

## Messy People “Loving with Boundaries”

1. Have you ever had someone take advantage of your kindness or felt trapped in an unhealthy situation because you thought it would be “un-christian” to walk away? What verses in the Bible make it hard to say “no” to people who are asking more from you than you feel comfortable giving? (2 Cor. 9:7, Acts 20:35, etc.)
2. Read Luke 5:15-16. Who was seeking Jesus? What did they want from Him? Why did he withdraw away from them? What was Jesus prioritizing over the crowd’s request? Are there situations in your life where you are sacrificing what matters most to God in order to keep “the crowds” happy? In what ways can pleasing people be unloving towards God?
3. Mark 1:32-35. How many people were gathered at the door? How many did Jesus heal? Why didn’t he heal all of them? How did Jesus know when it was time to say “no” to the crowds and get alone with the Father?
4. Matthew 12:46-50 and Luke 8:19-21? Who wanted to see Jesus? Did he leave the crowd to go to them? Why do you think he said what he said? What was His point? How would you react if your mother interrupted Bible study asking to “speak with you right now, please?” Have you ever been in a situation where a family member was placing expectations and pressure on you and then making you feel guilty for not sharing their viewpoint? How can you lovingly say “no” to their requests?
5. Luke 23:8-9. Why was Herod excited to finally meet Jesus (v.8). How did Jesus respond to Herod? In what type of situations, do you think silence would be the most loving thing to do?
6. Luke 6:12-16. How many people did Jesus choose to be the closest to him while he walked on earth? Why didn’t he just let everyone who believed in him become his earthly “best friends?” Do you think Jesus enjoyed hanging out with his disciples? Do you think Jesus ever received anything from them? What kind of things?
7. Matthew 17:1-2. Why do you think Jesus only took 3 disciples with him to see his transfiguration? How do you think this made the other disciples feel? Is it ok to have “special” people that we share our lives with? How can we do this in a kind and loving way without hurting others unnecessarily?

Jesus lived his earthly life in a beautiful rhythm of intake and output, of filling up and then pouring out, of spending quiet time alone with God and then reaching out tirelessly to others, of resting and working. He accepted His earthly limitations of time and energy better than most of us do (and He is God!). Jesus never rushed anywhere, he just moved from place to place doing God’s work. Jesus always had pure motives for every “no” he said. He never said, “no” just because he was lazy or tired or fed up with people and yet He did at times say “no.” May we be challenged to be more like Jesus.