

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

A Popular Story Lots Of People Misunderstand:

Luke 10:25-37

Understanding the main characters:

A Man:

Robbers:

A Priest:

A Levite:

A Samaritan:

What I Wish It Meant:

Luke 10:25-37

I get to choose “**my neighbors**.”

I get to choose **how I help**.

What It Really Means:

Luke 10:25-37, Matthew 5:43-47

Boundaries for giving: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13

“My neighbor” is anyone **God brings** across my **path**.

“My neighbor’s” **needs** are my **responsibility**.

Food for Thought for the week of March 27, 2011

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Jesus was a master at meeting both the physical and spiritual needs of the people he came in contact with. Read Matthew 9:1-8 to see how Jesus met this man's needs on both levels, then answer the following questions:

Matthew 9:1-8

Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. [2] Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

[3] At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

[4] Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? [5] Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? [6] But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. . . ." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." [7] And the man got up and went home. [8] When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men. [NIV]

What difference did the paralytic's friends make?

What was the paralytic's greatest need?

What perspective does Isaiah 59:2 and Romans 6:23 give you on our greatest need?

Isaiah 59:2

*But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear. [NIV]*

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. [NIV]

What message did the physical healing of the paralytic send?

How can our good works help God's reputation?

2. Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan as a way to help explain the Great Commandment – loving God and loving others (Luke 10:27). How does each of the following passages help motivate you to go beyond good intentions and love those around you in a practical way?

Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' [38] This is the first and greatest commandment. [39] And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' [40] All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." [NIV]

James 1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. [NIV]

James 2:14-18

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? [15] Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. [16] If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his 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 what I do. [NIV]

1 John 3:16-18

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. [17] If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? [18] Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. [NIV]

3. Meeting the needs of others often happens in the interruptions of life. Jesus gave his followers clear instruction and a great example of what it looks like to be interruptible and to meet the needs of others. Use Mark 10:46-52 as a backdrop for helping you process the following questions.

Mark 10:46-52

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. [47] When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

[48] Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

[49] Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." [50] Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

[51] "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."

[52] "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road. [NIV]

What helps you pay attention and take notice of the needs of others?

What can distract you from taking notice of these needs?

How can you become more interruptible so you can be better used by God?