

LEAN IN.

MAIN TRUTH

Jesus responded to the hurt, pain and dirt in others by leaning in.

This week's study flows specifically out of the message from Sunday morning. Please encourage those who did not hear the message live, to listen to it online at http://foothillsonline.org/files/audio/2009-08-09_sermon_audio.mp3.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 8:1-3 (Amplified Bible)

¹WHEN JESUS came down from the mountain, great throngs followed Him. ²And behold, a leper came up to Him and, prostrating himself, worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You are able to cleanse me by curing me." ³And He reached out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed by being cured." And instantly his leprosy was cured and cleansed.

REFLECT

- Why do we tend to lean away from difficult situations?
- How did Jesus lean in to the man in the passage?
- What are the situations in life that feel most overwhelming to you?
- How can (or does) that situation lead to a person?

LEANING INTO A PAINFUL SITUATION

In recent years, a horrendous human catastrophe has taken place in the Kivu region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), during which an estimated 3.5 to 5.5 million people were killed or died. Rebel insurgents systematically targeted women, who were frequently raped in front of their children and husbands and often sexually mutilated in an appalling manner. All too often, they contracted AIDS as a result.

A nurse in Bukavu, Beatrice Kabemba-Bapemacho, was so alarmed and moved by their plight that she and four other nurses created the Association of Women Nurses to assist women and children rape victims who are infected with HIV/AIDS. The association gives very small micro-credit loans (\$20) to women, on the condition they undergo an HIV test. If the test is positive, the women are then directed to an organization like Doctors Without Frontiers, which has the means of paying for their treatments. (The loans are of course given whatever the result of the test).

To start the association, the five women founders, all nurses, each gave \$20 (out of a monthly income of \$60 to \$100) to get a few women started. Since then, they have received extremely modest support from a few private individuals, but have no regular funding. However, they continue their activities. Some women in the micro-credit groups have already started returning to their villages.

<http://hopebuilding.pbworks.com/Five-Congo-nurses-create-organization-to-aid-Congo-women-raped-by-rebel-fighters>

REFLECT

- What did it cost this nurse to launch this program?
- Did this program solve the problem in the DRC?
- How does this program benefit individual women?

EXERCISE

Get a large sheet of paper (flip chart size) and write down each of the situations/issues that each person feels either overwhelmed by or connected to. Then draw a line from that situation to the name of a person that is in that situation. If there is no specific person, then write down a question that can help narrow the issue.

Spend some time in prayer together asking God to direct you to a person to whom you can be a blessing.

GOING DEEPER

Take time individually this week to write down the three levels of “leaning” that Jesus modeled. Ask God to lean you toward a person.

Lean in ... to the circumstances

Lean in ... to the questions

Lean in ... to a person