

Day 1

As Rabbi Jesus came onto the scene, He spoke with power and authority. We quickly discover that he wasn't like the other Jewish Rabbis.

Review Mark 2:23-3:6 from the weekend message. As the disciples follow Jesus through the field, hungry and tired, what must they have thought when He led them to take the grain and eat even though it was the Sabbath? What about when he healed the man? After the initial shock, and stepping aside as to not personally feel the bolt of lightning that was sure to smite Jesus from above, do you think that something deep inside the disciples began to come alive and shout, "Yes! This is just right!"?

Read Matthew 22:37-40. Throughout Jesus' ministry He relates love for God with love for one another and was angered whenever he encountered religious behavior taking priority above the general welfare and specific spiritual benefit of people. In what way has modern society marginalized people? What have we made more important than people? Religion? Wealth? Environment? Personal happiness? Political power? Whom (individual or group) have you marginalized? Confess this sin and ask Jesus to teach you to see them as He sees them. Ask Him to give you the courage to treat them the way Jesus would treat them. Pray for those people by asking God to bless them.

Day 2

Read Luke 10:25-37. The priest saw the man but passed by on the other side. Then a Levite (religious elite) saw the man and passed by on the other side. When each saw the beaten man, some sort of value scale must have registered in their minds. Was this man worth becoming ceremonially unclean for? Was this man worth the inconvenience, time, and effort? 2 out of 3 decided he was not... Jesus lived out a radically different message.

We may not often cross paths with someone who's been robbed, beaten, and left for dead, but how do we respond when we cross paths with people who have been beaten and broken by life? Does your value scale register them as valuable and important? Whom have you've given yourself permission to pass by/overlook? Following Jesus means looking beyond ourselves to the neighbors with whom our life intersects. Who's your neighbor? Pray today that our eyes will see those who walk beside us. Pray that we'll help those in need. "Plan" a random act of kindness for one person you expect to see today. Choose someone you wouldn't ordinarily choose or someone you may not even like very much.

Day 3

Within each of us is a longing for connection. Jesus summed up the essence of life when He said the most important thing is loving God with all your heart, strength and mind and loving your neighbor as yourself. (Day 1-Matthew 22:37-40) What Jesus describes is not only how we please God... it's how we can truly be happy; how we become whole. Connecting with our God and connecting with people. Just like everything created – the brokenness of our world seeks ways to satisfy our desire for connection to leave the brokenness and pain. We're broken people trying



to connect with other broken people which often results in more brokenness! In the video message this weekend, Dieta shared her journey to becoming whole. Even as she found forgiveness and transformation, she had no idea there were other women who had been through what she had. As she tells her story, there's a sense of relief in knowing she wasn't (and isn't) alone.

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. In the song Hold Us Together by Matt Maher, we sing "Love will hold us together. Make us a shelter to weather the storm. And I'll be my brother's keeper, so the whole world will know that we're not alone." We serve one another by weathering the storms of life together – it speaks of God's love to those who don't know Him. Do you have good community? Why or why not? If you're in a group, how could you to make it even better? If your group is great, consider inviting others to participate. If you aren't in a group, join one.

Day 4

Imagine finding an original Rembrandt painting covered in mud. You wouldn't focus on the mud or treat it like muddy trash. You would be crazy excited that you'd found something so rare and valuable! You wouldn't grab a water hose and start power blasting the mud and grime. Rather you'd make every effort to find an art expert to restore this treasure to its original condition. Jesus came to redeem us – to restore the masterpiece we were created to be. In our broken world it's hard to see past the mud, not only in the lives of others, but in our own as well.

Read Romans 15:7. Accept one another as I have accepted you... **BROKEN.** We need grace to accept, and not just in extreme situations... we need grace to accept within our marriages, our parent-child relationships, our community. People are hard to love. They've been wounded, I've been wounded and that combo can be brutal. Imagine treating one another as God's masterpiece waiting to be revealed and allowing God's grace to not only grow in others' lives but in our own. What could that do within our homes? Workplace? School? Community? What would this type of grace and acceptance look like within your closest relationships? With co-workers? Other students? Teachers? What would it look like in how you deal with those people in your life that are hard to love? Call or text three people close to you just to tell them you love them.

Day 5

Read John 15:12-13. How do we find true community, authentic vulnerability, and the kind of love that values one another like that?... Do we look at community and our own need to belong without considering others? Dieta found hope within her brokenness. She found healing, community and now leads a group - not in order to satisfy her own needs, but to give community, to give hope and to help others find healing. At Jacob's Well, we "do life" together through small groups.

Possible Next Steps:

- * Move closer to authenticity with those closest to you. Friends, family, and your small group may not have shared the same experiences, but they've created a safe place to be real and share your brokenness.
- * Find others who have experienced what you're going (or have gone) through. Find a way to give/share the hope and encouragement you've been given.