

Core Values: An Inclusive Community

Aim

To consider how the church is called to be like Jesus in his welcoming attitude to everyone, and to find practical ways in which we can follow his example.

You will need

Bibles, paper & pen,

Starter: read Luke 10:25-37

- Make a note of the character you most identify yourself with?
- When the same question was asked in a Favela in Brazil, all identified with the man who was beaten up. Why might that be? Is this different from your answers? Does your reading of the story change if you see it through different eyes?
- Make a note of the 'respectable' or 'insiders' in the story.

Can you identify the 'insiders' or 'outsiders' in our community?

- Are there any people you would find difficult to welcome into our church?

Prayer

In this study, we are looking at the call to follow Jesus in being an inclusive community, let's pray that we will be honest in facing our resistances, and find God's grace to overcome the barriers we erect.

Jesus and his community

Mark 2:13-17

- The religious leaders of the day were wary of contact with 'sinners' in case their faith and purity became contaminated. Can you think of any similar attitudes amongst religious people today?
- Whom do we view as dangerous or a threat to our faith and purity'?
- In practice, what values and attitudes about people tend to shape our decision- making as Christians?

Practical exercise

Tearfund has recently been focusing on people living with HIV/AIDS, as does BMS World Mission in their latest campaign. Are these signs that 'outsiders' are becoming more accepted.

- Make a note of ideas of how we could include the world community into our local life.

Closing prayers

1 Peter 2:10

'Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God'

- Pray that our community will be able to make the necessary adjustments to be truly welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all.