

EQUIPPED TO WIN EPISODE 4: LOVE PEOPLE

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

We are called to love people. The first step is for us to see ourselves as God sees us. Groups and Community are one of the practical ways that we love others.

CONNECT

Story Cards: Choose a card that represents who you were when you were around 18 years old. If no Story Cards: If you were to choose three words to describe yourself before age 20, what would you choose and why?

PROTECT

Thank God for showing what true love looked like when He sent His Son to save us. Pray that everyone in your group would have a heart to pursue people and see them exactly the way God sees them. Ask Him to help you grow together as a group.

GROW

- 1. Did anything from the video stand out to you?
- 2. How do you think God sees you? What makes it difficult to see others the way God sees them? What makes it difficult to see yourself the way God sees you?
- 3. Read Luke 19:5-6. What can we learn from Jesus about how to approach people we disagree with?
- 4. Jesus saw people as God sees them: as image-bearers. Read Genesis 1:27. How would it change how you see others if you began to see them as image-bearers?
- 5. Read 1 John 4:7-10. What do these verses say about God's love?



PRAY

Look up Colossians 4:5-6 and pray these verses over your group. Ask God to help us be wise in how we act toward outsiders and make the most of every opportunity. Pray that God would let our conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so we may know how to answer everyone.

PGROUPS



EPISODE 4: MIDWEEK MEDITATION

THE FIRST STEP OF LOVING PEOPLE IS A PERSPECTIVE SHIFT. WE SHIFT OUR PERSPECTIVE FROM OUR OWN TO GOD'S. GOD MADE YOU TO LOVE YOU, SO LET HIM LOVE YOU. ALSO, WHEN WE SEE PEOPLE AS GOD SEES THEM, WE DON'T LOVE OTHERS THROUGH RULES OF PERFORMANCE: WE LOVE THEM AS GOD MADE THEM. THE PHYSICIAN LUKE RECORDED A STARTLING ACCOUNT IN HIS GOSPEL OF THE PERSPECTIVE WE SHOULD HAVE. AS JESUS LOOKED DOWN AT THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS EXECUTION, HE DID NOT CONDEMN THEM. INSTEAD, HE SAID, "FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO" (LUKE 23:34). JESUS COULD HAVE RESPONDED WITH CALLS TO VIOLENCE, WORDS OF ANGER, AND CRIES FOR REVENGE. BUT JESUS RESPONDS WITH GRACE AND MERCY.

WHEN WE LOVE PEOPLE LIKE JESUS, WE PUT THEM FIRST. JESUS SAYS TO LOVE YOUR ENEMIES. THAT MEANS PEOPLE WHO ANNOY US. THE RUDE PERSON WHO CUT YOU IN LINE AT THE CHICK-FIL-A. THE ANNOYING SPORTS FAN WHO YELLS AT THE REFS THE ENTIRE GAME. EVEN THEM. IT IS A COUNTERCULTURAL WAY OF LIVING. BUT IT IS OUR CALLING AS CHRIST FOLLOWERS.

A PERSPECTIVE SHIFT MEANS RESPONDING WITH PATIENCE, LOVE, AND THE OTHER GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT RECORDED IN GALATIANS 5:22. A PERSPECTIVE SHIFT MEANS SEEING VALUE IN THE MARGINALIZED. SEEING PEOPLE LIKE GOD SEES THEM LEADS TO MERCY AND NOT HATRED. SO, LET US ALL PRAY FOR A PERSPECTIVE SHIFT, FOR EYES TO SEE THOSE AROUND US JUST AS GOD DOES AND FOR US TO RECEIVE THE LOVE GOD HAS FOR EACH ONE OF US.

RFFI FCTION QUESTIONS:

- 1. READ COLOSSIANS 3:12-13. WHICH OF THESE ATTRIBUTES OF LOVING PEOPLE IS MOST DIFFICULT FOR YOU? THEN, READ GALATIANS 5:22-23. WHICH OF THESE COMES MOST EFFORTLESS TO YOU?
- 2. WHO IS ONE PERSON THAT GOD WANTS YOU TO SHOW MORE MERCY AND COMPASSION TOWARDS?

TAKE A STEP:

ONE WAY WE LOVE PEOPLE IS BY SPEAKING LIFE OVER THEM. PAUL WRITES, "LET NO CORRUPTING TALK COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTHS, BUT ONLY SUCH AS IS GOOD FOR BUILDING UP, AS FITS THE OCCASION, THAT IT MAY GIVE GRACE TO THOSE WHO HEAR" (EPHESIANS 4:29).

THINK OF A PERSON OUTSIDE OF YOUR FAMILY WHO WAS INFLUENTIAL IN YOUR LIFE. THINK OF SOMEONE WHO INFLUENCED YOU AS AN ADOLESCENT OR HAS BEEN INFLUENTIAL IN YOUR PERSONAL GROWTH. REACH OUT TO THAT PERSON BY TEXT, SOCIAL MEDIA, OR A HANDWRITTEN NOTE AND SPEAK LIFE OVER THEM FOR THE WAY THAT THEY IMPACTED YOUR LIFE.