



REDISCOVER ...

THE ART OF NEIGHBORING

I DON'T KNOW AND I DON'T CARE • *Luke 10:25-37*

Pastor Kenneth Spiller • September 4, 2022

BIG IDEA: We don't need more knowledge; we need more obedience.

This sermon begins a new series that will help us all be better neighbors to those around us. We will begin by looking at a familiar text the Parable of the Good Samaritan because we as Christians seem to miss the point that Jesus emphasized. We look, but don't see; hear, but don't listen; talk a good line, but don't walk it. We fail to prefer others above ourselves, and our attitudes, more often than not, reflect that of the priest and Levite not the attitude of the Good Samaritan.

➔ **Jesus tells why he speaks in parables after telling the Parable of the Sower. "He said, 'The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, "though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand."'" -Luke 8:10** How do the words of Larry Jones and Pastor Kenneth resonate with Jesus' words in Luke 8:10?

An "I don't know, and I don't care" mentality pervades our culture ... People look but don't see; hear but don't listen; talk a good line but don't walk it.

-Larry Jones, founder of Feed the Children

➔ **Just prior to the Parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus says to his disciples privately: "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it." -Luke 10:24** How does this inform us as listeners of how we should listen to the Parable of the Good Samaritan? How should we approach the reading and hearing of this parable?

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN • Luke 10:25-37

LUKE 10:25 || On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. **"Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"** We have a lawyer who stood up to test Jesus. A lawyer



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was not what we think of lawyers today who go to court but was an expert in Jewish religious law. This man's intentions were not pure as he was trying to trap Jesus in a religious debate. So he asked, **“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”** As Jesus would address later, eternal life wasn't something he could earn; it was a gift from God. So, Jesus turns this man's question around.

**Most Christians
are educated
way beyond their
level of
obedience.**

-John Maxwell

➔ **For the Christian what is wrong with the lawyer's question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” (See Romans 6:23.) Does eternal life come from doing?**

➔ **From Jesus' interaction with the lawyer, what strategy might we learn for dealing with those testing or challenging us?**

LUKE 10:26-27 || “What is written in the Law?” he [Jesus]

replied. “How do you read it?” He [lawyer] 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.’” “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” In these verses, the lawyer answered correctly and quotes from two places in the Old Testament (*Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Leviticus 19:18*). That should be the end of it? He has his answer. He knows what he is to do. He can move on knowing he is correct, right? No! Christianity isn't just about knowing things. Many of us have been taught a paradigm that suggests the more we know the more spiritual or mature we are. Knowledge is certainly important, but it's not enough. We have to act on it; we have to do something with it. **We don't need more knowledge; we need more obedience.** If we need more obedience, then we don't need more effort and determination; we need to fall more deeply in love with Jesus. Out of our love relationship with Jesus flows obedience. “The Bible teaches that God is love and as followers of Christ, we will be recognized by the way we love one another. We are only able to extend the amount of love that we are able to receive from God....As we have a relationship with God we experience His love for us. Out of this overflow we are able to share God's love with others.” (*Bible App. Day six of Prayer and Fasting with Transformation Church Devotional Plan*) If you have an obedience problem, you have a love problem.

➔ **How does the lawyer's question demonstrate that he knows but does not understand what the meaning of the commands of the Old Testament (*Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18*)?**

➔ **The lawyer's question focused on “doing” to inherit eternal life. Pastor Kenneth stated that we need to fall more in love with Jesus. Where does doing come in our relationship with Jesus? Does it come before or after falling deeply in love with Jesus? What part of this**

did the lawyer hear but not understand?

LUKE 10:29 || But he wanted to justify himself so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Who is my neighbor? In his mind, he wanted to qualify exactly who was worthy of his attention and love. The lawyer attempted to narrow the neighbor field down to people he approved of, thus excluding all others. In the church, we have almost done the opposite. We’ve expanded the definition of neighbor to anyone in need, and that’s right, good, and godly. But in the process, we’ve made the definition of neighbor so big that we often ignore those closest to us, our physical neighbors. Christian love should include everyone, everywhere, but at a basic level, it also has to include our physical neighbors.

➔ **Do you know your neighbors?**

➔ **What are some ways that you can get to know your neighbors?**

➔ **What steps will you take this week?**

There are three attitudes towards our neighbors that are present in the parable.

Attitude # 1 – The Robbers: What’s yours is ours, and we’ll take it! (Luke 10:30)

How does this play out with a neighbor? It’s basically not caring about your neighbor, For example parking in front of your neighbors’ mailbox or driveway or holding onto an amazon package that was incorrectly delivered to you.

Attitude # 2 – The Priest and Levite: what’s yours is yours, and what’s ours is ours. (Luke 10:31-32)

A priest was a designated official who served in the temple. The priests ministered to God (*Ezekiel 44:15-16*), they performed the sacrifices, they pronounced priestly blessings on the people (*Numbers 6:22-26*), and they kept the temple tidy. Priests were also musicians, gatekeepers, and singers.¹ The Levites were also religious leaders. They offered up sacrifices and they transmitted and administered the divine law (*Deuteronomy 17:18, 33:10*).² The Priest and Levite served God in the temple, but they didn’t serve him outside the temple.

➔ **How many Christians serve God in a church building but not outside the church building?**

➔ **What does this attitude look like to our neighbors?**

➔ **How are you serving God outside the church building? If you aren’t, what steps are you**

¹ Achtemeier, Paul J., *Harpers’s Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985), 822-823.

² Achtemeier, Paul J., *Harpers’s Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1985), 558.

going to take to change that?

Pastor Kenneth gave one example of this when we see a neighbor's yard overgrown and instead of offering a helping hand, we phone the HOA to complain.

Attitude # 3 – That of the Samaritan: What's mine is yours, and we'll share. (Luke 10:33-35)³

The lawyer's question of 'who is my neighbor' was answered by the kind acts of the Samaritan as he cleaned and bandaged his wounds, took him to the inn, and paid for his lodging. The Samaritan met the needs of man.

Jesus tells the lawyer to go and do likewise (Luke 10:37).

➔ How can you meet the needs of those around you?

➔ What is your attitude when you think about your neighbors?

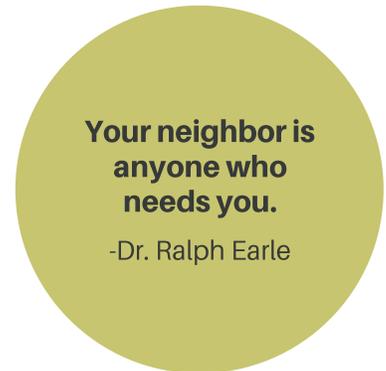
Pastor Kenneth challenged us to think about our attitudes towards our neighbors with these questions

- When there's a beggar on the side of the road, do you help them or do you pass them by?
- When fellow students sit alone in the lunch room, do you sit with them or pass them by?
- When a new neighbor moves in, do you introduce yourself to them or pass them by?
- When you know of a need, a co-worker has do you do something about it or pass them by?

For Christians, Jesus makes it perfectly clear that we have the responsibility to help those in need. We have this responsibility not just from the parable but from the mission of Jesus himself. A disciple is a little Christ in the world. Christ states his mission in Luke 4:18-19 when he says **“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”** We see the early Christians in Acts 2:42-47 doing this after Jesus ascended and gifted the church with the Holy Spirit. As Christians today, we have the same responsibilities to help those in need.

The Parable of the Samaritan provides four practical ways of helping our neighbors, those in need as we open our ears to hear and hearts to understand what Jesus was teaching in this parable. They are:

³ Ralph Earle, *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary Volume 4* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 269.



1. See the needs of people around you. *(Luke 10:33)*
2. Have compassion on those around you. *(Luke 10:33)*
3. Give what you have. *(Luke 10:34)*
4. Don't expect to get anything in return. *(Luke 10:35)*

We have four practical ways of helping our neighbors, those in need. But which attitude are we going to display?

➔ **How are you going to care for your neighbors this week? How are you going to see their needs, have compassion on them, give, and not expect anything in return?**

➔ **How can I take my love for God outside the four walls of Parkgate Community Church and be a little Christ to those I encounter every day?**

➔ **Am I driven by love or by something else?**

Pastor Kenneth ended with the challenge that we become a church of good Samaritans as we sang this song, "Driven By Love:" <https://youtu.be/McayEdbeckKA>.

**Do all the good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can, in
all the places you can, at
all the times you can, to
all the people you can, as
long as you ever can.**

-John Wesley

³ Ralph Earle, *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary Volume 4* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 269.