



These Digging Deeper questions can be used the week following the Sunday message. You can use these questions for personal growth and development, or as a guide for your family or Connect Group discussions.

Message Recap:

Read **Luke 10:27, Matthew 25:40**

An active love is loving the “least of these.” Jesus taught us that anyone who is in need and has no power are the “least of these.” These are people who are overlooked and this group especially includes children. Children are a vulnerable population and we are called to be extraordinary, to go out of our way, to pour the compassion of Christ into the lives of children. God is as our Father is an example of the words found in Ephesians 6:4 where fathers are instructed to nurture and nourish their children, not wound them or be angry with them. Children are to be raised up to allow them to reach their God-given potential.

Pray

Dear God, give us the wisdom to understand your instructions and the insight to recognize what changes we need to make to reach out and pour your compassion into the lives of children, our own and those around us. You are a gracious and encouraging father. Help us to be the same. Amen

Getting Started

- Occasionally the media or social media will highlight the act of a stranger in helping a person in need. Share a recent “act of kindness” story you have heard or read.
- We often seem to go through life oblivious of things around us. Tell about a time you were literally or figuratively asleep and failed to notice your surroundings.

Digging Deeper

1. Integral missions is active love and faith. In your own words, define active faith and what that looks like on a daily basis.
2. Read Mathew 25:31-46. Who are the “least of these” and why does Jesus identify himself with them? Who are the “least of these” in your path?
3. Why do we often miss seeing the “least of these”? What changes can we make to begin to notice the needs around us?
4. Statistics tell us churches are declining, less people are being reached and we are losing our children. How does that make you feel? What actions can be taken to counter this trend?
5. God’s children come in all ages and all are of infinite worth. Why is it important for us to really believe this?
6. Consider the uniqueness and beauty of each snowflake. Compare and contrast this piece of God’s creation to the life of a child.
7. If we are to nurture our children, how do we prevent passing on our own brokenness to children in our lives?

Living Jesus

The greenhouse is an environment for growth. We need to get there and grow, bringing the children in our lives with us! We are to pour the compassion of Christ into the lives into the children around us. This will require us to be intentional in encouraging and staying engaged. Get to know the hopes, dreams and fears of the children in your life. Look around. See the need. Take action. Include the least of these!!

What’s Your Story?

If staying engaged and being encouraging to the least of these requires intentional acts, share how you have done this in your life or explain what action you can take this coming week to begin to make this part of your daily routine.

>> **Go to SevernRunner.info and choose the Stories tile. Then follow the link provided to share your own story; we will even connect you with a writer to help you.**