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Luke 10:25-37

Fruitfulness on the Frontline:

Ministering Grace and Love

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Website: In Luke 10:25-37, Jesus teaches us not just who our neighbor is, but how to love our neighbor. Our neighbor isn't just limited to geography, or those we like, but those we don't think like us, or would never expect us to do anything kind for them. Jesus turns our pre-conceived notions of who we believe our neighbor to be on their head. Listen to the sermon learn more and apply it to your everyday life.

Pre-Introduction:

1. Today we're continuing our sermon series, *Fruitfulness on the Frontline*.
2. In it we've looked at various ways to help those around us flourish.
3. As we *Model Godly Character*, we add credibility to our faith and prepare to help those around us.
4. As we *Make Good Work*, we serve and bless those we work for or supervise as unto Jesus.
5. Today we're studying how to *Minister Grace and Love* in the story of the Good Samaritan (pray).

Introduction: (Slide #1)

6. When you think of a Samaritan, you probably think of good people who serve and care for others.
7. Samaritan's Purse is an international relief organization dedicated to helping those in need. (S2)
8. They run Operation Christmas Child and are aiding Syrian refugees and the hurricane crisis in Haiti.
9. Or maybe you're familiar with The Samaritans On Cape Cod and their sign at the bridge. (S3)
10. They try to help those who are suicidal or just need someone to talk to or text message.
11. A Good Samaritan is anyone who is willing to help those in need.

I. As Christians, we know we're supposed to love our neighbor. (Luke 10:25-28) (S4)

(Before the story of the Good Samaritan begins, an expert in the law asks Jesus a question.)
(He asks him, "What must I do to get eternal life?" and Jesus asks, "What does the law say?")

A. The expert in the law knows the right answer.

1. An expert in the law is a "scribe" whose job it is to preserve and protect the Jewish scriptures.
2. Scribes are almost always Pharisees who teach people and the nation to obey the law.
3. The expert seems to know what it takes to get eternal life; 1) love God and 2) love neighbor.
4. (S5) **Deuteronomy 6:5** Love the Lord your God with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **strength**. (NIV®)
5. He is so serious about God's law he adds **mind**—he's saying to love God with your whole being.
6. (S6) He also quotes **Leviticus 19:18**, which says, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but **love your neighbor as yourself**. I am the Lord." (NIV®)
7. Jesus says, "You got the right answer" but the man presses further, "who is my neighbor?"

(Although he has the correct answer, he does not know who his neighbor is or how to love them.)
(Leviticus 19:18 defines "neighbor" as one "among your people", a Jewish person.)
(Jesus does not define neighbor as someone who lives nearby or looks like me...)

II. Jesus defines our neighbor as *the last person we would expect*. (Luke 10:29-35) (S7)

(A Jewish man is traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, a distance of 17 miles.)
(He walks through rocks, around corners, and desert sections, descending 3,300~ feet.)
(As he comes around a corner he's attacked by robbers who steal his money and clothes.)
(They leave him naked and dying on the road... but he sees a Priest coming and is filled with hope...)

A. **Priest** - Religious professional (S8)

1. They are descendants of Aaron, served in the temple, and lead the people in worshipping God.
2. They're considered the most upright, pure, and Godly, so he would have thought he was saved.
3. **Lev. 21:1b** A priest must not make himself ceremonially unclean for any of his people who die.
4. According to Jewish tradition, you became unclean if your shadow touched the undead body.
5. So the priest passes by on the far side of the road, not stopping to help.

B. Imagine a situation where you're in the Market Basket parking lot.

1. The lot is packed, but you just barely pull into the last parking spot.
2. A car comes out of nowhere, screeching to a halt, and begins pounding on the horn.
3. The driver doesn't stop, but yells at you, cusses at you, and is making a huge scene.

4. Your hands begin to shake, but you look up, and you see me walking out of the store.
5. But I duck my head, push my cart by, load up my groceries, and drive away as fast as I can.
6. That's the picture we receive in this story... but in our story also sees a Levite coming...

C. **Levite** - Upright and strong **(S9)**

1. Their job is to assist the Priests in their duties.
2. Levites aren't afraid; they slaughter animals, they guard the temple complex (Num 1:51).
3. Levites are kind of like the tough guys of the temple—it was their job to keep foreigners out.
4. A Levite seems like a pretty good person to rescue the man, but he too walks by on the other side.

D. Now the man in the vehicle has gotten out of his car and is slapping your window.

1. You've locked the doors, but he's telling you to move, but he's parked behind you.
2. You see Jennie from church, who you know has a black belt in karate, park her car.
3. But she pretends not to hear what's going on, and runs inside to shop.
4. All hope is not lost, because in the Bible story, a third person comes by... the Samaritan.

E. **Samaritan** - Those we least expect **(S10)**

1. The story is not: 1) Priest walks by, 2) Levite walks by, 3) an ordinary Jew stops to help.
2. A Samaritan stops—the Jews think of them as “half breeds”, spiritually and genetically.
3. The name Samaritan didn't use to be a positive term like it is today; in fact it was quite negative.
4. Israel was divided into southern Judah and northern Israel; its capital was Samaria. **(S11-maps)**
5. In 722 BC, Assyria came and took the rich and wealthy in Northern Israel into captivity.
6. They colonized northern Israel with foreigners and at some point the region became Samaria.
7. 2nd Kings 17:25-28 says lions began to kill the people because they weren't worshipping God.
8. So the king of Assyria sends a Priest to teach them to worship Yahweh (“lion converts”).
9. Eventually southern Judah is also taken into captivity and their temple is destroyed.
10. When Judah returns, the Samaritans try to “help” rebuild the temple, but they're rejected (Ez 4).
11. They worship false gods, start their own priesthood, build a temple, and only read Gen-Deut.
12. The name Samaritan is from a Hebrew word meaning “keepers of the law”—Jews hated them.
13. The Maccabean priest and king John Hyrcanus destroys the Samaritan temple in 128 BC.
14. In AD 9, Samaritans snuck into the temple and scattered human bones to defile it.
15. A Samaritan is the last person any Jew would expect to help them:
 - a) To take pity on them no matter the circumstance (v. 33);
 - b) To bandage their wounds with costly oil and wine (v. 34a);
 - c) To put them on their donkey and walk down the dangerous road in the dirt (v. 34b);
 - d) To give up two-days wages (2 denarii) for between 10 days to 2 months rent (v. 35);
 - e) And to offer to pay more if needed... The Samaritan is the one you least expect... **(S12)**

F. You're afraid the man is going to break your window but you can't find your phone.

1. Out of nowhere a six-foot-tall black woman comes in swinging her purse.
2. She fights him off and he drives away; she comes over to your car and asks if you're okay.
3. You start to cry, and she gives you some tissue, and sits with you until you're better.
4. Then she walks with you into the store and helps you shop for your groceries.
5. You begin to learn more about her—her name is Gloria.¹

¹ Gloria is a fictitious character. No identification with actual persons, living or deceased, is intended or should be inferred.

- a) She stood up for you because she has felt picked on and singled out too.
 - b) She recently walked in a **black-lives matter** protest to fight racial injustice.
 - c) You learn that Gloria used to be named George but now she **identifies as a woman**.
 - d) She can't find a job because most companies won't hire a transgendered person (2x norm).
 - e) She grew up in the AME, African Methodist Episcopal Church, singing gospel songs.
 - f) But she tells you she hasn't gone in years because she is afraid of what they will think.
6. In our context, Gloria is the Good Samaritan, the one we least expect.

(Gloria is my Good Samaritan, the one I least expect, the one I feel least comfortable with.)
 (Jesus ends by asking which one is our neighbor, the Priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan?)
 (The expert is so horrified he can't even say the Samaritan's name, "the one who had mercy.")
 (Which one is our neighbor, the Pastor, church-goer, or the black transgendered Gloria?)

III. Jesus calls us to go and love those who least expect it. (Luke 10:36-37) (S13)

A. He ends with a command, "Go and do likewise."

1. Jesus reverses the situation so that we are supposed to go and care for the Samaritan, for Gloria.
2. We don't all have Glorias in our offices or at the grocery store, but who doesn't expect your love?
 - a) Is it Grant, your co-worker who just messed up a big job and deserves to get yelled at?
 - b) Is it Meredith who lives next door and keeps encroaching on your property?
 - c) Who do you find it hard to get along with or just doesn't seem to like you?
3. Building a relationship with our Samaritans is difficult and messy.
4. It's risky to giving grace to the grace-starved, love to the unloved, care to the outcast.
5. When we get to know people who don't know Jesus, we will encounter sin we can't approve.
6. The closer we get to sinners, the more we have to rely on the gospel, not our works, for purity.
7. Jesus doesn't ask us to do anything he hasn't done already.
8. The Pharisees and experts in the law hated Jesus because he ate and drank with sinners.
9. Sinners is a euphemism for prostitute, sexually immoral, those who sell themselves (Lk. 7:34).
10. Jesus doesn't condone sin, but he does love sacrificially, and challenges us to do the same.

(Love those who least expect it with the kindness of the King.) (S14)

B. Jesus love you and me... He is the Good Samaritan.

1. Just like the victim in our story, we were dead in our transgressions and sins (Eph 2:1).
2. Jesus comes along and binds up our wounds, healing us.
3. He does this by paying the ultimate price, dying in our place.
4. Jesus was stripped of his garments, crucified, and left for dead.
5. When he looked up, no one came to rescue him, not us, not even his Father in heaven.
6. He died alone and abandoned, but three days later, he rose back to life again.
7. Now he offers any who believe in him that same "eternal life" the expert in the law wanted.
8. You can't get eternal life by being a Good Samaritan, but by knowing the Good Samaritan.
9. Where are you on your journey? Are you hurt? Jesus, the Good Samaritan, can heal you.

(Receive the kindness of the king so you can pay it forward to your neighbor.)

(Love those who least expect it with the kindness of the King.)

Conclusion:

1. This July a heavily armed man killed five police officers in Dallas.
2. The next day several police officers were eating at a diner in Pennsylvania.
3. The waitress brought a couple to sit across from them, but they refused to sit down.
4. Officer Chuck made eye contact with them and it was clear they wanted nothing to do with them.
5. Chuck even told them that he and his fellow officers wouldn't hurt them, but they still refused.
6. Instead of arresting them, or calling them out, he asked the waitress for their bill and paid for their tab.
7. If you know Jesus, you can be confident that he has paid your bill in full.
8. Now he calls us to go out and pay his kindness forward to those who least expect it.

Love those who least expect it with the kindness of the King.

Reason To Return: Come back next week to learn about moulding culture.

Matthew 11:28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (NIV®)