



Lesson 4

Why do you want to help me?

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, you knew us as hurting ones because sin made a mess of our lives and of being with you forever. Because of your loving heart, you took action for us. You knew why you wanted to help us. In our study use your Word to lead us to see why we want to help those who come to us hurting. Bless us with a spirit of understanding and a desire to help. In your name we pray. Amen.

Introduction

If you are going to start eating healthy, you need to know why. If you are going to start managing your money better, you need to know why. If we as a congregation are going to help the hurting with hope, yes, we need to know why. Knowing *why* gives you a purpose. Knowing *why* lets you ask and answer difficult questions. Knowing *why* makes something important and worth doing. We've seen who the hurting are and what they are like. If one of them were to ask you, "Why do you want to help me," how would you answer? Let's see from Scripture what our answer can be.

Search the Scriptures

1. When Jesus removed himself visibly at his ascension, he gave his followers directions as to what they were to do as his Christian people. Read Matthew 28:18-20 and pick out what his followers were to do and then give a reason why each one is important to those who are hurting. Use the table below to record your answers. Take two minutes to complete this on your own. We'll hear samples.

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

What did Jesus tell his followers to do?

Why is this important to the hurting?

2. Jesus didn't distance himself from those in society who were seen as outcasts and misfits. He saw the hurting for who they were and what they needed. As you read Jesus' response to those who looked down upon the hurting in his day, use his response to give reasons why we want to help the hurting.

Mark 2:15-17

¹⁵ While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷ On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

3. Jesus' forgiveness that he brought was not just for "sinners" in general but was also for his own tormentors. As the sections of Scripture are read, try to determine how many ways Jesus was tormented and star * them. Circle which star you think would be the most difficult for you to forgive and be prepared to tell why.

Matthew 27:27-31

²⁷ Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. ²⁸ They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹ and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. ³⁰ They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. ³¹ After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

Acts 10:34,35

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵ but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right."

Galatians 3:26-28

²⁶ So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 18:1-5

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

a. How do you think these passages would look from the viewpoint of the hurting?
Write down what you think they would observe in these passages.

b. How would you finish this sentence?

"We want to help the hurting who need help, conveying to them that they are part of us here at our congregation, because _____."

5. Jesus notices what his people do when they put their faith into action. In Matthew 25, Jesus tells us about what will take place on the last day when he comes back as our king and judge. How do these Bible verses help us understand why we want to help those who are hurting?

Matthew 25:34-36,40

³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ ... ⁴⁰ “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”

Bringing It Home

6. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being poor and 10 being outstanding), how well does our congregation know why we are a congregation who helps the hurting? Take 30 seconds to write down your number and prepare a reason why you chose that number.

7. What are things we can do to get to be a “10” congregation that knows why we help the hurting with hope? On your own, name two things you think would help our congregation improve in this area. After you have your two, share them with a person next to or near you. We’ll hear a sampling.

8. After what we’ve seen in this lesson, what’s our *why*? What three reasons would you give if someone who is hurting would ask, “Why do you want to help me?”

9. Draw a picture that illustrates the main point of today’s lesson. We’ll see samples.

Living My Faith

We can be part of a problem, or we can be part of the solution. Our congregation needs to a group of believers who understands why we want to help the hurting with hope. From the suggestions named in question 7 that would help our congregation improve in this area, pick one of the suggestions and actively seek to be part of the solution at our congregation. What are you going to do to help?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, you have been with us today in our study through your Word. We heard your messages of care, love, and a desire to help those who are hurting because of sin. As we carry on our life of Christian service to you and others, bring to mind the reasons why we want to help those who are hurting. By your Spirit through the Word, instill in us a strong desire to live and bring your message of hope to those who so desperately need it. In your name we pray. Amen.