

Study Guide

But this is not always an easy or comfortable path. It challenges us personally and challenges our culture. The expert in the law wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”

This “Engage” series will have its challenges, so Martin has highlighted this with the subtitle “**The Danger of the Jericho Road.**” He does so with a wry smile to the Macaulay clan motto: *Dulce Periculum* – Danger is Sweet.



As you go into the studies can we encourage you about several things?

- ◆ **Pray as you begin**, expecting God to speak to you through the passage and through the other members of the group.
- ◆ Our model of group bible study is “**mutual discovery together**”. The leader isn’t the teacher - the Word of God is the teacher, and we all discover things together. Leaders: Please ask the questions, and then let others speak!
- ◆ Some questions are **Observation** (*what does the Bible say*) or **Explanation** (*what does it mean*), and we need those things, but make sure each week you get on to **Application questions** (*how the Bible applies to our lives today*). Make it personal!
- ◆ We have included a **memory verse** related to part of the vision statement for each week and encourage you to learn it and even test each other the following week.
- ◆ There are also **practical challenges**, or **spiritual practices**, you might try. Please don’t make these rules we must follow. We don’t want to be Pharisees. But we offer them as training exercises for serious disciples that can put us in a place where God can do what we cannot. They also help us engage with the vision and tackle the danger of the Jericho Road.

God Bless you all,

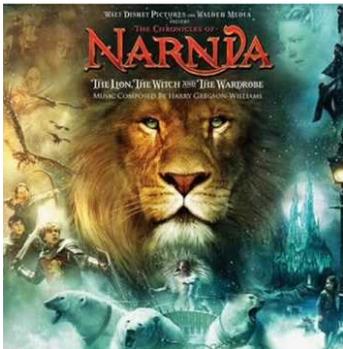
Martin Macaulay, Sebastian Murrhly and Joy Davis.
February 2016

Engage — The Danger of the Jericho Road

Week 1 : Engaging with God

We will read **Luke 10:25-37** each week. As you read/hear it being read, take notice of what jumps out at you. It may be an action, it may be a question, it may be something about the setting or something someone said. It can be profound or very simple. Ponder on that thing for a moment or two, and if you are in a group share with others what stood out to you.

1. What question did the expert in the law ask Jesus? What different things could have motivated him to ask it?
2. How did the lawyer answer when Jesus turned the question back to him?
3. v27 forms part of the *Shema*, which is a daily morning and evening prayer said in Judaism. Read it in context in **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**. What ways have you found to remember God's love and goodness every day and to teach your children and remind yourself to respond by loving God and following his ways?
4. What things do you do that help you feel closer to God and grow your love for God?
5. How do you think the actions of the priest and the Levite affected their love for God? What about the Samaritan?
6. Why was it dangerous to go down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho?
7. How might it be "dangerous" to be close to God?



In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, CS Lewis has Lucy ask nervously before meeting Aslan the Lion, if he is safe.

'Safe?' said Mr. Beaver. 'Don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you.'

The **words of our vision** that relate to **engaging with God** are:

We will be a thriving church, responding to God's grace and passionately living out our faith, wherever we live, work and play.

8. Discuss ways you respond to God's grace (for example, thank you prayers). Pray for any challenges you or others in your group are facing in passionately living out your faith, wherever you live, work or play.

A VERSE TO REMEMBER

Abide in me as I abide in you.

Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

John 15:4

DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGES TO HELP US ENGAGE WITH GOD:

- ◆ **Daily devotional reading** with a prayer morning and night. Have a suitable resource for doing this with your children (or grandchildren when they visit).
- ◆ Give yourself a "**passion and risk assessment**" by asking, "How passionate am I about my relationship with God, and what risks am I taking to live out my faith and express my love for God?"
- ◆ What **physical actions** could you try that might refresh your daily engagement with God?

Some examples:

- ◇ Lighting a candle morning and evening to remember Jesus is the light of the world who banished the darkness from your life, and now calls us light of the world.
- ◇ Kneeling, or lying stretched out face down on the floor to pray.
- ◇ Raising your hands in praise and prayer.
- ◇ Going to a hilltop or lookout to pray.
- ◇ Singing or playing a worship song that expresses your love to your Lord.

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Week 2: Engaging with One Another

Read **Luke 10:25-37** again. As you read/hear it being read, take notice of what jumps out at you. It may be an action, it may be a question, it may be something about the setting or something someone said. It can be profound or very simple. Ponder on that thing for a moment or two, and if you are in a group share with others what stood out to you.

The word **‘engage’** is an active word. It means to participate in. When we are engaged with others, we participate and become involved in their lives. Have you ever had that feeling at church where you are sitting beside someone you recognise but have no idea what their name is? This is fairly common at Sunday worship services these days. But I wonder whether it’s healthy.

1. Before the expert in the law asks Jesus his question (Luke 10:25), what was Jesus doing? He spent a lot of time with his disciples. Why do you think it was important to him? What do you think they spent their time talking about?
2. How did the Samaritan help the man who was beaten? What can we learn from his actions?
3. Having other Christians in our lives can be a real blessing. Name a time when you were blessed by the actions or words of someone else in the family of God.
4. How did the priest and the Levite respond to their fellow Jew’s plight? What was the danger of stopping? What are the dangers for you engaging with others in the family of God?
5. Have you been let down or hurt by others in the church? Pause and pray about it. If you feel comfortable ask others to pray with you.
6. **Read Galatians 6:1-10.** There is serious conflict within the Galatian church. So Paul writes reminding them of what life as a Christian should look like. Remember, for Paul, engaging in Christian community wasn’t something that happened once a week at their place of worship. It was a way of life where they constantly interacted with each other. In Galatians 6:1-10, what are some ways listed that can help us to engage positively in each other’s lives? What are other things we should bear in mind as we engage with one another?

7. Why do you think it's important that Christians engage regularly with one another?
8. What are ways that you can engage with other Christians outside of Sunday worship?

"If we are connected to Christ, we are connected to the body of Christ"

The words of our vision that relate to engaging with others
flow from our engagement with God:

*We will be a thriving church, responding to God's grace
and passionately living out our faith,
wherever we live, work and play. Together...*

A VERSE TO REMEMBER

*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people,
especially to those who belong to the family of believers.*

Galatians 6:10

DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGES TO HELP US ENGAGE WITH ONE ANOTHER:

- ◆ If you aren't part of a small group, then join one. If you are part of a small group, then invite someone else to join your group.
- ◆ Invite someone for a cuppa so you can hear about their life.
- ◆ Is there someone in the church who has a need? Think of a creative and tactful way to help them with their need.
- ◆ At Sunday worship, be brave and make a point of talking to someone you haven't talked to before. Invite them to have lunch with you.

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Week 3: Engaging with our Communities

Read **Luke 10:25-37** again. As you read/hear it being read, take notice of what jumps out at you. It may be an action, it may be a question, it may be something about the setting or something someone said. It can be profound or very simple. Ponder on that thing for a moment or two, and if you are in a group share with others what stood out to you.

The road to Jericho was dangerous and risky, steep and rugged, with robbers lurking. Community engagement can also be a risk. We often have to move outside of our comfort zone into new, sometimes unfamiliar and challenging territory. There can be unexpected twists and turns.

1. Why do you think the Lawyer asked “Who is my neighbour”?
2. How did Jesus define "neighbour" through this parable? Who are your “neighbours”?
3. Why was it a surprise that a Samaritan helped the man who was robbed and beaten?
4. What did the Samaritan have to do and overcome in order to help the man? (Look at the verbs or action words in v33.)
5. What are the hurdles such as race, religion, or respectability that you need to overcome if you are going to engage your community more?
6. These bible verses began with the great commandment. Read again what came before “Love your neighbour as yourself.”
7. How does our relationship with God and with other Christians help us engage our communities?

The words of our vision that relate to engaging with our community flow from our engagement with God and with other Christians:
Together we will work alongside others to develop thriving communities where people feel connected, known, loved and valued.

8. What did it cost the Samaritan to help the man? What might it cost you to work alongside others to develop thriving communities?

A VERSE TO REMEMBER

*Jesus says "Here is my command:
love each other just as I have loved you."*

John 15:12

DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGES TO HELP US

ENGAGE WITH OUR COMMUNITIES

(These are some simple ideas from which to choose some first steps.)

- ◆ Welcome and talk with the new person in your class, at work, or in the clubs you go to. You can practice this by welcoming people you don't know at church.
- ◆ Join a community group/service club/recreational group.
- ◆ When someone tells you they have an upcoming job interview, a test, or a doctor's appointment, mark it on your calendar. Follow up on the big day with a note of encouragement to let them know you are praying for them, or ask them how it went afterward.
- ◆ Mosgiel is growing fast. If you see someone moving in, bring them dinner, baking, or basic supplies they might need before they unpack, like paper towels, toilet paper, and hand soap.
- ◆ Ask your neighbour to be their friend on Facebook. This is a great way to find common ground and things to talk about the next time you see them.
- ◆ Practice random acts of kindness. Take your neighbour's wheelie bin out, or put it away. Mow their lawn "just because."
- ◆ Use your kids as an ice breaker. Invite parents to bring their kids over to play with yours and get to know their Mum and Dad over a cuppa
- ◆ Get outside the walls of your house. You'll meet neighbours as you walk the dog, take walks, work in your garden, or around the town. Be intentional about saying hello and getting to know them.
- ◆ If you are in one of the new subdivisions, organize a neighbourhood get-together so that your neighbours can meet each other.
- ◆ Keep up-to-date with the plans for helping refugees settle into Dunedin. Look for opportunities to help.

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Week 4: Engaging with the Vision

Read **Luke 10:25-37** for a final time. As you read/hear it being read, take notice of what jumps out at you. It may be an action, it may be a question, it may be something about the setting or something someone said. It can be profound or very simple. Ponder on that thing for a moment or two, and if you are in a group share with others what stood out to you.

1. At the conclusion of the parable, not being able to bring himself to speak the name “Samaritan”, how does the lawyer describe the man who was a neighbour to the one who was robbed and beaten?
2. What did Jesus then tell the lawyer to do?
3. Sadly, sometimes the lesson of this parable is reduced to “make sure you help someone who has broken down on the side of the road.” Having studied this parable for four weeks, how would you describe the bigger picture lesson of this parable about the kind of life Jesus calls us to lead?

The conversation which began talking about loving God and loving your neighbour, ended with the challenging twist in the tale that it was the example of the hated and despised Samaritan which Jesus told him to imitate, not that of the respectable, religious Jewish priest or the Levite.

4. Do you think God can work through people who aren't part of the Christian Church? Why or why not? Are there examples in the Bible of this?
5. How do you feel about working alongside others (who may or may not be Christians) to develop thriving communities...? What are the dangers of this?
6. What are some of the challenges of working as a Christian in a world that doesn't acknowledge Christ?

DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGES TO HELP US ENGAGE WITH OUR VISION:

- ◆ Pray big picture prayers for yourself and for others.
For example, base a prayer on:

Colossians 1:9-14 *⁹For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

- ◆ Instead of asking what kind of mission God has for *me*, ask what kind of *me* God wants for *his* mission.
 - ◇ What does God want to change?
 - ◇ Invite him by his Holy Spirit to shape your behaviour and your character.
- ◆ Instead of asking, "Where does God fit into the story of my life?" ask, "Where does my life fit into this great story of God's mission?"
- ◆ Ask God to show you what is on His heart for your home, your street, your school or workplace. Pray for God's will to be done there.



Engage - The Danger of the Jericho Road Series

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| Sunday 14 th February | – Engaging with God |
| Sunday 21 st February | – Engaging with Others |
| Sunday 28 th February | – Engaging with our Communities |
| Sunday 6 th March | – Engaging with our Vision—One Service at ET |

ONE SERVICE— 6 March 2016—11.30am

Bring and Share Lunch

East Taieri Church—12a Cemetery Road, Mosgiel

One People, One Body, One Spirit, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism,
One God and Father of all...

Once a year we gather **all East Taieri Church congregations** together.
This year we will start with a short service at 11.30am, then joined together with a
bring and share lunch at 12 noon.

Please note: There will **not** be a service at FUEL, Coast Community Church,
2pm or EPIC that day.

*We will be a thriving church, responding to God's grace
and passionately living out our faith,
wherever we live, work and play.
Together we will work alongside others
to develop thriving communities
where people feel connected, known, loved and valued.*



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