

Love God. Love your neighbor.

LUKE 10:25-42

BACKGROUND: In Luke 10 a lawyer (as in religious law) asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus said, “Love God with your whole being, and always love your neighbor as much as you love yourself”. Luke says that he was seeking to justify himself and asks, “Who is my neighbor?” We are always seeking to justify and defend ourselves. To answer the man’s question, Jesus told a powerful story known as “The parable of the Good Samaritan.” A man was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. The road to Jericho was dangerous because it was so steep. Although only seventeen miles separates the two cities there is a 3000 foot descent through a rough and mountainous pass. It was the perfect place for thieves and bandits to hide and in the story there is a man who had been robbed, stripped, beaten, and left for dead on the side of the road. He is Jewish. A priest and a Levite (both religious workers) saw the man and passed by on the other side of the road. The crowd would be surprised that the religious leaders would not help a fellow Jew (to love their neighbor in a time of need). But they had good excuses. You are alone at night on a dangerous street—You see someone who looks like he has been murdered. The people who did this might still be in the neighborhood. Also, according to Levitical Law anyone touching a dead body was considered to be ceremonially “unclean”, and they were excluded from worship for seven days. Jesus asks the lawyer, “which one of these men was a neighbor”, and the lawyer is trapped into responding to the truth~ “the one who had mercy on him.”

OUTLINE:

- **The heart of mercy**
The Samaritan (an enemy of the Jews) in the parable shows us the heart of mercy and who our neighbor is. It’s not just the person who I like or is like me, but it includes my enemies and those people who are difficult to love.
- **The man of mercy**
The only truly “Good Samaritan” is Jesus who loves us while we are still enemies. Only Jesus has loved God completely and love his neighbor as himself, and in light of his mercy to us, we are “deputized” to go and do likewise.
- **Doing Likewise**
This must move out of the theoretical and into the practical.

NEW VALLEY ALL-CHURCH WORSHIP

KEY TAKEAWAY → When we live in light of the mercy of God towards us in Jesus, we cannot help but be moved to love our neighbor more and more.

QUESTIONS:

Q: We all see people in need around us. What are the needs that you see around you on a day-to-day basis?

Q: According to Jesus, “who is our neighbor?”

Q: What are some of the ways we/you justify ourselves asking, “who really is my neighbor?” We are some of the excuse (both good and bad) that we/you use to justify not doing anything about the needs you see?

APPLICATION:

We are masters at taking care of our own needs (loving ourselves). Notice that Jesus doesn't say, “don't love yourself”, instead he says, “love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.” Meaning, love your neighbor with the same creative and imaginative was you love yourself.

PLAY THE LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR GAME AS A GROUP

RESOURCE CARDS

- Take several 3x5 cards and write out every resource you have. Make sure you try to be exhaustive and not just generic stuff like, “money.”¹

NEEDS CARDS

- On another stack of cards write out examples of brokenness in the world around us.²

¹ Your house, your car, your bike, your garden, your comic book collection, your poetry, and musical talents. Your money, you time, your phone, your experience, your computer.

² If you need help being creating: Lonely international students at ASU; single parents raising their kids while grieving divorce; children in foster care; immigrants both legal and illegal (still our neighbor) and the challenges they face-working multiple jobs and sending over half their income back home; the homeless---or the nearly homeless; elderly people who are shut in and alone etc.

NEW VALLEY ALL-CHURCH WORSHIP

Take one card from the “Resource” pile and another card from the “Needs” pile and as a group creatively think of ways you could use your “car” to bless “a single parent” as an example. Don’t rush, and really become creative.

ADDITIONAL READING:

"All the blessings we enjoy are Divine deposits, committed to our trust on this condition, that they should be dispensed for the benefit of our neighbors." – John Calvin

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

-Ladies’ Fall Fling – November 5 from 5:30-8:30pm at New Valley Ahwatukee. Register online. \$5 donation requested for cost of the meal.

-Guys’ Night October 30th at 6pm at New Valley Ahwatukee. Andy Lee will be sharing about “A Man and His Foxhole”.

-Faith In Politics Class continues this Tuesday at 7:30pm at New Valley Ahwatukee. This week’s topic is How Can Christians be Good Citizens? Political Parties, Loyalty and the Kingdom of God