

WEEKLY REFLECTION

It's easy for us in the church to treat mission as something that we do, rather than something that the body of Christ should be characterized by. Last Sunday, we were reminded that mission is more than just gathering and scattering—it starts with us as we intentionally make space for the Holy Spirit to dwell within us, and continues as a natural outpouring and outward expression of God's love for all.

But before we go out and scatter, we must address the question of “who is my neighbor?” (Lk. 10:25-37) We must come to terms with ourselves about whether or not we are truly *willing* to step into some of the most difficult places of human pain and suffering.

Most of us will have to wrestle with God when we find ourselves in the midst of such circumstances. David Gotts, founder of International China Concern (ICC), certainly did. He was confronted firsthand by the news of children with disabilities being largely abandoned by their families in China. These children were dying at an alarming rate and left to actively suffer in desperate conditions because of that lack of care. It would have been easy and natural for David to step away from what he saw, to turn a blind eye just as the priest and the Levite had (Lk. 10:31-32). He was not equipped for the situation. He could have dismissed it as being none of his business. Instead, he realized that the body of Christ is the vessel through which mercy and justice flows into this world. He recognized that God calls us to be people of mercy who respond to the pain and brokenness in this world, and people of justice who work beyond the immediate to partner with Him in making an impact on the world around us.

So, church: who is your neighbor? Will you go? Will you respond in faith to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God? (Mi. 6:8)

QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE:

David mentioned during his sharing that “biblical justice is when we refuse to settle for less than what we believe God has determined to be just and fair for everyone around us.”

What does biblical justice look like in your everyday life? How have you seen others around you put that into action? Are there any ways that you can start to “do justice” or act justly to the people around you?

QUESTION TWO:

There is more to the Parable of the Good Samaritan than meets the eye. As you consider the responses of the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan, refer back to Lev. 21:1-4 and Num. 19:11-13. Remember that the man was violently assaulted and “half dead” (Lk. 10:30), and the history of the enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans.

What, then, is the significance of the Samaritan’s actions? What does that tell us about God’s definition of mercy and justice? How should we be a people who “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with [our] God?” (Mi. 6:8)?

QUESTION THREE:

Take the time along with the rest of your small group to pray into the question, “Who is my neighbor?” Last week, we suggested that it might be a good idea for your group to find a group of people / age group you might want to serve communally.

Whether your answer is individual or communal, engage in conversation and dialogue with the Lord to see where He is leading you. Don’t just stop at mercy, but also ask God how you can also “do justice” to this neighbor He might be leading you to.