



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE—YOUTH

Year 1—The God of Life: A Story of God's Redeeming Shalom

Module 4—Coming Alive by Being Human: Jesus Stories on What it Means to Be Human and Fully Alive

Lesson 3—Luke 6:27-49

ENCOUNTER 1—Community Discussion

Read Luke 6:27-49 together out loud as a group. Encourage each person to journal through the passage using these questions. After allowing sufficient time for reflection, invite the group to share their thoughts.

How is this God's story?

How is this others' story?

How is this my story?

How is this the world's story?

ENCOUNTER 2—Community Discussion

(Read the reflection included with this lesson. The questions are designed for your group to enter into a meaningful dialog about the Word. The bulleted teaching points are taken from the reflection and correspond to the questions.)

GOD'S STORY—The way of life envisioned in this story begins with God's grace for us in Jesus Christ.

How does reading these verses help you understand God's relationship with us?

In what ways do these verses help you understand God's grace?

- Jesus' message in this story is meant to transform how we think about life with God, transforming us in the process and ushering us into a fuller and more truly human existence with others through which God is bringing about the wholeness of life in his world once again.
- God challenges us to love our enemies because that is precisely what he has done. In becoming human in Jesus Christ God was for us even as we set ourselves against him and his life for us by our sin.
- God poured himself out for us in Jesus Christ, giving himself away in order that we could be ushered back into his life-giving presence, restored to the fullness of our humanity that God always desired us to know and live into.
- Grace is thoroughly about God drawing us back into relationship with himself in Jesus Christ. God's grace is thus freedom for us to be who God always intended us to be. We experience this freedom as we become fully alive by living in obedience to Jesus Christ as his follower.

OUR STORY—God's grace in Jesus transforms us to see ourselves as we truly are and live into Jesus' way of life for us.

What is the hardest of Jesus' teachings to put into practice? Why?

There are at least two ways in which God reshapes us through this story and leads us more fully into our true humanity with Jesus.

1. Seeing this as the way God has acted in his grace towards us in Jesus throws into stark relief who we truly are as God's own. Our sin cuts us off from God, and yet God draws us to himself and offers redemption for the sin that divides us from God's life.
2. When we are awakened to true life by the grace of God in Jesus Christ, seeing ourselves for who we truly are in him, we begin to become the kind of gracious and life-giving people whom God has called us to be.

OTHERS' STORY—Living this way with others is the way in which God draws them to himself.

Describe your attitude toward others. Does it reflect God's attitude toward us?

- The kind of life described by Jesus in this passage is humble faith. Humble faith is born from the recognition that without God's grace you wouldn't be able to live at all, and that only by turning away from yourself and to Jesus Christ is this way of life even possible.
- God's posture toward us was to love us, give himself up for us in Jesus and thus restore us to relationship with him. Our posture toward others is to mirror this.
- Others' sin is not something we hold over them but in giving ourselves away for their sake, by letting go of our desire to convict them of their sin, our generosity bears witness to God's generosity with us all.
- Confronted by this grace which they experience through our loving presence in their life, they may turn from their sin and to life with God.

THE WORLD'S STORY—This vision of life is embodied in the church for the sake of the world.

Do you really think it is possible to live a life of self-giving love? Why or why not?

- At the center of this passage is the life of self-giving love rooted in Jesus Christ.
- Imagine a world where this kind of self-giving love is the norm rather than the exception. What kind of a world would that be?
- This would be a world of wholeness and goodness that God intended for creation from the foundation of world. That sounds like the relationships of mutual care and dependence that God has always desired to see fill the whole earth. In short, that sounds like *shalom*.
- The church has both the privilege and responsibility of living in this way of Jesus in order that something that seems so idealistic might actually become possible even now, if only in glimpses. In this way, we are drawn into God's life-giving mission for the sake of the world.

PRAYER

(Lead your group in corporate prayer.)

Prayer from Dag Hammarskjöld

Great and good God, give us pure hearts that we may see you, humble hearts that we may hear you, hearts of love that we may serve you, hearts of faith that we may live in you, reverent hearts that we may worship you, here and in the world out there, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WEEKLY PRACTICE

(Read the weekly practice out loud, and challenge your group to practice *missio* beyond today.)

Praying for our enemies:

This week, at the end of each day, make a list of "enemies." These are people that throughout the day you have been in conflict with, who have upset you in some way or people who you generally have a hard time being around. Write each of their names down. As you write their name, pray for them. Not so they would be changed according to your wishes, but so you might be changed to love them more deeply in the grace of Jesus Christ. Then, once you have prayed for them, journal your experience using these questions:

How did praying for them change your heart toward them? What still remains?

How did you see them as people for whom Christ has also come so they may share in God's mission?

BECOMING MY STORY

(Encourage the group to spend time this week in God's Word, allowing it to penetrate their heart and life.)

Passages for further reflection this week:

• *Matthew 5-7*

• *Romans 12:9-21*

• *Romans 14*

• *James 2*

Spend time this week reading and journaling through the above Scriptures. Reflect on how the passage is God's story, my story, others' story, and the world's story. In the context of Luke 6:27-49, consider the following questions:

How are these Scripture passages related to the message in Luke 6:27-49?

How do these Scriptures tell us about the story of God being continued from Luke 6:27-49?

What is God saying to you through these passages?

Consider other passages that you might know related to Luke 6:27-49 and read them this week, journaling as you go.