

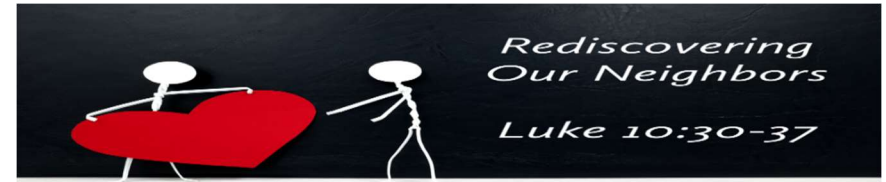


Stepping Stones

Luke 10:30-37 New Revised Standard Version

³⁰ Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and took off, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, treating them with oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him, and when I come back I will repay you whatever more you spend.' ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Notes: _____



"A good neighbor—a found treasure." Chinese Proverb

Growing up, I knew practically everyone in our neighborhood. The Joneses lived out our back door, my best friend, Daniel, was diagonal across the way, and the "Kodak Folks" were a few houses down. Time carried on, however, and with-it people moved, grew older, and experienced family changes. Today, that neighborhood is completely different and, unlike my childhood experience, I hardly know anyone who lives around us.

What started as an inquiry into the attainment of eternal life quickly turned into a discussion of neighbor identity. The lawyer posed a question to Jesus only to receive a story and a concluding question asked to himself. Of greater importance than identifying the lawyer's neighbors was the matter of discovering to whom he himself was called to be a neighbor. For Jesus, neighbor goes beyond proximity, culture, religion, and becomes a matter of action.

Over the years, we have come to refer to those who perform random acts of kindness as being "Good Samaritans." They appear in the right place at the right time and do what is necessary to aid another who finds him or herself in need. Occasionally, these individuals may be known, while, at other times, they may be complete strangers. But, if we are not careful, we can miss the real impact of this parable. It is the kind of impact which would have been astonishing to Jesus' first hearers.

1. **How we see another will determine how we move.**
2. **Pity goes beyond feeling bad and gets to work.**
3. **Being a neighbor calls for self-sacrifice for all of us.**

Prayer Pebble: Lord, enable me not only to have neighbors, but also to be a neighbor. Amen.