



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 7: Every Life Valued

Suggested Week of Use: January 18, 2025

Core Passage: Matthew 8:1-4, 14-17; 9:1-8

News Story Summary

While working as a police officer in Frederick, Maryland, Wade Milyard was sent to a homeless camp to deal with a domestic dispute. As he talked to the couple, he heard a voice that he believes came from God. The voice said, “Ask them about their laundry.” So, he did. He discovered that they were washing their clothes in a creek. With retirement on the horizon, Milyard didn’t want to stop serving, and this encounter sparked an idea: Fresh Step Laundry, a mobile laundry service for the homeless.

With his own funds and donations, Milyard outfitted a bus with washing machines and dryers. Now, he drives around to homeless camps to do laundry at no charge. One of his clients noted, “If you’re clean, you just feel better. You feel a little more proud of yourself.” Milyard, who has taken on what could be described as an unpleasant task, has discovered sour smells don’t compare to the sweet sense of purpose that comes from giving others a boost.

For more about this story, search “Milyard free laundry for homeless.”

Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, write the word “homeless” on the board. Ask: *What comes to your mind when you see that word?* Encourage adults to share honestly. Say: *For most of us, the homeless probably represent a darker side of society, a side we are not always comfortable talking about or dealing with. But they do have value in God’s eyes.* Share the story of Wade Milyard and his laundry service to the homeless in Maryland. Discuss how this kind of service could affirm the value of each human life. Say: *On this Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, Wade Milyard can serve as an example of how a simple task can make people feel valued. But, as we’ll see in our Scripture passage today, Jesus set the greatest example of valuing all human beings.*

Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, remind learners of Wade Milyard’s service to the homeless. Ask: *What other groups in our society are often seen as outcasts?* Record responses on the board. Encourage each adult to find a partner and assign one of the “outcast” groups mentioned to each pair. Direct them to brainstorm simple things your church can do to help these people feel valued. Encourage adults to spend time in prayer this week, talking with God about how they could be involved in these kinds of ministries.