



## “Care for Every Home”

Luke 10:25-37

**Idea:** A neighbor cares for others.

**Intro:** *What is the neighborhood like?* This is a question often asked when a person or a couple is looking to move to a new place. The question seeks to understand the demographics of the area. But it desires to know more than just simple demographics. It wants to know not only who lives nearby but also what kind of people live nearby. Are there good, trustworthy, and friendly people? Are there people that I will be able to connect with in the area? Or is the neighborhood comprised of bad, dishonest, and unfriendly people? Are there people in the neighborhood that I would prefer to avoid?

*What is the neighborhood like?* This is a good question to ask, and it is certainly one that most if not all of us have asked. Perhaps, though, there is a better question to ask. Rather than asking what the neighborhood is like we should ask, “*What kind of neighbor am I?*” Am I neighborly? I am of the deep conviction that the way to improve our neighborhoods is for each person to purposely strive to be a better neighbor. I must choose to know, interact with, care for, and thus love those who live around me. This is the attitude we need more of today. I must care for and about others.

Show video of modern day Good Samaritan.

“Just a simple kind act.” This is what being neighborly looks like. This is what caring looks like. This is what Jesus did.

Read Matthew 9:35-36.

Jesus is the model for us to follow. He is the ultimate expression of kindness. He is the perfect example of what it means to care for someone else. He is the Good Samaritan.

**Inquiry:** On one occasion, while Jesus was traveling around Israel teaching and ministering to people a lawyer stood up to test Him. This lawyer asked a provocative question. It was a good question, and one that we all should ask at some point.

Read Luke 10:25-28.

This is an interesting dialogue. Luke tips us off that this lawyer has no desire to believe on Jesus. Instead, he is attempting to trip up Jesus. The lawyer's answer, however, was correct. He referenced the *שמע* (*Shema*) found in Deuteronomy 6. A devout Jew would repeat it twice each day. In the *Shema* three prepositional phrases describe the total response of love toward God. These involve ones heart, soul, and strength. He also referenced Leviticus 19:18, where God's people were commanded to love their neighbors as they loved themselves.

Read Luke 10:29.

For most Jews a neighbor was another Jew, not a Samaritan, or a Gentile. As true to human nature, there was a lot of racism and segregationism in Israel. In fact the Pharisees and the Essenes did not even include all Jews. The reality of who was ones neighbor was up for debate among the people, but it was not up for debate with Jesus or His Word. He settled the debate with a parable.

Read Luke 10:30-37.

Among the things we can learn from this story is that all of humanity can be divided, at moments of their lives, into one of three categories.

### Three Options for You

#### **1. You can be cruel.** (vs. 30)

This man was going down from Jerusalem. The city sets 2500 feet above sea level. Therefore, one always goes down from Jerusalem no matter which direction is taken. Jericho was seventeen miles east of Jerusalem and approximately 800 feet below sea level. The road leading to Jericho was dangerous. Robbers often hid in the mountains, rocks, and desert along the road. The robbers attacked the man in Jesus' story.

We are confronted with their cruelty. They robbed, stripped, beat, and left the man for dead. Their attitude toward the man is, "What is yours is mine, and we'll take it." They are heartless. They had him outnumbered. They could have taken his things and left him unharmed, but they beat him and leave him half dead. Just flat out cruel. We see here the action of the cruel: "They inflict suffering."

But cruel people are not limited to Bible times. Last weekend a twenty-one year old man in Louisiana murdered his parents, girlfriend, her father, and her brother. Then he drove to Warsaw, Virginia, where he was arrested.

There are a thousand lesser ways to be cruel such as bullying, gossip, slander, or fraud. There is plenty of cruelty in the world. We don't need any more of it. But it is an option for you.

#### **2. You can be calloused.** (vs. 31-32)

Two men passed by the man lying bare and beaten in the road. One was a priest, and the other was a Levite. Both men were religious leaders who served in the Temple. They were men who you would expect to have compassion for people. Rather than caring for the man's needs, they walked around him and kept going about their day. Their attitude toward the man is, "What is mine is mine, and I'll keep it." Therefore, the action of the calloused is to ignore suffering.

Illust: At about 3:20 AM on March 13, 1964, Kitty Genovese, a 28-year-old manager of a bar in Queens, New York, returned to her quiet residential neighborhood, parked her car in a lot adjacent to her apartment building, and began to walk the 30 yards through the lot to her door. Noticing a man at the

far end of the lot, she paused. When he started toward her, she turned the other way and tried to reach a police call box half a block away. The man caught and stabbed her. She started screaming that she'd been stabbed, and screaming for help, but Moseley did not stop. He relentlessly pursued her and killed her. He said in his trial that he heard some of the tenants of the building yell down at him, but he said he was unconcerned. "I had a feeling this man would close his window and go back to sleep," he said to cops, "and sure enough, he did." You see, Moseley had killed before. Brutally. When captured for Kitty Genovese's murder, he was sentenced to life in prison. There were 38 witnesses to Kitty's murder. Over thirty minutes the brutal attack lasted, but no one came to her defense.

Why didn't someone help? Why didn't someone try to rescue Kitty? Why didn't someone at least call the police? The reason is the same reason the priest and Levite didn't stop to help the man in the street. It is the same reason why people don't notice the suffering of others or try to help those who are suffering today. They are calloused. They don't want to get involved because of the inconvenience, cost, or danger that may come with it.

### 3. You can be compassionate. (vs. 33-35)

The Samaritan had compassion (vs. 33). The term "Samaritan" is in the emphatic position in the sentence. Jesus deliberately chose an outsider, and a hated one at that, for his hero in order to indicate that being a neighbor is not a matter of nationality or race. It is a matter of love...love for God and for others.

The Samaritan's attitude is "What is mine is yours, and I'll give it." This attitude is evident in his actions. He helped the man. The compassionate intervene in suffering.

The Samaritan was lavish in his love! He bandaged the man's wounds. He helped him get on his donkey. The Samaritan then took the man to an inn and cared for him over night. The next day he gave the innkeeper two denarii. Archeology has revealed that the cost for a room in an inn back then was 1/32 of a denarii. This means that the Samaritan paid the innkeeper for 64 days so that the man could heal from his wounds. On top of that, he said any other charge I'll pay when I return. He is a picture of Jesus.

Who is the hero in this parable? The hero is Jesus. He is the Good Samaritan who has compassion on those who are harassed and helpless.

Once touched by His love, we are to go and do likewise.

Illust: Share the story of Jacob Boykin from last week's Powhatan Today.

"With all of the negativity and hatred in this world, why not do the best we can to shine a little light on the darkness of this world."

What kind of neighbor are you? Hopefully, you are not a cruel one inflicting suffering on others. But you might be a calloused neighbor who is so busy, distracted, and self-absorbed that you ignore the suffering and hurting of others. Don't be cruel or calloused. Be compassionate. Be like Jesus. Be like Jacob. Be a blessing to every home by caring for every home.

**Conclusion:** How you can care for every home?

**Begin with prayer.**

Ask God, "How do you want me to bless the people in the places where You have sent me? You can't and won't begin to care for the people until you first begin to pray for them.

**Listen**

Go meet the people who live around you. Get to know them. Listen more than you talk. Hear their struggles, pains, and victories in the places God sends you.

**Eat**

A good practice to have as a neighbor is to take food to people new to the area, who have had a medical emergency, or are going through a life crisis. But please don't just check this off quickly. It is not quick. God has created us as communal beings, and one of the best ways to build community is around a meal. You have to have a meal with people or share a cup of coffee in order to build relationships.

**Serve**

If you listen to people and you eat with people, they will tell you how to love them. Then you will know how to serve them.

**Story**

When the time is right, you talk and share the story of how Jesus has changed your life. You will never truly bless a home until you have shared the life-transforming message of Jesus Christ with them.