



RISE Refugees: Video Session #4 A Welcoming Case Study

As you begin

How did your action step from last week go?

Read **Matthew 25:31-46**.

In this passage, called “The Sheep and the Goats,” Jesus described situations where people (the sheep) did things for the King. What were they?

Was it for the actual King? If not, who? Who would be considered the “strangers” during that day?

How might people care for the sick or visit those imprisoned during that time? Did they have hospitals? Prisons? Goodwill Thrift shops? Soup kitchens?

Watch the video

Time: 11:57

Trainer: James Litsey—The Welcome Project

Talk it over

The word translated “welcome” in Matthew 25: 35 is usually translated “gather,” as in gathering wheat into a barn (Matt 3:12) or a crowd gathering together (Mark 5:21).

What do you think Jesus is saying, then, regarding how he expects his people to react to strangers in their midst?

Is that different than the conventional thought about being welcomed in a country? How so?

Moving forward together

Take some time together to look up information on a computer or several smartphones about refugees in your area. Go through the following questions to learn more about your city and refugees or people from other cultures living near you.

1. Does your town have a refugee resettlement agency? If so, proceed to question 2. If not, skip to question 5.
2. Is your town's resettlement agency open to church involvement? If not, can you imagine how that might change?
3. How involved is your church in welcoming refugees? Are other local churches involved?
4. Are there already ways local churches are connecting with refugees? These connections might or might not directly involve the resettlement agency (e.g. a church may be coordinating with a local school to provide an after-school homework help program for refugee children).
5. Is there a population of refugees who were originally resettled in another U.S. city but have subsequently moved to your town? How might you find such information?
6. How would you rate the interest of your church leadership in welcoming: opposed to welcoming, not opposed to welcoming, favorable to welcoming, actively promoting welcoming?
7. How and with whom will you be praying regarding your church welcoming strangers?

Prayer points

We do ministry best when we pray best. We pray best together. You already know God's heart in this matter, generally. Now you need to discern his will for your particular situation. Who will meet with you regularly to pray about this? Don't spend time thinking about any subsequent steps until you're praying together.

"Don't forget to be kind to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it."

- Hebrews 13:2

Rise up for next week

Remember, The Welcome Project is only one ministry in one town. God might want a different sort of welcoming ministry in your town. You've already discussed the resources he's given you. Together imagine how he might put use your combined gifts and resources to welcome strangers in Jesus' name.

If you weren't able to answer all of the previous questions in your group discussion, try to find out more information during the week. Each person can take a question to dig further into or an organization to call.

Next steps

Check out the RISE website for further resources and inspiration —www.theriseproject.com.

Further questions or comments? Contact James Litsey, the trainer for this segment at james@theriseproject.com.

