

Hard Questions

Can We Trust the Church? / February 17-20, 2022

When the global church has forgotten that gospel of Jesus, injustice has abounded (Luke 10:25-37). History shows us that the Christian church has been responsible for atrocities and abuses, which has caused many to question whether the church today can be trusted. Those injustices are the result of Christians losing sight of what it means to love God and to love our neighbor, of losing their grasp of the gospel and all that Jesus did for us through His death and resurrection. When we love our neighbor as Jesus taught in His parable of the *Good Samaritan*, we see the needs of those right in front of us and try to meet their needs. Loving our neighbor means fighting injustice for the one in front of us, being bold enough to take a stand.

GETTING STARTED

From your own experience, when have you had a strong sense of justice arise within you over something small that you witnessed or fell prey to (and can laugh about now)? What did you do with that sense of justice, if anything, and do you regret it now?

GO DEEPER

1. Why is it unhealthy to love Jesus and hate the church? From Ephesians 5:25-27, what did Jesus do out of His deep love for the church?
2. According to Jesus in Luke 10:25-27, how does someone inherit eternal life? In Luke 10:30-37 (*Parable of the Good Samaritan*), what does it mean to love our neighbor? Why do you think the global church, at different points in history, has abandoned or forgotten this critical teaching, resulting in grave injustices? What are some of the modern-day injustices committed by various parts of the church today?
3. How has embracing and embodying the teaching of Jesus in Luke 10:25-37 – to love God and to love our neighbor – led to significant breakthroughs and righteous victories over injustice?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What is your attitude and perspective towards the church? What possible hurt have you experienced at the hand of someone within the church that God wants to heal? What might be your next step towards that healing?
2. When we are truly loving our neighbor as God intends, we stand and fight for righteousness and justice, especially for the one right in front of us. Who is the one right in front of you, and what is their need? What can you do to meet their need?

PRACTICE IT NOW

Take time as a group to purposefully pray that God would give you a healthy perspective and attitude towards the global church, and towards Beltway Park. Ask God to help you fully love Him and your neighbor, to show you more of what that means. Ask Him to give you the courage you need to address past church hurts, and the boldness to fight for justice for the one right in front of you.