

At The Movies
Radio
Clay Weed

TALK IT OVER

Key Scripture:

Galatians 6:7-10 (NLT)

7 Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. 8 Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature.

But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. 9 So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. 10 Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.

1 Samuel 16:7 (NLT)

7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The LORD doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Psalms 139:13-14 (NLT)

*13 You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body
and knit me together in my mother's womb.*

14 Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!

Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

Mark 12:30-31 (NLT)

30 And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' 31 The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these."

Luke 10:29-37 (NLT)

Start **talking**. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What are your top 2 or 3 goals for our small group this semester? How do you think we can best support each other in achieving those?

Start **sharing**. These questions are to help get your group thinking and to create openness.

- Reflect on the movie clip where Coach Jones rescues Radio from the team's mistreatment. Was there a time when you stepped in to defend or help someone in need? How did it make you feel, and what was the outcome?
- **Read Galatians 6:7-10.** What's Paul's message here? How have you witnessed this principle in action in your life or the lives of others? Do you think this more often results in positive or negative consequences based on someone's actions?
- **Read 1 Samuel 16:7.** What was the context of this verse? Share a story from your life where you or someone you know misjudged someone based on their outward appearance, only to realize later that you were wrong.
- Discuss the scene where Coach Jones invites Radio into his life, provides him with food, and comforts him. How can we practice hospitality and care for those in need in our own community or church?
- **Read Psalm 139:13-14.** Share your thoughts on the idea that we are all fearfully and wonderfully made by God. How can we better appreciate the uniqueness in each person we encounter?
- One key lesson from the movie and Clay's message is treating others as we would want to be treated. Are there specific actions or changes you feel inspired to make in your interactions with others after hearing this message? (Ref **Mark 12:30-31** and **Luke 10:29-37**)

Start **doing**. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Write down your goals for your participation in this Small Group for this semester. And include a practice or discipline that will best help you to achieve those goals.

Start **praying**. Be bold and pray with power.

- Pray that you and each member of your Small Group is receptive and open-hearted to the Holy Spirit, that all of you are able to grow in the Spirit, taking your next steps alongside each other.

Question: "Where/how do you draw the line between helping someone and allowing someone to take advantage of you?"

Answer: Luke 6:30, 35-36 tells us to "give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back." "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." These verses and many others in the Bible teach us that Christians are to be loving, merciful, and self-sacrificing. As we see the needs of people all around us, our hearts should be full of compassion just as our Heavenly Father has compassion towards all people. "The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made" (Psalm 145:9).

It is right to have a heart that would continually give to others, and it pleases God to see this wonderful characteristic in our lives. However, in this area of giving and helping, the Bible also teaches that we must have wise discernment (Matthew 10:16). God gives us certain standards that we must take into account when it comes to giving our time and money to others. When the Bible tells us we are to help others, the purpose is never for us to do this to the point where it becomes detrimental. It's good to do what we're able to do, but 2 Thessalonians 3:10 also reminds us, "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." There are people who want to live an irresponsible lifestyle with absolutely no accountability. So there must be limits; we will help someone with a need, but if we see that it's become a chronic life pattern, it's wrong for us to continue to encourage that. It's very harmful to others to contribute to their indolence, laziness, and lack of effort. The old saying "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day, teach him to fish and he eats for a lifetime" is very true. As long as we see that someone is sincerely making an effort, we should be there to support him in whatever way God leads.

Often, a much more effective way to help others is to come alongside them to give biblical counsel, principles, and encouragement. If they are willing to listen and try, they should be able, through the power of the Holy Spirit within them, to reverse this pattern of dependency on others. This begins, of course, with a clear presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, without whose empowerment, lifestyle changes of this magnitude are not possible.

We are also to take into consideration what the Bible tells us about being good stewards. As we put our trust in God and walk with Him, He promises to supply our needs (Philippians 4:19). What the Lord provides for us, we must use wisely. We are to give back to the Lord a portion of what He gives us; we are to provide for the needs of our families; and we are to pay our bills. How we spend our time is also involved in stewardship; a balance of worship, work, and family is important. These are all principal aspects of stewardship and cannot be neglected, so they must be considered in the decision of how and what we can do in helping others. If, by helping someone else financially, we are unable to take care of our own debts and responsibilities, then we are not doing right in our efforts to help.

There are many ways people can take advantage of others. It's important that we make this a matter of prayer, asking the Lord to show us what He wants us to do. He will give us wisdom to recognize genuine need and discern between an opportunity and a distraction (James 1:5). Sometimes, people are so beaten down by life's trials and failures that they need someone who is willing to be a long-term friend to them. This can be a trying relationship, but it can also be a very rewarding one. Local churches can be a tremendous help to those with a burden for those in need. However, trying to help someone who is just not willing to take any steps towards a solution in the matter may be a hopeless cause. Again, praying for God's wisdom and exercising the discernment He gives are crucial in these situations.