

Session 6

Go and Do Likewise (Luke 10)

Focus

To learn to become “neighbor” in a deeper sense, and to imagine and act on ways that we and our congregations can follow Jesus’ teaching to “go and do likewise” together with hungry and poor people.



Preparation

Review the suggestions and reminders for invitations, announcements and preparations given in previous sessions.

Consider inviting several participants from prior sessions who have been touched by the work done in the sessions thus far, and prepare for this final session with prayer and reflection together. Give thanks for what has happened in the hearts of participants and lift up both the issues that have been studied and the future possibilities that have been opened up for your local congregation.

Print copies of “Now What?” at www.hungernomore.org for participants.

Gather or make copies of denominational and ecumenical approaches materials that support systemic change and ways that congregation members can participate. Include materials about advocacy and community empowerment. A selection of appropriate materials from Bread for the World can be downloaded at www.bread.org or requested by calling 1-800-82-BREAD.

Watch for stories in the **national and local press** (or on news Web sites) in the days preceding the session. Make copies of some headlines and paste them on a poster board. Hang it over the table on which the materials are placed.

Welcome

Welcome the participants and briefly remind them of what has been done so far. Invite newcomers to feel welcome. There are still lots of places at the table. Set the stage for the session by suggesting that this meeting is really the first session of what can happen in the future, rather than the last session of the group’s study.

Opening Prayer

The leader (or a previously designated participant) begins the prayer:

(L) The grace of the God who is beckoning us into creation, into redemption and into transformation be with you all.

(All) And also with you.

Ask participants to turn to each other and wish each other grace, peace and courage.

(L) Let us pray together for the grace to hear the word of the God who is still speaking, still acting, still calling in the lives of those who are poor, oppressed and burdened:

(Reader 1): O God of the poor, you challenge us with the vision of a world of shared abundance and graced possibilities.

(All) Lord, have mercy.



(Reader 2): O God of the prisoner, you invite us to risk living in the glorious freedom as the children of God.

(All) Christ, have mercy.

(Reader 3) O God of the brokenhearted, you empower us to heal and be healed by walking with those whom you love and for whom you gave your only begotten.

(All) Lord, have mercy.

(L) Lead us, now, O God of hopefulness, to see your people who suffer, to hear your word, that summons us to love your world. We ask this in the name of your beloved, Jesus Christ, now and always with you and your Holy Spirit. **(All)** Amen.

God's Story

After making sure that all have or can share a Bible, distribute the handout titled “Go and Do Likewise.”

Next, give the following information about the scripture reading (Luke 10:25-30, 36 and 37) in these words or your own:

Jesus often taught in parables. This form of story is designed to challenge the assumptions of the listener and to explode the ways in which the listener has become accustomed to thinking about the world, both the way things are and the way things ought to be. The parable of the “Good Samaritan” mixes experiences and characters which would have been familiar to those who first heard it with some radical possibilities on which to build a new understanding of what must be done to “inherit eternal life.”



Then read Luke 10:25-37 in the handout.

Ask the group to reflect for a few moments and then name the verbs or actions that stand out in the parable itself (vs. 30-36). Print them on newsprint. Go back over the reading and see what the group might have missed. You will probably find two main sorts of categories here – the first being more “negative” and the second being more “positive.” If possible, put them in columns as the group suggests them.

fell	moved with pity
stripped	went to him
beat	bandaged wounds
went away	poured oil
left him for dead	put him on his own animal
passed by	brought him to an inn
passed on the other side	took care of him
	come back and repay

And so on, depending on the translation.

Ask the group to identify what characteristics the verbs in each column share in common with the other verbs in that column. Then reflect on what the common characteristics suggest about the way in which we go about living the Christian life in the world.

Some of the possibilities that might be teased out include those that relate to:

- Engaging directly – touching, pouring, caring

- Being pro-active – the Samaritan took action even though he did not have the religious responsibility of a priest or Levite
- Doing whatever it takes – as the situation, not our prior conceptions, discloses
- Committing for the long haul – we are not satisfied with the quick fix
- Willing to get out of our comfort zone – if we stay in our church/family/neighborhood fixed way of doing things, we might not ever see or hear the neighbor in need.

Ask: “What does the parable invite us to change in the light of our Christian calling?”

Finally, ask the group to look briefly at the **two passages** that are placed before and after this story – how the disciples are sent out and return from mission and the story of Martha and Mary. Invite the group to read the whole chapter at home and ask themselves what these two stories add to the understanding disclosed in the group discussion.

Success Stories

Ask individuals to read each of the stories out loud while others follow along in the handout. Then break into several groups, one per story, each taking one of the situations. Ask each group to appoint a note taker and then to discuss the following questions:

- In this story, how is success defined?
- What kinds of ministry do you find in the story?
- What is the underlying issue that is at the root of the personal situation that the story describes?
- What other things could be done to address the underlying issue?
- If you were the injured person in the story, what would you be asking this group to do? What actions would you ask us to undertake, and why?



Bring the group back together. Have the note takers share the conclusions. Then take a look at the selection of materials you gathered. How do they open up ways of addressing the concerns and conclusions of the discussion?

Our Story

Say the following, or put it in your own words, as a way to bring the session and the series to a conclusion:

“Our Story” for the final session of this group study is yet to be written. In each of the previous sessions it has always flowed from the interaction of three stories – the stories of Scripture, the stories of those who are hungry and poor, the facts that have many faces, and the stories that participants bring from their own lives. What will it take to write today’s version of “our story?” Can we begin to outline it by thinking about what we have heard, prayed about and shared in these weeks; by looking at the approaches our church is calling us to be and do; and by looking at what is happening in the world today? Let’s try.

Hand out the page headed “Now What?” at www.hungernomore.org. Ask the group to discuss what they can do as individuals and as a group to help end hunger at home and abroad.

Reflection and Closing Prayer

Ask the group to **be quiet** and centered in God for the closing reflection and prayer. Begin with the following quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer and then allow a few moments of silence:

The way of Jesus Christ, and therefore the way of all Christian thinking, leads not from the world to God but from God to the world. – *Ethics*, p. 351

(L) Let us pray together to the God who is always before us, and ask for the grace and courage to follow faithfully:

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, in the face of hungry, poor and powerless people who are summoning us to walk with them all the way to your reign.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, along the highways of this land, where your homeless ones look for shelter.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, in the corridors of power, where voices can be raised, hearts changed and healing policies begun.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord, in the lives that are broken and lost in war, in violence, in needless suffering, in hunger and in hopelessness.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) You are before us, O Lord. You are freeing us from what holds us back and you are calling us to respond.

(All) God, you are our God. We are seeking you.

(L) Together, let us pray:

God of our journeys, God of our dreams, you so loved the world that you gave your only son, the child you loved, and still you hold this world before us to summon us, to challenge us, to enfold us with its longing. Give us grace as we need it to hear, to see, to love and to act, and always to “go and do likewise.” We ask this together in the name of the One whose name we claim, and by which we are claimed. Amen.

