



BRAVE IN THE NEW WORLD

Week 3 | Tolerance vs. Love

Start

In so many difficult and complex conversations, people talk past one another because they are using the same word in a very different way. "Tolerance" is one of those words. Start off by agreeing upon a definition of tolerance for your group will use in this discussion. Then, work together to define "love" as Scripture describes it.

Study

Ask someone in the group to read John 7:53-8:11.

What strikes you in this passage? What do you notice about Jesus and how he responds to the situation? What do you notice about the woman? What about the scribes and the Pharisees?

Tolerance is referenced so often in our culture it can be hard to remember what it actually means anymore. There are some forms of tolerance that are really good and important for society to function: choosing to make space for people that are different than you and seeking to love them well and understand their

perspective is a great thing! What positive experiences have you had with this kind of tolerance?

How the word tolerance is usually used, however, is somewhere along the lines of , "As long as it doesn't hurt anybody, anything is free game." What actually hurts people? Who gets to define that and how? Are actions really that isolated from others that there would be no consequences?

According to the definitions you came up with earlier, how are tolerance and love different? Which do you see Jesus expressing in today's passage? What does this tell you about what Jesus values? What does this tell you about what Jesus doesn't tolerate?

There isn't really a question of whether the woman was right or wrong to do what she did. Jesus maintains a moral standard, and upholds her to that, but he still offers a chance for redemption and growth. The pharisees wanted the woman's sin to be the end of her life, but Jesus wanted it to be the beginning of her life. What does it look like to love without condemnation? How do we seek restoration and redemption for people and make that our focus?

Soak

Actively look for ways to love those around you this week, even if they are different for you. If it helps, brainstorm a list of people you typically clash with because of differences and pray for God to help you see ways to respond to them in love.