



# NEW HEIGHTS

## CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

*"Our Heart is People, Our Message is Jesus"*

### Small Group Discussion Questions

**Series: Glimpses of the Kingdom**

**Title: "Won't You Be My Neighbor?"**

#### **Icebreaker / Getting Started (10-15 minutes)**

1. What stood out to you most from the sermon—maybe a phrase, story, or idea (like the Mr. Rogers reference, the "three mile an hour God," or Jesus as the Good Samaritan)? Why did it hit you?
2. The sermon describes parables as glimpses of the kingdom that require "imaginative participation" and "squinting" to see, rather than simple morals. Have you ever had a Bible story (or even a non-Bible story) that confused or disrupted you at first but later revealed something deeper? Share briefly.

#### **Digging into the Scripture & Sermon (15-20 minutes)**

3. Read Luke 10:25-37 together as a group. The legal expert asks, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus responds with a story and flips it to, "Which one was a neighbor?" and "Go and do likewise." How does this shift—from defining neighbor passively to actively becoming one—change how we approach loving others? (Reference the sermon's point: "Neighbor is not an object to be defined, but a relationship to be entered into.")
4. Jesus deliberately makes a **Samaritan** the hero, someone the listeners would have viewed with deep prejudice (racially impure, religiously tainted, historical enemies). Why do you think Jesus chose this shocking twist? Who might be a "Samaritan" figure in our world today—someone we'd rather not imagine as the hero or helper?
5. The sermon highlights three barriers that keep us from loving people we'd rather not love: **prejudice** (labels, pain-hardened views, "us vs. them" moral judgments), **pace** (moving too fast to notice or help, like the seminary students experiment or Jesus walking slowly as a "three mile an hour God"), and **priorities** (not budgeting time/money/mercy, like the Samaritan's deliberate sacrifice of two days' wages). Which of these three feels most convicting or relatable to you right now, and why?

#### **Personal Application & Reflection (15-20 minutes)**

6. The sermon says the kingdom of God looks like "loving someone we'd rather not love." Where in your life do you see a person (or group) you'd "rather not love"? What label or shorthand might be fueling a lens of prejudice there? How might Jesus be inviting you to "squint" and see them differently?

7. Jesus is the ultimate Good Samaritan: He crossed the ultimate divide (heaven to earth), bound our wounds when we were enemies/sinners, and paid the full cost for our restoration. How does remembering that we were once "in the ditch" (treated as enemies but made neighbors) change how you view showing mercy to others? (Tie to Romans 5: while we were still sinners/enemies, Christ died for us.)
8. The sermon ends with: "Jesus wants to love your neighbor through you." It's not about mustering up our own mercy, but letting His mercy flow through us. Who is one person in your life this week that Jesus might want to love through you? (Think coworker, family member, neighbor, stranger, or someone from a "different side.")

**Prayer & Action Steps (10 minutes)**

9. In pairs (like the sermon suggested), ask each other: "How can I bless you this week?" Then pray a simple blessing over that need.
10. As a closing prayer, invite the group to ask the Holy Spirit: "Lord, what is one way I can be a neighbor to one person this week?" Share any promptings (e.g., a text, coffee, listening ear, small act of generosity). Commit to following through and checking in next time.