

# W HOLE HEARTED

*Finding spiritual health  
and emotional maturity.*

*Small Group Discussion Guide*



## PREPARATION

### ❏ STUDY

Spend the week studying Luke 10:25–37. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools to enhance your preparation.

### ❏ PRAY

Pray for our pastors and this week's message, the upcoming group time, your group members, and their openness to God's Word.

### ❏ LANDING POINT

The greatest mark of emotionally healthy spirituality is love.



## GROUP DISCUSSION

❏ **CONFIDENTIALITY** | What's said in the group stays in the group.

❏ **NO CROSS-TALK** | Be considerate of others as they share. Refrain from side conversations and texting during group time.

❏ **NO FIXING** | We are not in the group to fix each other. Jesus does that part.

❏ **SHARING** | Be sensitive to the amount of time you share. Don't talk too much or too little. Every person brings something valuable to the group.



## INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

## THE GOAL

The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

1 Timothy 1:5

Paul makes it clear that the goal of the Christian life is love. It's what Jesus came to show the world, and it's what He calls us to show others today. The path toward emotionally healthy spirituality leads you to become an emotional adult marked by love. This week your group will discuss what it means to put loving like Jesus into practice.

**Q:** *What distinguishes someone who loves well? Share examples of people you know.*



## DEEPER DIVE

*Select 2–3 questions to discuss as a group.*

## HOW TO LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

One of Jesus' most popular parables is the Good Samaritan. The story challenges us with the question, "What does it mean to be a loving neighbor to those around me, especially those who are different from me?"

**Q:** *Have someone read Luke 10:25–37. As the passage is being read, imagine the scene and what emotions the characters in the story might feel.*

**Q:** *Why is it impossible to love God and not love others? How are the two connected?*

**Q:** *How does Jesus challenge you to see others differently through the Good Samaritan parable?*



## REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

Select 2–3 questions from this section to answer.

## SEEING OTHERS DIFFERENTLY

The Good Samaritan teaches us an important lesson about God’s love. It changes the way we see others. Love helps us see others as fellow image bearers who have dignity, as people deeply loved by God and worthy of our love as well. Love helps us see what is praiseworthy in others. And it helps us see their hurts and wounds.

Becoming a Christian and following the ways of Jesus doesn’t automatically make us perfectly loving humans. We still have to resist and turn from selfishness, which is the opposite of love, and our natural, sinful default. God transforms our love and relationships over time by rooting out selfish sin and replacing it with His self-giving love.

**Q:** *How is selfishness the opposite of love?*

**Q:** *What are some practical ways you can choose love over selfishness in your relationships, especially with your neighbors?*

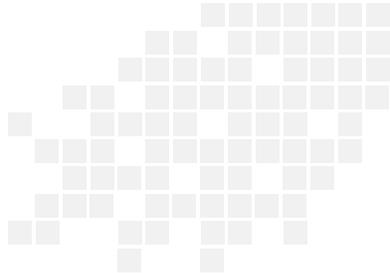
**Q:** *Where do you need more of God’s love for others in your life?*

## HEALTHY CONFLICT

Each of us is different (in background, personality, temperament, ways of processing and communicating), so conflict will arise in any healthy, loving relationship. But how do you engage in conflict in a healthy way?

Here are some principles for having healthy conflict:

- Talk before you fight.
- Don’t assume.

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- Claim solidarity (i.e., What we do impacts each other.).
  - Take sin seriously.
  - Unity pleases God.
  - Teach the next generation. Model healthy conflict for others to follow.

**Q:** *Think of a close relationship you have—a spouse, child, close friend, family member, etc. How might the principles above, when practiced, strengthen your relationship with that person?*

**Q:** *How can the group pray for you now and in the week ahead?*



**THE LAWYER'S MOTIVES** “The [lawyer’s] question in [v.25] was not sincere, as can be seen from two points in the text: (1) The lawyer wanted to test Jesus. (2) After Jesus answered the man’s question, Luke recorded that the man wished to justify himself.”<sup>1</sup>

**A HOSTILE RELATIONSHIP** “The Jews were no friends with the Samaritans, and regarded them almost on a level with demons (John 8:48). For a Samaritan to befriend the wounded man would have seemed unthinkable. Yet Christ’s kingdom would ultimately cross all boundaries of race, culture and class. The Samaritan, though apparently alone and unseen by others, showed great kindness. Too often, we are kind to others because we expect recognition and praise for it. The Samaritan could so easily have walked past, and let the man die. No one would have known, and therefore no one would have censured him. But he could not ignore the need.”<sup>2</sup> “Significantly, it is this hated foreigner who is commended by Jesus, and this Samaritan demonstrates the love that is not constrained by ethnic boundaries.”<sup>3</sup>

**TRUE NEIGHBORLY LOVE** “The Samaritan had *compassion*—a Greek expression built on the word for a person’s inner parts, the seat of emotions and feelings. It expresses Jesus’ feeling for those in need (Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 6:34; 8:2; Luke 7:13). It is the feeling and attitude of a master who cancels a servant’s massive debt (Matt. 18:27). This is true neighborly love—a love that goes beyond anything society or religious law expects and acts simply because of the extreme need of another.”<sup>4</sup>

#### ENDNOTES:

1. John A. Martin, “Luke,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 234.
2. Gavin Childress, *Opening up Luke’s Gospel, Opening Up Commentary* (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2006), 96.
3. D. A. Carson, “The Gospels and Acts,” in *NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 2097.
4. Trent C. Butler, *Luke*, vol. 3, *Holman New Testament Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 173.