Lifegroup Study – 25th Feb 2018

**More People More Like Jesus 1 – Prioritising Relationships**

**INTRODUCTION**

God has called us to be a discipleship-based church. Relationships are the foundation for discipleship.

We are created in the image of a relational God and so are create for relationships. But this truth has degenerated, particularly in Western culture, from individual worth (which is so important) to individualism – defining what it means to be human apart from anyone or anything else. The truth is we are relational beings. So God has placed reminders in our emotional experience (nothing moves us like love or concern for other people) and in the Bible, to remind us that life is all about relationships. The Scriptures teach that loving God involves loving people. And God makes it clear in the Bible that your relationships with people affect your relationship with God. This means that loving people is a worship issue. Becoming more like Jesus means getting really good at loving people.

**KEY SCRIPTURES**

**READ Mark 12:29-31** 29 “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

**READ 1 Peter 3:7** “In the same way, you husbands must give honour to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. … Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.”

**READ Matthew 25:34-40** 34 “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’37 “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

**READ** [**Matthew 5:43-48**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5%3A43-48&version=NIV)“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Q. These passages teach us about how God wants us to love people. What are some similarities or differences you observe in these scriptures?

Q. Reflect on the connection between loving God and loving people. What can this look like in practice?

Q. Do you see any challenges in making relationships a priority? How do you think Jesus fully loved others in spite of them?

Q. What do these passages suggest is the outcome of loving people in this way?

Q. Is there anything God spoke to you about personally from this message?

Q. Paul quotes Jesus when he says, “Wh*atever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you*.” (Phil 4:9) What is the next step you need to take in response to God’s word?

**KEY POINTS**

1. Jesus considers relationships to be a core value. How much does your life reflect this?
2. Loving people starts with friendliness. It also requires us to be proactive and intentional.
3. Jesus was genuine in his love for others and went deep with a few. Relational discipleship means you allow yourself to be seen and known.

**PRAYER POINTS**

* For each individual to have a personal revelation of what these scriptures mean for them
* For God's help to engage with any specific challenges your member may have raised
* For us to become more like Jesus and have a love for people that prioritises relationship.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Church-wide feast**: Sunday 4th March

**Lifegroup Serving:** Choose a Sunday your Lifegroup can join Chewy and the host team to welcome people to Elim.