

## **Welcoming the Stranger Week 1 Notes: Where is it Written?**

### **Rubber Band Metaphor**

Nate Severson used a rubber band as a metaphor to illustrate the importance of being stretched by Scripture. The idea is that just as a rubber band is most useful when stretched, individuals are most useful when they allow Scripture to challenge and stretch them. Being stretched by Scripture helps us live into who God made them to be.

### **Biblical teachings on immigration and the importance of community and empathy.**

**\* \*\*Personal Experiences in Costa Rica\*\***

Jarrett Meek shared personal experiences of moving to Costa Rica, learning Spanish, and adapting to a new culture. They recount humorous and challenging moments, emphasizing the importance of community and friendship in overcoming cultural barriers.

### **Biblical Perspective on Immigration**

Jarrett discusses the biblical perspective on immigration, highlighting how immigrants are frequently mentioned alongside widows and orphans in the Old Testament. They emphasize the vulnerability of immigrants and the biblical call to show compassion and hospitality.

### **Greatest Commandment and Neighborly Love**

Jarrett explores the biblical commandment to love God and love one's neighbor, emphasizing that loving one's neighbor is a key expression of loving God. They discuss the importance of empathy and understanding in fulfilling this commandment.

### **\* \*\* Widows, Orphans and Immigrants in the Bible\* \*\***

Hebrew word for Immigrant “GER” appears 92 times in OT. GER -גֵר means...Foreigner, Stranger, Sojourner and Immigrant. Old Testament themes related to GER are Oppression prohibited, Mercy commanded, Share in Sabbath rest, and Rights and responsibilities. Jarrett’s point was the theme of immigrants is found throughout the entire Old Testament and is a major part of the Hebrew Story.

### **\* \*\*Loving Your Neighbor\*\***

The discussion emphasizes the importance of loving your neighbor as yourself, highlighting the need to empathize and put ourselves in the place of others' situations, especially those fleeing violence or living as outsiders. Jarrett stresses that this commandment (Matthew 22:36-40 and Galatians 5:14) is central to Christian teachings and should not be de-emphasized.

### **\* \*\*Who is My Neighbor?...The Parable of the Good Samaritan\*\***

The parable is used to illustrate the concept of loving one's neighbor, showing that compassion may involve risk and that religious or cultural biases should not prevent acts of kindness. The Samaritan, an outsider, is portrayed as the true neighbor for showing mercy.

### **\* \*\*Leviticus 19:33-34\*\***

The passage from Leviticus is discussed, emphasizing the command to treat foreigners as native-born and love them as oneself. It highlights the importance of empathy by recalling the Israelites' own history as foreigners in Egypt.

### **\* \*\*Poem: Immigration Tears\*\***

The poem reflects on the struggles of immigrants and the often-hypocritical attitudes of those in more privileged positions. It calls for compassion and understanding, urging Christians to align their actions with their faith.

### **\* \*\*Next Time\*\***

The course focuses on loving people from all places, with upcoming sessions on 'Heroes from All Places', the immigration system, and the immigrant experience.