

# The Liberating Love of Jesus

## Suggested prayer format (15-20 minutes)

1. access the 'Hope' Resource (<http://www.kildareministries.org.au/hope2.html>) via personal device, or if possible on the screen at the meeting
2. turn to recommended slide
3. either one person read for group, or group read in silence as preferred
4. following some quiet reflection time, encourage group members to respond to reflection material – questions provided to assist
5. final prayer to close

Refer to Slide 5 of the Hope Resource:

**HOPE IN THE TIME OF JESUS**

**Mt 22:36-40**  
“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

**Jeremiah 29:11-13**  
**Matthew 22:36-40**  
**Luke 4:18-19**  
**Luke 17:20-21**  
**Romans 8:24-25**  
**1 Cor 13:13**  
**Hebrews 6:19-20**

**TO LOVE AND SERVE OTHERS**

Community is the air which liberation breathes and the ground from which it realises its aspiration...

**COMMUNITY**

begin with the reading from Matthew 22:36-40

click on the box 'Community'



**D**uring the time of Jesus the vast majority of the population of Palestine was made up of rural and urban poor. Many peasants lived off the land owned by the wealthy elite, increasing their economic and social vulnerability. Many were driven into cities creating more poverty and disease. Many were left to work as day labourers on large estates where their risked exploitation, having broken all ties to their own land, kinship and family. Large numbers of people were left isolated and without any form of network of support.

The popularity of Jesus was in no small part due to his deep empathy with the most vulnerable and the everyday suffering of the ordinary person. Jesus constantly used parables to speak to these conditions of injustice and oppression, highlighting the plight of the most vulnerable and exposing the callousness of the powerful elite. Within this social construct the declaration of the coming Kingdom of God could be interpreted as a grand scheme of emancipation. Yet for Jesus, liberation was both more basic and more complex, drawing on fundamental human realities.

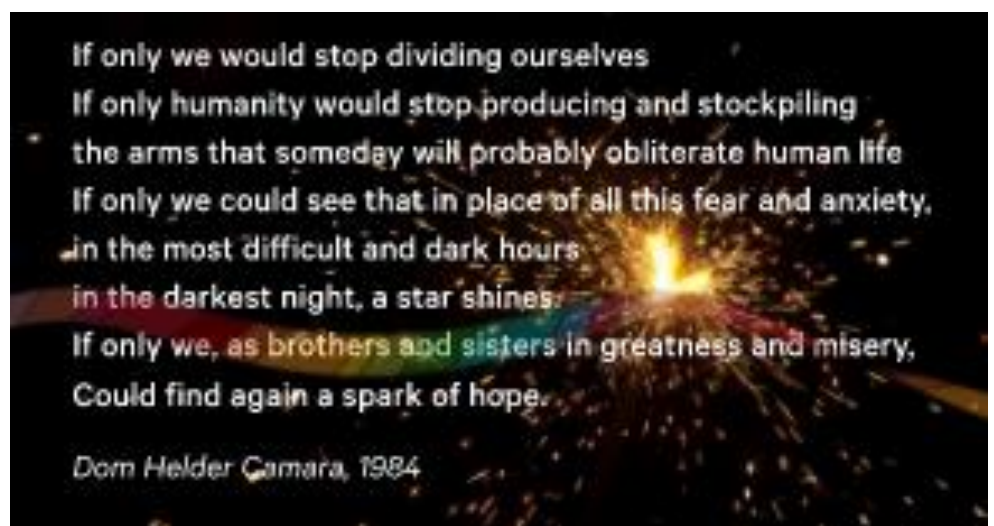
Jesus preached freedom as liberation from bondage, allowing the poorest of the poor to imagine a future beyond the shackles of their past. He enabled the possibility of hope through his mission to those imprisoned in isolation, by creating a new sense of community.

**“Community is the air which liberation breathes and the ground from which it realises its aspiration. People are brought out of the imprisonment of isolation into the freedom of healing relationships with one another. This is the Kingdom of God.”**

(Rev. Dr David Ranson, The Ministry of Governance)

***Some questions to guide reflection and conversation...***

- ❖ share experiences of ‘neighbourly love’ in your community...
- ❖ respond to the idea that through community people are brought out of the imprisonment of isolation... where do we see evidence of this within our own community?
- ❖ who are the isolated within our own community (ie school or community work)?
  - what are the difficulties in reaching them?
  - what can we do individually and collectively to breach the gap?



If only we would stop dividing ourselves  
If only humanity would stop producing and stockpiling  
the arms that someday will probably obliterate human life  
If only we could see that in place of all this fear and anxiety,  
in the most difficult and dark hours  
in the darkest night, a star shines  
If only we, as brothers and sisters in greatness and misery,  
Could find again a spark of hope.

Dom Helder Camara, 1984