



## Dancing To Jazz: All By Myself | May 16, 2018

### Discussion Guide

#### The Scoop

Sometimes the messages that come to us regarding our faith lead us to believe that faith is a solo act. But that's not actually what the Bible says.

#### Key Verses

**2 Corinthians 5:15 (NIV)**

*"And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."*

#### Discussion

A group of seminary students was asked to study the parable of the Good Samaritan. After studying, their task was to share it with a group of students on campus. Unknowingly, their professor had something up his sleeve. After telling them they were running late, he strategically placed someone who needed help between the classroom and the chapel where they were giving their message. The central theme of the story they were teaching was that we shouldn't pass by those in need, yet none of the students stopped to help on the way to give their message.

1. Put yourself in the students' shoes... Do you think you would have stopped to help if you were also in a hurry? It might be easy to hope we would have stopped, but try being really honest with yourself.
2. Why don't you think the students stopped to help the person in need? Have you ever blown by someone in need only to regret it later?

Unfortunately, many of us live out our faith in a similar way to those seminary students. We may know all the stories, but it can be easy to get so wrapped up in our own agendas that we forget to serve or be the hands and feet of Jesus in the lives of those around us. In the book *Blue Like Jazz*, Donald Miller argues that we should live out our faith similarly to the way we listen to jazz. The truth is, our faith isn't meant to be lived alone, it's supposed to be more of an art, something that we live within and that pours out of us.

3. Have you listened to jazz music? What are the elements of jazz that might be similar to our faith journey?
4. What do you think faith "lived within and pouring out of us" looks like in everyday life?

In 2 Corinthians 5:15, those who have surrendered their lives to Jesus are told that by doing so, we no longer live for ourselves, but instead for him who died to save us. The grand narrative of the Bible teaches us that our lives are not our own, and so instead of being hyper-focused on working to better ourselves, we should prioritize the needs of those around us instead.

5. Do you prioritize your own spiritual needs or the needs of others? What might God be trying to reveal to you about where your priorities lie?
6. What might be the benefit of living with a focus and intention to serve others? In what ways might we start to change or begin to look more like Jesus?

#### What's Next?

If we all take an honest look at our faith lives, each and every one of us could admit that we've fallen into this trap at some point. Even with billions of people on Earth, we convince ourselves that the details of our personal faith journey are the most important thing in our lives. It's not that it's not important to invest in our own faith journey, but when that is always the most important thing, we lose the ability to look and serve outward, and we are missing the point.

This week, as you try to figure out how to integrate faith and life in your daily life, look for opportunities to serve those around you, so that people you interact with can begin to know and understand a relationally loving God.