

Southwest Life Groups

A Place to Belong...A Place to Transform

Focus: To explore the accepting environment Christ offers, while comparing it to the critical nature of the Pharisees and asking ourselves which we create and why.

Text: Mark 2:23-3:6

Introduction: Think back through your week... about all the interactions you have had with people. There were some interactions where you walked away laughing. There were some that you walked away feeling discouraged. There were others that left you feeling angry, happy, or blessed. The fact of the matter is, when we leave another human being, we leave them with something. Start tonight by telling stories of someone in our church that leaves you feeling blessed.

- What does it feel like to be around that kind of person?
- What does it feel like to be around someone who is critical?
*How do you deal with someone who is supposed to be a Jesus follower and yet leaves you feeling that way?

Dig: In this text we have the disciples hearing two different perspectives on the Kingdom that God is desiring to offer his people. One is represented by Christ and the other by the Pharisees. Have the group listen for both perspectives as the text is read.

- What were the Pharisees about? Why? (Dig into who the Pharisees were and what they wanted...Matt15:1ff, 16:5ff, 23:2ff, Mk 7:1ff, Lk 18:9ff)
- What did that create in their followers?
- Why did they dislike Christ so much
- What about Jesus...what was He about here?
- What was his response in other situations such as with tax collectors, sinners, people who chose not to follow him?
- What did that create in his followers?

Application: Religious people are sometimes seen as critical, judgmental, and arrogant. Jesus was accepting and forgiving at every turn.

- So when people leave your presence, how do they feel?
- Are there people you don't accept that Jesus did and would?
- Is our life group more accepting of people that we disagree with or are we more critical?
- Who do you need to talk to this week that maybe you haven't given Christ's love and forgiveness to?

Prayer: Tonight I want to suggest you break into smaller groups and pray your heart, asking God to show you where He wants you to be more accepting.

