



Church is a movement that includes

By Dave Parr

CHAPTER ONE.

An inclusive movement. Luke 10

This episode will help you **engage, reflect and respond** to Church is. We encourage you to explore each episode with friends - if you do, let us know! We'd love to hear about it and your thoughts and ideas.

Each episode has a companion video and each episode title mirrors one of its key themes. Thanks for downloading.

Companion video: churchis.co.uk/daveparr

Chapter: ONE of FOUR



W W W . C H U R C H . C O . U K



An inclusive movement

Luke 10 (NIV)

The Parable of the Good Samaritan



²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

²⁷ He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’[a]; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’[b]”

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii[c] and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Everyone is in!

Jesus is clear, to understand what it means to be truly human there's a simple path; love God and love your neighbour as you love yourself. When confronted by a teacher of the law however, Jesus goes further and explains just how expansive this mandate really is. To Jesus, neighbours are not simply those people who are easy to include and straightforward to walk alongside. His definition of neighbour stretches much further and even includes those people who might be considered our enemies.

If this is true, we've all got a long way to go.

We're called to love and include **all** our neighbours – those close to us, those we share bonds with, those we agree with, those with whom we don't see eye-to-eye, and, by Jesus' definition, even those who we consider our enemies.

How often can I say I have consciously sought to push the boundaries of inclusion, to go further than my easy circle of friendships into the space that Jesus calls me to inhabit? It's a real challenge and one that takes daily and determined effort.

So, for me, Church has to be a place where inclusion is a reality, not simply a theological debate topic.

All too often we make the inclusion of others a theoretical conversation. However, real inclusion doesn't live in the world of theory; it's real and it's difficult to achieve. In fact, the only way for a community to become truly inclusive is for individuals to choose to put Jesus' mandate into practice, day by day, hour by hour. We all have a choice (myself included), to remain within our comfort zones or to take conscious, proactive and courageous decisions to include and love extravagantly.

Please continue to the next page for the discussion questions

Questions:

Following

- Do you feel that you push the boundaries of inclusion at the moment? If not, who could you seek to include?
- Who do you struggle to include and what can you do about that?

Church

- How could the Church be more inclusive? Who are the groups that are currently excluded, marginalised or overlooked, consciously or unconsciously?
- What practical steps could your church take to ensure that more people feel included and accepted?

Action

- How do you think your local church and the national/global church should respond to these issues?