

Relational Revolution

Get Off Your Donkey

Ice Breaker: Tell about a time when a stranger went out of their way to help you in a time of distress. Or tell about a time when you helped a stranger in a time of distress.

Luke 10:25-37 *On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" 27 He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." 29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' 36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."*

1. What do we know about the motives of the man questioning Jesus?

2. Although Jesus does not answer the “who is my neighbor?” question directly, how does Jesus define neighbor by telling this story?

3. Who might we consider our “neighbors” in our lives in light of Jesus’ answer?

4. Why do you think the Priest and the Levite did not stop to help the man in need?

5. What excuses do you sometimes use to avoid being a good neighbor to strangers or the people you know?

6. How did the good Samaritan demonstrate love to the man left at the side of the road?

7. How is this different than sympathizing and feeling sorry for the one in distress? (1 John 3:18) How is this different than just handing someone money?

1 John 3:18 *Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.*

8. How does this story demonstrate that the Samaritan's actions were more in line with what God wanted than the religious leaders in the story? (John 4:9, Matthew 23:23-24, Exodus 23:4-5, Proverbs 14:21; 25:21-22)

Matthew 23:23-24 *“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.*

Exodus 23:4-5 *“If you come across your enemy’s ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it. 5 If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it.*

Proverbs 14:21 *It is a sin to despise one’s neighbor, but blessed is the one who is kind to the needy.*

Proverbs 25:21-22 *If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. 22 In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.*

Pastor Brian pointed out that the Samaritan had his own experiences that he could have used as excuses to not involve himself, including knowing the Jews thought he was an outcast and the person on the side of the road was not his business.

9. What about the Samaritan’s background could have made him sensitive to the need of someone in distress? (John 4:9)

John 4:9 *The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)*

10. Yet the Samaritan transformed his experiences and compassion into action. What are ways we can transform our experiences and the compassion we feel for action? (Matthew 25:35-40, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 *3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

Matthew 25:35-40 *35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ 37 “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ 40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’*

11. How can church and Circle groups provide the opportunity to understand each others needs in order to practice being each other’s neighbor?

12. How can we practice being a neighbor to strangers?

13. How can being aware of how God is working around you and being available to being a part of what God is doing (being “missional”) help us to “Go and do likewise.”? (Luke 10:37)

14. What can we do ahead of time to be less like the Priest and Levite and more like the Good Samaritan to be ready for when the opportunity arises?

15. In what way does our willingness to be a good neighbor bring glory to God? (Matthew 5:16, 1 John 4:11-12, James 2:15-18)

Matthew 5:16 *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

1 John 4:11-12 *Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.*

James 2:15-18 *Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.*

16. Can you think of a person, people or circumstance that you can be a good neighbor to this week? What can you do?

Rhythm of Gather then Scatter!