



Smith Rock
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group study guide

LUKE

J E S U S F O R E V E R Y O N E

**For the week of
29th of March 2020**



I had driven up to Portland one evening for a meeting the next day, and I had stopped off at a shop to get some milk for my tea in the morning. It was getting late, and I was tired, and just wanted to get to the motel. But as I came out of the shop and was walking towards my car a man came up and started talking to me. He was stranded, I can't remember the story now, but the nub of it was he needed some money for gas. As I said, I was tired, and there is always a story, and standing in the middle of an empty parking lot in the cold and dark there was no way for me to validate anything he said. He said that if I gave him his address he would pay me back.

What should I do? What would you do? Maybe this exact situation hasn't happened to you, but I expect you have had to make a decision on whether to help someone in some tangible way that would probably not be returned to you.

On what basis do you make your decision?



27 "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29 To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. 30 Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. 31 And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. 32 "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. 35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

37“Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; 38give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

Luke 6:27–38 (ESV)

Commentary

Jesus tells the following story to show how good God is and how much more generous our heavenly Father is.

5 And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, 6 for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; 7 and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? 8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs.

Luke 11:5–8 (ESV)

The reason Jesus told this story was because everyone would have understood exactly what He was talking about, reciprocity (responding with something of an equal or greater value), was the basis of the culture. A friend arrives late at night to a man’s house and he has nothing to give him, but he “owes” him because he is his friend. Maybe he has done something good for this man we don’t know about, so even though it is going

ISRAEL AT THE TIME OF JESUS

1ST CENTURY AD



to be hard he feels duty bound to provide him bread. So he goes knocking on his mate's door, who is safely tucked up in bed for the night with his family, and if he gets up he will disturb everyone else, but again because of reciprocity he will. Perhaps he feels he is in debt to his friend, or that providing bread in the middle of the night to him his friend will be in debt to him and he can expect repayment.

Reciprocity was even embeded in the law:

17 "Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death. 18 Whoever takes an animal's life shall make it good, life for life. 19 If anyone injures his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him, 20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him. 21 Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, and whoever kills a person shall be put to death.

Leviticus 24:17–21 (ESV)

Yet the reciprocity in the law was more to limit punishment meted out, and make the punishment comensurate with the crime, rather than people taking whatever vengeance they felt was justified.

And even in the law we see the ideal of reciprocity being broken:

4 "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. 5 If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him.

Exodus 23:4–5 (ESV)

So here comes Jesus into this world of reciprocity and who does

He minister to? He goes to people who have no means of repaying Him whatsoever, and in particular he hangs out with those people who are considered “sinners.” In the world of reciprocity you get returned to you what you give, so if you are a sinner you can not expect God to return good to you. but as Jesus points out in Matthew’s Gospel:

For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Matthew 5:45 (ESV)

This section is a continuation of the Beattitudes, as Jesus addresses His disciples on how they should live their lives in imitation of Him, how they should treat those who don’t return love to them, in fact do the opposite, they return hatred, and cursing, and even abuse. These are people who would steal from you given half a chance and maybe have. They are those who if you lend to them you are unlikely to see your money again.

Jesus says they are to treat these people just the same way as people who they love and who would reciprocate to them.

Two key things Jesus says their actions should predicated on: first the “Golden rule” - “As you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.”

Secondly, “for with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

This does not mean our salvation is dependent on how we treat people, but our reward in heaven is, and can we truly claim we have received the grace of God if we don’t treat others with the same grace we have received?

Group Study

Open the group with prayer and discuss how you have used your application from last week's study in your life, and what you have learned from it.

Tell of a time when someone asked you for something and you were very reluctant to give it. Why was that?

Who do you find the hardest people to be around?

How easy do you think Jesus finds it being around you?

Read Genesis 39:9-23. Why does it hurt when reciprocity is not returned?

Whose reward did Joseph place his trust in?

Whose reward does Jesus tell us to place our trust in?

The "golden rule" call us to step out first before waiting to see how the other person will treat us, how is that counter cultural?

What criteria do you use to judge other people with?

24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

John 7:24 (ESV)

How can we judge with right judgement?

12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.
James 2:12–13 (ESV)

Read the following passage and reflect on how the principle of “sowing and reaping” applies to what we are talking about.

the point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written,
“He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever.”
10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.
2 Corinthians 9:6–11 (ESV)

Personal study time

Read the following passage and use the REAP method to reflect.

21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. 22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 2:21–25 (ESV)

9 Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

1 Peter 3:9 (ESV)

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him;

if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:14–21 (ESV)

Reflection

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REAP Method of studying Scripture

READ

Find the passages for today's reading in the Bible Reading Plan. Read the passages with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to give you words of encouragement, direction, and correction (2 Timothy 3:16). Underline the verses that seem important and that God is using to speak to you.

EXAMINE

Spend some time reflecting and writing about what you've read. Write down one or two of the key verses that stuck out to you. Ask yourself these questions and write down your thoughts:

- * What is going on in the passage?
- * Who is writing and whom is he writing to?
- * When was the author writing?
- * What are the circumstances that the author is addressing?
- * Does the writer mention anything that might indicate his purpose or intent?
- * How do you think the author wants his audience to respond?

APPLY

After examining the passage, apply the text to your own life. Ask yourself these questions:

- * What is God's word for me from this passage?
- * How will I live differently and be different today because of what I just read?

KIDS CORNER



Real Love

1. Who is someone who's really nice to you?

Have you ever heard the phrase, "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine"? It basically means, I'll do something good for you, but only so I can get something good from you back. That's a good way to get what you want, but it's certainly not how to love someone. The Bible says that love is kind, but when our kindness toward someone is motivated by our own selfish gain, it's not actually kind. Real love is when we're kind to people who won't know about it, appreciate it, or show any kindness back. It's treating others with patience and respect, even when they're behaving rudely or acting annoying. Real love is difficult.

But how can we show love to people even when they make it so hard? It seems like some people just don't deserve it. The truth is, that's right! In fact, no one deserves it, but God loves us so much anyway. He loves us even when we're too lost to know it, too selfish to appreciate it, or too sinful to love Him back. Each one of us is so valuable to Him, that He is even kind and patient toward those who are downright evil. When we base how we love others on how precious they are to God, it makes it possible to love everyone in our lives, even when it's hard.

2. Think about someone who's hard to love. How much are they loved by God?

3. Do you want to show real love to the people in your life?

