

TALKING POINTS

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6. LEARN HOW TO CARE

MARK 6:30-44

(8:1-10)

1. In what areas of life does selfishness frequently surface in our western world? Think about the influence of the advertising media, a consumer oriented society, the emphasis on acquiring things: money, luxuries, etc.

What is its effect on society?

2. Why is selfishness fundamentally un-christian? Note the significance of 'selfish ambition' being included in the 'acts of the sinful nature' (Gal.5:19-21). What other characteristics in these verses are tinged with selfishness? A related word 'greed', figures in Col.3:5,6. What does Paul say that the Christian's attitude is to be?
3. Unselfishness is written right across Jesus' life. Go through the typical day with Jesus in Mark 1:21-39 to see how He unselfishly gave His time and energy. Mark 10:45 sums it up.

In what aspects of life is Jesus' attitude a guide for us? Note situations at work, at home and in church life where unselfishness is needed.

4. Draw up a list of people in your church or among your contacts who need help. Identify their needs and plan practical ways of meeting them.
5. Often in a church the task of 'caring' falls on just a few shoulders. Note who these people are and see if there are ways in which their caring roles might be shared.

Often pastors, elders and deacons find themselves faced with more needs than they can readily cope with - and many of their counselling roles are confidential, and can't be shared. Are there tasks that they could delegate? Take steps to find out.

What measures can be taken to ensure that they get the breaks and rest that they need?

6. Information: seminars and courses on various aspects of caring are run by Care and Counsel, St. Mary Magdalene Church, Holloway Road, London N7 8LT. Tel. 01 609 4545. Brochures are available on request.