

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

LifeCare Weekend

Introduction

In the Bible, we often see Jesus helping people who were not like him. He is found walking towards, speaking, providing care and doing miracles for people on the fringe of society. Although it seems natural to care for those who are similar to ourselves, when it comes to strangers, there is an emotional battle as to whether or not – or perhaps how far – we should care for those who are different. As believers, it is important for us to push into this emotional battle.

Read

Matthew 25:31-45

Discuss

1. In our reading, what are the acts of practical care that the King expects from his people? In the parable, what is the significant difference between those who helped and those who failed to help?
2. Why do you think Jesus emphasises caring for the needy rather than the Law or religiosity?
3. On a scale of one to four, with four being 'very comfortably asking for help', where would you rate yourself?
Where would you rate yourself with four being 'very comfortable in helping strangers'?
For both measurements, what could be the challenges in moving to the next number on the scale?
4. Pastor Matt teaches us that we pursue God's heart when we care for the needy and the vulnerable. Share your own experience in both giving and receiving care. How did you experience God in those events?

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5. Read Hebrews 13:2. What does this verse tell us to do to strangers? How can we take a step out of our circle of affection and give care to strangers? What does it look like to you?
6. Are there people around you that you find it difficult to connect with? Why? How do you embrace the emotional battle ground of trying to connect with them?

Respond

Pastor Matt encourages us to keep embracing our emotional battleground when it comes to helping strangers. It is important to remember that Jesus loves the strangers around us, regardless of our differences. To be Jesus with skin on, we need to be able to see past those differences. When we do, we will see where God is at work in their lives as well as our own. What practical step can you take to move yourself along the scale in helping strangers, or perhaps someone that you have found it difficult to connect with?