

Russell Kelfer

The *Really* Good Samaritan

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Series: The Parables of Scripture



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The Really Good Samaritan

One of the really great dangers in Bible study is the danger of presumption. We tend to presume that, because we have heard a story or a principle or a passage many times before, that it is no longer of real value to us. I remember many years ago hearing a young man say, “I’ve read the Bible all the way through, what more is there to do?”

If the Bible were simply a book, such logic would have some merit. It is, however, not a book. It may be in book format, but it is *alive, and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword*. So alive is it, that it is able to discern the thoughts and intents of your heart. The thoughts and intents of your heart change from day to day. God has, therefore, placed inside of you, *your own personal interpreter*, the Holy Spirit. He takes exactly what your heart needs at the precise moment you are exposed to Scripture, and makes that passage applicable to your own individual need. That is why 500 people can hear the same passage, and there will be different kinds of conviction, different kinds of application, and different kinds of encouragement. The content won’t change, but your personal interpreter will apply the passage to you in a way that is specific to you.

For that reason, every time you hear or read a passage that is familiar, *you actually have a better chance of gaining new insights*, because the words are so familiar, you can focus more clearly on the work of the Spirit in you relative to that passage. All this to say that the parable we are studying in this lesson is so familiar that *Satan will try to say to you*, “I’ve heard that before, I can ignore it.” Try, instead, to say to God, “I’ve heard that before. I know the story. Now teach me something new that I can apply to my own life.” He will.

Note: Russell wrote each of these lessons in a manner that would enable him to clearly communicate them to his weekly class. The grammar or punctuation you encounter may not be technically perfect, but you will certainly “hear” his unique gift for making the message applicable to the common man in everyday situations.

It’s been said of him that he was really a writer who read his stuff. And that’s a very accurate statement!

May you be richly blessed as you “hear” as you read.

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Jesus had sent the seventy out and they had returned, rejoicing over their newly-experienced spiritual power. He cautioned them not to rejoice that they had such authority, but rather that their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life. It is so easy to revel in the experiences and forget the reason behind them. It is so easy to take the blessings God sends us and focus on the blessings, even using them as a springboard to showcase our own supposed spirituality. The world doesn't need to hear what God did for us as much as it needs to hear who God is. Let us seek God's daily wisdom to discern the difference. The disciples were overwhelmed with how spiritual they had become, and Jesus prayed for them and in front of them like this:

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:

For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.
(Luke 10:21-24)

Blessed were they indeed. And blessed are we, who have not only the work of God, but the Word of God to reveal the heart of God to the children of God that they may do the will of God. If the disciples were reveling in their power and wisdom, Jesus' prayer ought to have humbled them. He thanked the Father that He had chosen to reveal the things of the Spirit, not to the wise and prudent of the age, but to nobodies who knew nothing apart from divine grace. At that point, a lawyer challenged Him. I won't comment on that. The passage continues:

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?
(Luke 10:25)

It was a wonderful question, but it didn't come from a pure heart. This man didn't want to know how to be saved, he wanted to trap Jesus into saying something that could be

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used against Him in a trial or could be grounds for taking Him before the magistrates. So some things are not new, at all. It says “a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Him”. He was much like a reporter in a news conference, pretending to ask a seemingly pertinent question, but the question is only designed to elicit an answer that will make good press. You can relate to that in today’s world. It isn’t a new trick. Jesus didn’t mind. He rather used the lawyer’s trick question as a springboard to tell yet another story. That story is what is so familiar. It goes like this:

He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (Luke 10:26-37)

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“Who is my neighbor?” What a crafty question. Again, he wasn’t seeking information for application; he was like so many who attend Bible classes to enrich their intellect and to give them something new to debate or question. Jesus never backed down from a theological question, but His primary goal in answering was always to go back to matters of the heart. There are two basic matters of the heart. One is vertical and one is horizontal. One is internal and one is external. One pertains to our relationship with God, the other to how that relationship works itself out in our relationships with people. The thing Jesus wanted to get across, however, was that *the way we demonstrate the love of God in our lives is, in effect, the best way to measure the depth of our love for Him*. If we say to our neighbor when he or she is hungry and in need, “Go, be warmed and filled,” we have accomplished nothing but to satisfy our own religiosity. Until we make ourselves available and vulnerable to help them be warmed and filled, “Where dwelleth the love of God in us?” Indeed.

Jesus painted a backdrop for this story that was all too real to those who listened. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho, according to William Barclay, was “a notoriously dangerous road”. He shares these insights:

“Jerusalem is 2,300 feet above sea-level. The Dead Sea near where Jericho stood, is 1,300 feet below sea-level. So then, in little more than 20 miles, this road dropped 3,600 feet. It was a road of narrow, rocky defiles, and of sudden turnings which made it the happy hunting-ground of brigands. In the fifth century, Jerome tells us that it was still called, “The red, or Bloody Way”. In the 19th century, it was still necessary to pay safety money to the local Sheiks before one could travel on it. As late as the early 1930’s H.V. Morton tells us that he was warned to get home before dark, if he intended to use the road.”

Jesus, then, was telling this story with as familiar a setting as if He were telling one today by beginning, “A group of people were driving down the Los Angeles freeway at 5:00 pm and the traffic was horrendous.” We would understand. They understood. So the first words of the Master created a backdrop in their minds that made an indelible impression. He wanted them to see this truth in the context of reality. I believe they did. He wanted us to see it in the same way. Imagine that your car broke down in the

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most gang-infested portion of a major city in the United States. Your only way to get help was to walk through darkened streets where angry teens and young adults hovered in the shadows with guns and knives. You have your money and credit cards on you. You can't leave them in the car. You are ripe to be beaten and robbed. You don't belong in that neighborhood, and they know it. The question is: what will happen next? Will anyone come to your rescue if you are attacked? That is the kind of verbal movie that Jesus is showing on the screen of Scripture to prepare us for this story.

The characters in the story are several. First, there is the traveler, the poor soul who is trying to get from point A to point B. He is innocent of any wrongdoing. He hasn't hurt a soul that we know of. He may be on his way to Aunt Anna's house to see the nephews and nieces. We don't know. He may be on his way to visit a sick friend. He may be on his way to make a business deal. We only know that the only way to get there was down this long, lonely, dark road. Some imply that he was a fool, because only fools traveled this road at night carrying valuables. So be it. It could be so, but we don't know. He may have had no choice. Jesus didn't say, so we don't know. He doesn't have a speaking part. For the most part, he just lies there, waiting for someone to touch him and help him. He is the object of the story, a seemingly inanimate object, if you will.

The second character is the priest. We will look at his dilemma in a few minutes. He was a religious man, and his religiosity got in his way. The third character was the Levite. He was a man who took no chances. His first response was to measure in his mind what risks were involved, and then, if the risks were great, to pretend he had never been there. He was typical of today's society where we want no involvement in the problems of others, but expect the whole world to be available if we have a need. The final character, the Samaritan, is the key to the story, as we will see in a few moments.

That, then, is the cast of characters waiting in the wings to enact on the stage of human experience, this penetrating story told by God Himself about a victim, two cowards, and a hero. It is a story reenacted daily in the world in which we live. Strangely enough, we may, at different times, be cast in the role of each of the characters in this drama. Which character we portray depends on two things:

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- 1- Whether we are the victim or a passer-by and,
- 2- If we are a passer-by, which side of the road we decide to walk on.

THE QUESTION

It all began with a question. It often does. The question was innocent sounding, and theologically impressive, *but it didn't impress Jesus*. You cannot help but wonder just how the religious word games we sometimes play affect the heart of God. We love to hassle over the meanings of words and the various interpretations of doctrines, thinking that by discussing their ramifications we are somehow becoming more spiritual. So often, all we are doing is creating intellectual smoke screens to keep from dealing with issues of obedience. Beloved, most of us know more than enough that we haven't obeyed to keep us busy till Jesus comes again.

This man was testing Jesus. So often, so are we. Pretending to be a sincere seeker, he was really nothing more than a horrendous hypocrite, trying to goad God into a corner to see if he could be more impressed with his own intellect, or better still, impress others. So often, we will turn Bible studies or Sunday school classes into nothing more than debates over non-essential issues in order to hear ourselves talk, never really holding ourselves accountable to respond to those aspects of the Word we can readily agree upon. This guy was pretending to be asking a sincere question: *"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"* He is typical of many who don the robe of an inquirer to attract attention, but are really just testing God to see what their options are.

Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 and added Leviticus 19:18. This sparked the next stage of his challenge. Have you noticed that those who are using the Scriptures as a script to read while performing on the stage of debate will only answer an answer with another question? This time, having heard that he was to love his neighbor as himself, he volleyed with question #2, *"Then just who is my neighbor?"* In other words, *"Who is this person I have to love, anyway?"* This time, Jesus answered a question with a story. He *told another parable*, and it turned out to be one of the most famous stories in all of history. Let us look at it, not as a casual review of a familiar passage, but as genuine searchers, looking for new jewels in God's treasure-house of truth to use to

change the very way we look at life.

“WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?”

That seems on the surface to be a reasonable question. To answer, Jesus programs the VCR of our minds to turn to the mystery channel once again, and He plays for us the opening scene of this drama entitled, “An Unlikely Hero”. As the first scene emerges, it is much like many of the TV dramas you see today. The first thing you see is the victim. You do not see the actual crime, but you see its results.

A man is lying by the side of the road. God’s detectives have surveyed the scene, and this is what they found: sure enough, it was a robbery. This man has been severely beaten, robbed, and left to die by the side of the road. He was left “half-dead” the Scripture says. That may be where that term came from. Any good detective, meanwhile, would say something to his partner like, “That’s the third robbery on this road this week. What a dangerous place to walk alone.”

One thing, however, separates this opening scene from so many of those on television. The victim is not dead. He is still breathing. The primary need, then, is not for a diagnosis of a murder, but for someone to come along and render aid to this poor soul *before it’s too late*. Left alone, he probably *will* die, or be beaten by still another of the rough element that hangs around these parts, people who will kill someone who has already been robbed, *just for the thrill of the kill*.

Coward #1

Oh, good. Here comes someone now, and it’s someone who isn’t going to bring harm to our poor victim. It’s a priest. If there was ever someone likely to stop and render aid it would be someone who was known to be a man of God. Quiet, now. He’s getting closer. Look. He sees the man. It’s only a matter of time until...but I don’t understand. He’s going the other way. He’s *actually crossing over to the other side of the road*. Why would he do that? Oh, I get it. He doesn’t want to be *ceremonially defiled*. He can’t afford to touch the man or he won’t be allowed to participate in the duties of his office.

He doesn’t want to be defiled, and he doesn’t want to get close enough to the hurting man to be recognized by him, should he live to tell the story of *who almost helped him, but didn’t*. So

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He *crossed over to the other side*. He had religious duties to uphold, and for the Jew at that time in history, there was little understanding of the relationship between religion and morality. Religion had become an end within itself, and was no longer an expression of the nature of Israel's God. That is why Jesus had to take the law and redefine it in human terms. This man was on his way to church. He was *important* in the temple. For him to remove himself from the duties of the priesthood, even temporarily, just to help a helpless dying man made no sense at all. "Get me to the church on time" was his driving thought.

Don't laugh. How many times have you been faced with meeting the needs of a hurting friend, or visiting someone in your neighborhood who needed Christ and was grieving, but you had a committee meeting or a Bible study or even a prayer meeting, and you elected to *pass by on the other side*? Was your real motivation that meeting? Or did that meeting become an excuse for not wanting to get your hands dirty or your emotions scarred or face possible rejection at the hands of someone who didn't appreciate what great lengths you went to in order to take them a bowl of soup or take their children to baseball practice? You missed a meeting. How dare they not understand. This priest was ceremonially clean. But he wasn't a neighbor.

A neighbor, incidentally, to the Jew was only another Jew. They had redefined the word and attached to it ethnic prejudice, and had, in the process, justified their hatred of others, including and especially others who had persecuted or exercised prejudice against them. Jesus was about to redefine it once again, and this Pharisee was going to have to help Him finish His sentence when He did.

Coward #2

Coward #2 was right around the bend. He was a Levite. The family of Aaron had been set apart especially to the duties of the priesthood. The rest of the tribe of Levi were consecrated to special services in connection with the worship of Jehovah. Moses gave the Levites judicial authority (Deuteronomy 17:8-12) and made them keepers of the book of the law (Deuteronomy 31:9,25,26). After the temple was built, the Levites were given tasks as porters, musicians, and assistants to the priests. So they fulfilled many roles, including music, buildings and grounds, and associate pastors, as we might see it today. They, too, could

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not be ceremonially contaminated and fulfill their duties.

Our TV camera is still watching, and this Levite comes along just minutes after the priest in the story scooted across the highway. One big difference here. The Levite is more curious. While it says the priest “saw him and passed by on the other side”, it says of the Levite, “when he was at that place, he came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.” I think this guy is even more hard-hearted than the priest who preceded him. He came up close. He saw that the man was still breathing. He heard his muffled cries for help. He was close enough for the wounded man to see his face. He “looked on him”. He saw the anguish. He saw the pain. He could race the video tape in his mind forward and see that the man was dying and would be dead if no one helped him, *but he could still be saved*. This Levite was one of the keepers of the law. He could, no doubt, rattle off the Scriptures about loving your neighbor as yourself as though they were engraved indelibly on his brain. He had taught Sunday school and knew all the intricacies of the law. Here was a man who knew something about who God was, according to God’s own words.

Strangely enough, however, *he chose not to get involved*. His religiosity and his reputation were more important to him than the life of an unidentified dying man. These two guys may have thought anybody who walked this way at night deserved such a fate. Then why were they there? They may have thought they were too special to be in danger. They may also have seen themselves as God’s chosen, called-out ones, so they dared not get their hands dirty touching the likes of this man. So the Levite, like the priest before him, *passed over to the other side*.

Remember, Jesus was defining the word “neighbor”, because we were to love our every “neighbor” (whoever that was) as much as we love ourselves. That would mean that anyone representing themselves to be a “neighbor” would have to stop and help a hurting person *with the same level of intensity with which they would desire that help were they hurting*. Remember that. These men were such graphic pictures of believers who are so focused on being identified with God’s people, they put bumper stickers on their chariots and wear Christian jewelry to be sure everybody knows who they are. Jesus, however, gave a different command: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, by the love ye have one for another.” (By the way you reach out to your

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neighbor, as though his needs were just as important as your own.) Oh.

Our Hero

Well, I guess our beaten buddy is a goner. It looks as if nobody is going to help him. With every minute, his open wounds bring added pain. With every second, he inches closer to death. Our religious cowards who chose side “B” of the road have no doubt made it to the temple by now and are preaching sermons on the dangers of walking the Jericho road at night, or the tragedy of the rising crime rate in the area.

Wait a minute. Here comes someone else. He’s getting closer. Oh, no. It’s a Samaritan. Samaritans are the lowest form of humanity to the Jew. Not only are they hated as a race, they are the butt of all the jokes of the day. “Do you know how many Samaritans it takes to change a light bulb?” That kind of thing. No Samaritan would qualify as a “neighbor”; not to any knowledgeable Jew.

What’s he doing? He’s stopping. You can hear him audibly groan with compassion. It says, “He had compassion upon him.” This was no religious duty; this was the act of a man whose heart had been touched by another man’s hurt. But he’s not just weeping; he’s working. He’s not just giving last rites; he’s giving first aid. He’s taking oil and wine from his pouch and pouring it on the man’s wounds. Dr. Luke made special note of that. That’s noble. Maybe he’ll live now till someone comes along to...no, wait a minute. He’s lifting the man up and putting him on his own horse. He’s going to walk. This injured man gets to ride to the hospital where he can get help.

In that day, the best thing to do was get him to the nearest inn. This he did promptly. Not only did he get him where the innkeeper could send word to his family, *he paid for the man’s lodging, and then left his VISA card so that whatever bills the man ran up as he was healing were covered.* He made a pledge to the innkeeper, in other words, that he would return and cover the rest of the bill.

Did he know this man? No. Did he love this man as God did? Yes. Why? *He was his neighbor.* Does that mean he lived near him and knew him? No. He was his neighbor the way God defines “neighbor”. That word “neighbor” is used throughout

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the Bible and is a most descriptive word. The Greek word used in the New Testament is the word, *plesion* {play-see'-on} Your concordance defines it like this:

- 1) a neighbor
 - a) a friend
 - b) any other person, and where two are concerned, the other (thy fellow man, thy neighbor), according to the Jews, any member of the Hebrew nation and commonwealth
 - c) according to Christ, any other man irrespective of nation or religion with whom we live or whom we chance to meet

“Any other person, irrespective of nation or religion.” What an all-inclusive phrase. To the Jew, it was *any other Jew*. To Jesus, it was *any other person*. He had to get that through to His disciples, and these arrogant Pharisees had set the stage for Him to do that. So we weren't just talking about *God's chosen people*; we were talking about anyone on the face of the earth God brings across our path. Careful. Don't run for the exits. We need to see what Jesus is saying before we decide it's too hard. He knows how hard it is. No one ever demonstrated the compassion of the Good Samaritan the way Jesus did. *He was the Good Samaritan*. He was the *really* good Samaritan.

Jesus wasn't afraid to reach out and touch someone. They may have been undesirables; they often were. To the Master, they were God's special people in need. So He touched them. Just a sampling of verses from Matthew alone tells the story. In chapter 8, a leper came and worshipped Him. No one touched lepers. No one fellowshiped with lepers. Jesus did. Lepers were His kind of people. They were needy. They were humble. They were rejects.

And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. (Matthew 8:3)

Peter's mother-in-law was sick. No one knew what was wrong. She was running a fever and was probably contagious. That didn't stop Jesus.

And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them. (Matthew 8:15)

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In chapter nine, Jesus had just brought a ruler's daughter back to life, when two blind men interrupted the celebration and crying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" What did He do?

Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. (Matthew 9:29)

In chapter 20, two blind men sitting by the side of the road were crying out "Have mercy on us, O, Lord, Son of David!" "What do you want" asked the Savior. "Lord, that our eyes may be opened," they responded. And we read in verse 34:

So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him. (Matthew 20:34)

He touched them. First, He had compassion. Then, He *touch*ed them. He was the *really* good Samaritan. Like the Samaritans, He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. Like the Samaritans, He was ridiculed and scorned by those who should have accepted Him and received Him. Why did He spend so much time *touching untouchables*? I'll tell you why. They were *His neighbors*. They were the very people His Father had sent Him to touch. To *not* touch them would have been sin. And Jesus never sinned.

The *really* good Samaritan went back to heaven. But as He went, He sent His Spirit to live in you and in me. Now He has millions of bodies to walk in; millions of hands to reach out; millions of feet to walk the dusty, dirty back roads of life seeking to find men and women who are lying by the side of life's highways, beaten and bleeding and dying. He has millions of *neighbors who are sent-ones; dispatched to the world's hurting people to demonstrate the love of God physically so others may experience the love of God spiritually.*

You happen to be one of them. When you set Jesus free in you to be the *really* good Samaritan He is, you will not only *not* pass by on the other side of the road; you will be out on the pathways of life *looking for people to minister to in Jesus' name.*

You may not concentrate your search for those hurting people in suburbia, or in the fashionable malls or shopping centers. You may not be satisfied settling yourself in a modern, upscale church while you wait for the needy to come to your door, begging for help. You may not. You may choose instead to leave the comfortable confines of your fashionable surroundings

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and go into life's ghettos and into life's projects and into life's jails, and into life's hospitals, where the people are that nobody wants to touch.

You may find yourself in the nursing homes where so many elderly abandoned are. You may find yourself helping to feed the hungry, help the homeless, find homes for the orphans. You may. You may find yourself on an airplane, *at your own expense*, flying to a country where needs are so great that people are not only dying by the thousands without Christ, they are dying without food or shelter as well. You may.

Or you may simply find yourself helping the handicapped where you live, caring for those who are physically or emotionally challenged so those who care for them around the clock can have a break. You may find yourself taking food to those who have been traumatized by one of life's volcanic surprises. You may. The key is: you probably will move somewhere outside the mainstream of your normal social contacts until you find a neighbor in need.

The reason I think that, is because that's what the *really good Samaritan would do*. And you are His personal representative to the neighbors to whom you are sent. What is wrong with the church in our generation? Why are we not winning the lost in great numbers? Why are we not impacting the world in which we live?

One reason is that we have redefined *who our neighbors are*. Like the Jews in Jesus' time, we have embedded our prejudices in the definition, and we are basically content, so long *as we are simply ministering to one another*, or to those who are socially and economically and racially not much different from us. The church, then, becomes a social haven for the believer, where people of similar education, similar economic backgrounds, and similar ethnic roots find a comfortable place to engage in Christianity. They define their "comfort zone" unconsciously, and just as unconsciously create boundaries that make others unlikely to break into their club. They have redefined the word "neighbor", and, like the Jews in Jesus' day, they have excluded all but those who are "like them".

That's not the church the *really* good Samaritan came to form. So He told a story one day to indicate what the kingdom of heaven was to be all about. It was to be all about Christians

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seeking to save that which was lost. To find those who knew they were lost, we were to go where hurting, dying, needy people were—ones who knew they needed a Great Physician. To lead them to the Savior, we were first to seek to demonstrate so great a love as God's by giving away our very lives to those very people the rest of the world called unlovable.

Jesus was the master at practical teaching. This wasn't a seminary lecture on the doctrine of love. This was down-home application. He turned to His somewhat edgy Pharisee friend and asked:

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? (Matthew 20:36)

The man nervously answered:

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (Matthew 20:37)

Indeed. He didn't say, "Then go do a word study on 'neighbor' and come back with a five point outline for next week's class." Nor did He ask them what alternatives they might suggest to such an uncomfortable assignment. Nor did He say, "That's okay, I was just testing you. I don't expect you to do such a radical thing."

He said, "Go." Get out of your comfort zone and go.

"Do thou likewise." Don't discuss it. Just do it.

I think He was speaking to us.

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A Challenge to Further Study

1- Do a study of the life of Jesus. Ask yourself, “Who did He spend His time with?” Ask yourself, “What occupied most of His time?” Now, take His agenda and overlay on it yours. What seems to be missing?

2- Why did Jesus go to the people He did? Can you find a Scriptural basis for our going to the same kinds of people?

3- What is the relationship between Jesus’ meeting physical needs and spiritual needs? How can we keep the balance?

A Challenge to Further Application

1- Make a list of the people you consider to be the “least lovely” people you know or have heard of who need the gospel. Think about the youths at the youth facilities waiting for trial. Think about those in nursing homes with no families to visit them. Think about the handicapped, about the mentally challenged, about the terminally ill. Ask yourself, “If Jesus were here today, would He be visiting them? Or would He be busily involved in the committee activities or the social activities or even the athletic activities that so occupy my time?”

2- Now take one of those groups you put on that list, and ask God in prayer to equip you and prepare you and enable you to reach out and “touch” someone in that category who might otherwise never know the love of God. You might begin with a letter or a phone call or a visit to a facility. You might begin with a prayer list of the people in a certain home or jail or place so God can prepare the way for you.

3- Ask God to free the “really good Samaritan” who lives in you to continue the ministry He has always had on planet earth, that of reaching out and touching hearts that are hurting and lives that know they are in need of help. Be ready when He does to “go, and do thou likewise.”

A Challenge to Scripture Memory

Memorize Luke 10:36,37

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