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Love Where You Live: Your Neighbors (Luke 10:25-37)

Being a good neighbor is actually a gospel issue.

Luke 10:25-29, ...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 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?"

- The question that led to this parable is how we can have assurance of our salvation.
- Loving your neighbor is not a condition of salvation, but it is a result that flows from true salvation.

Let's consider 4 characteristics about neighbors as seen through this parable:

#1 OUR NEIGHBORS: are people that have real pain.

Luke 10:30, 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.

- Our neighborhoods are struggling with: sickness, crime, relational issues, unemployment, death, mental health issues, etc.

#2 OUR NEIGHBORS: have pain that is often overlooked.

Luke 10:31-32, 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.

- Excuse: "I'm sure they have family to help them."

- Proverbs 27:10, "...when disaster strikes you--better a neighbor nearby than a brother far away."
- Excuse: "They wouldn't want me to help. That's too awkward."
- Excuse: "My physical neighbor isn't my neighbor" (mine neighbor is _____ (at work, at the gym, etc.)
- My concern is that out of a desire to make everyone our neighbors, we've made no one our neighbors.
- Central to the idea of the Good Samaritan is that people were trying to get around caring for neighbors by redefining who their neighbors were by focusing on other networks and not the needs right in front of them.

#3 OUR NEIGHBORS: have needs that can be our privilege to embrace.

Luke 10:33-36, 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?"

- This doesn't mean, "get to know your neighbors so you can invite them to church". It means getting to know them because they're worth knowing!
- Embracing our neighbor's needs means empathizing, praying and when possible, physically helping.
- Visit www.Go2Cornerstone.com/neighbor for a list of 25 ways to meet your neighbors. After you've met them, pray about how to be a good neighbor.

#4 OUR NEIGHBORS: need the same love that's already been shown to us by Jesus.

Luke 10:37, The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

- Jesus functioned as our good neighbor that sacrificially loved us.
- This passage challenges Christ followers to not be content with the appearance of religion, but to pursue sacrificial love.
- This parable destroys any claim we've kept the law and shows us just how impossible salvation by works is. It's by grace, through faith alone that we are saved!

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