

The Promise of Reaching Out

September 17, 2017

Genesis 12:1-3, Acts 1:6-11

Pastor Paul Springer

Personal Connection (25 minutes)

Icebreaker

Q. Think of a time in your life when someone asked for your help. Perhaps you found yourself jumping for joy, eagerly anticipating lending a hand. Maybe you've wondered if someone else could assist. Or, perhaps you've asked yourself, "What's in this for me?" Briefly, share about a time that meeting another's need offered nothing in return.

Review Last Sunday's *What Now?*

Did the Lord identify someone to you this week to whom he wants you to reach out? If this person's need is too great, could the LIFE Group commit to assist you as you reach out obediently to Christ's leading? This could be a physical or spiritual need.

Ups and Downs

Last week we considered Jesus' teaching about *neighbors*, realizing that the classification is based less on proximity than on who could be the recipient of God's love flowing through us to them.

Q. Thinking about your relationships with neighbors, share highs and lows from this past week. Offer God praise for the doors he has opened.

Sharing Christ

Q. Did you engage someone in a conversation about Christ this week?

Q. Did the Holy Spirit prompt you to share with an unbeliever? How did you respond?

Q. How can the group best pray for you as you share the Good News of Jesus' love and redemption?

Praying for each other

Reflect on the questions above and share with the group. Take some time now and appoint someone in the group to pray for spiritual strength and guidance to grow in areas of vulnerability.

Digging Deeper (25 minutes)

This Week's Key Concept

God's Promise is to bless the world, and he has chosen to do that through us!

Read Genesis 12:1-3

Note: The Lord's promise to Abram in Genesis 12:2, "I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."

Q. How has the Lord blessed you, so that you, too, are a blessing?

Q. What do you feel more comfortable or drawn towards, offering physical blessings or spiritual blessings? Why and give an example.

Discuss: Notice all the things God declares he will do. We are not in this alone; he wants to get his work done. We go, and he makes it great!

Read Acts 1:6-11

Note: In verse 8, Jesus states, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the Earth."

Consider the following, then answer the question, below:

- Today's *Jerusalem* = Those who are church-ed but not believing.
- Today's *Judea* = Those who are near us and like us.
- Today's *Samaria* = Those who are near us, but different from us.
- Today's *Ends of the Earth* = Those who are a very far distance from us.

Q. How can we as individuals and working collaboratively as a church body, reach out to our neighbors in *Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth*?

Impact Questions

Q. Did Sunday's focus on the Genesis and Acts passages encourage you to share the Lord's blessings with others?

Q. Did you see anything in a new light?

What now? (20 minutes)

This week pray and reflect on some of the missed opportunities you've had to share God's love with your neighbors.

Q. Think of someone you can reach this week. In Christ's power, how could you meet a need and be a blessing to them?

Q. Reflect for a moment on a time when someone reached out and met your need and how it made you feel.

When God prompts his children to meet others' needs, his love shines through. People take notice that there is something different in the effort, something beyond what is natural. In this, God is glorified as we identify his prompting to reach out.

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

Please share your prayer requests and praises, so that your LIFE Group may lift you up, in neighborly affection.

Please pray for expanding Christ's Kingdom through your relationships, in our congregation, to the community, and in distant places.