



MODULE 3 | **The Real Jesus**

Leader's Guide

Session 4

Loving your neighbour

Key idea: *We all need forgiveness because we all fail to be the people Jesus challenges us to be.*

Key encouragement: *Having been loved and forgiven by Jesus, ask God to help you love like Jesus.*

Practical challenge: *Identify and respond to a need experienced by one of the people you are praying for.*

Session goals:

- *Grow increasingly familiar with the three questions: Jesus. People. Me.*
- *Accept Jesus' challenge to love our neighbours by deepening our relationships and conversations.*
- *Pray for each other and each other's friends.*

As you wait for people to arrive, you could fill the time with casual conversation about how people found the Review exercises, whether they have seen any of the people we are praying for, etc. This doesn't have to wait until we 'officially' begin.

Session Introduction

Watch the introduction video for Session 4.

Jesus thinks we need forgiveness. Our response to Jesus depends on whether we think we need forgiveness. But what if your family and friends don't want or think they need forgiveness?

Share

Not everyone will have evangelistic opportunities every week. By sharing stories with each other, we can all celebrate, learn from, be encouraged by and pray for God's work through other members of the group.

- How did inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel with you go?

Encourage honesty here. Celebrate 'wins' however small. Grieve when things didn't go the way people hoped they would. Discuss whether they will try to ask the same person again or whether they will try someone different this week.

If inviting someone to read Luke's Gospel is just too big of a step for someone, perhaps try to break it down into smaller steps. Eg: This week plan to tell someone that you go to church.

- Today we'll share stories about the evangelistic opportunities God gave us this week. These might be conversations you are grateful for or ones that didn't go as you hoped. They might be interesting conversations with potential or clear answers to our prayers.

This helps group members think about evangelism more generally—not just about the five people they are praying for. Encourage people to think broadly about opportunities. God might surprise us with who he is working in.

Cast the net wide here. 'Conversations with potential' might not even mention Jesus ... yet. But conversations such as these can help develop a relationship of trust or they involve a topic that Jesus speaks into.

Pray

This is the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

'Father,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation.'"

Luke 11:2-4 (NIV)

- | Use this passage and the sharing time to guide your prayers for yourself, each other, and your friends.

Train

Luke's Gospel

Let the group know that from Session 5, each group member will have a turn at facilitating the Luke's Gospel discussion (Question 1). This is so that we all practice reading Luke's Gospel with others.

In our passage today Jesus tells a story that has become very famous – The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

1. Read Luke 10:25-37 and discuss the three questions:
 - a. Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
 - *Who is Jesus speaking to?*
 - *Why does he tell this story? What point is he making?*

- *What standards do Jesus (and God) set for people?*
 - *What does love for God and love for neighbour involve?*
 - *How does Jesus love God and his neighbour?*
- b. People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- *Who is questioning Jesus?*
 - *What does he want from Jesus?*
 - *What does he get from Jesus?*

 - *Who are the characters in the story?*
 - *What do they do? Why do they do it?*
 - *How are they related to the man questioning Jesus?*
 - *Samaritan: What costs does he bear to care for the injured traveler?*
- c. Me: What is my response to Jesus and this story?
- *What stands out for me in this story*
 - *Who do I resonate with most in the passage?*
 - *What standards of love do I set for myself or for others?*
 - *How do I respond to my failure to love as I should?*
 - *How do I feel about this story?*
 - *When have I experienced love like this?*
 - *What does following Jesus involve?*

2. Review your discussion.

- a. Think back to each of the three questions: Jesus. People. Me. What comments or additional questions helped keep discussion focused on Jesus, moving forward and going deeper?
- b. How did discussing a parable change the way the three questions operated?
- *There may be another layer of expansion questions. eg People:*
 - *Who are the people Jesus is speaking to?*
 - *How do they relate to the characters in the story.*
 - *Why might Jesus choose to tell this story to these people? Its setting, its main point, etc*
- c. What information does this passage add to our discussion about forgiveness?

- *Everyone needs forgiveness for failing to love God and others.*
 - *Jesus does not compromise God's good standards because we fail meet them. Instead, he offers us forgiveness.*
 - *Jesus is the only one who doesn't need forgiveness. He is the ultimate Good Samaritan.*
- d. What aspects of the story would you like to have discussed, or to have discussed more fully, if you had your time again?

Skill: Loving your neighbour

The following tables invite you to think through ways you can deliberately and intentionally love your neighbour. The top table is about spending time with people, and the bottom table is about conversations with people. In real life though, the two tables overlap.

1. Work through the tables with one of the people you have been praying for in mind. Try to come up with specific ideas for deepening your relationship and conversations with them, including ways of inviting them into your Christian community. Then, share your ideas with the rest of the group.

While loving people can sometimes feel costly it is great privilege to share your life with someone else. Real love is costly but it is also beautiful. Ask Jesus, who loved us so much that he died for us, to help you.

Come with a worked example for one of the five people you are praying for to help your group know what to do.

These tables will be formatted as an infographic in the Training Guide.

Spending Time with People			
	Love: Acts of service.	Social: Casual and fun hangout.	Community: Connecting them.
	How can I show love to them in practical ways that they appreciate?	How can I spend time with them in everyday ways?	How could I help them get to know my Christian friends?
Me Individually	<i>Meal? An encouraging message? Drive them to the airport? Ask about their family?</i>	<i>Things we have in common or new things that you are willing to try? Exercise? Dog park? Movies? Children at the same school?</i>	<i>Dinner with a mix of Christian friends and those who are not?</i>
My Christian Community	<i>Is there a church program they might be interested in? Mainly Music? Food hampers?</i>	<i>Who might they connect with that I could introduce them to? Other single parents, retirees, photographers etc?</i>	<i>Social event?</i>
Conversations with People			
	Questions: Answering questions.	Jesus: Talking about Jesus.	Bible: Reading the Bible
	How can I answer the questions they have about Jesus?	How can I introduce them to the life and teachings of Jesus?	How can I encourage them to read the Bible?
Me Individually	<i>Research the question and talk about it with them? Recommend a book and read it with them? Podcast? Website?</i>	<i>Explain how Jesus gives me hope or meaning or joy or ... ? Tell them I am praying for them?</i>	<i>Invite them to read Luke's Gospel with me? Share a gospel story with them?</i>
My Christian Community	<i>Alpha or Christianity Explored? A Christian friend with similar questions or in similar circumstances?</i>	<i>Evangelistic event or course?</i>	<i>Invite them to church/Bible Study Group/etc</i>

2. Pray. Thank Jesus for loving us enough to die for us so that we could be forgiven. Having been loved and forgiven by Jesus, ask God to help us love like Jesus.

For Session 5: Ask a group member to lead discussion on Luke 18:1-14 using the three questions. Ask them to spend 20 minutes preparing using the three questions and the Expansion Questions document attached to Session 2. Share the Leaders Guide for Session 5 with them so that they have access to the expansion question ideas for Luke 18:1-14.

Even though they are only leading Luke's Gospel Question 1, encourage them to read the whole session so that they see how the passage connects to the 'forgiveness' theme and the Skill.

Revise

Read Luke 11-14 in one sitting. In these chapters Jesus continues teaching his disciples as they head towards Jerusalem. Choose one short passage from within Luke 11-14 and answer the three questions. Include three or four relevant expansion questions for each of the three questions:

- Jesus: What do we learn about Jesus?
- People: What do we learn about the people who met Jesus?
- Me: What is my response to Jesus and these stories?

Work through the Loving your Neighbour tables for each of the five people you are praying for.

- Act on at least one of these ideas this week.

Connect with other group members during the week.

- Share with each other one of your ideas for loving your neighbour, or, how God has been answering our prayers.

After Session Reflection

- *Contact the person facilitating the discussion next session on Luke 18:1-14 and check that they understand their role.*
- *Send them a copy of the Leader's Guide for Session 5 to help their preparation.*
- *Offer to chat through the passage and the three questions.*
- *Remind them to use the Expansion Questions document attached to Session 2.*
- *Pray with them.*

Keep learning at
ripple-effect.net.au