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**A Parable**  
**Luke 10:30-37**

Continuing with the theme of 'Following Jesus' we'll see today an emphasis in the form of 'A Parable' regarding an urgent need. Followers of Jesus have an obligation to reach down into the desperate pain around us. Perhaps like never before we need to get together and unite our forces and do all we can to reach a hurting humanity in the name of the Jesus.

If I've learned anything in the time I've been a Christian, I've learned that when you truly engage people's lives...you often find there are serious problems going on in the hearts of people. Genuine followers of Christ have a responsibility to look into the word of God for biblical answers to sociological and emotional ills. I believe the word of God is the antidote. If applied right it is the medicine that can heal the wounded souls of a wounding world.

We have an epidemic of pain infecting this country and it does not discriminate. And we need the word of God to minister healing to the broken hearted like never before.

Luke 10:29. It's a very familiar passage of scripture. Jesus has said some things that have people all stirred up. A man trying to justify himself for his laxidaziol attitude for his neighbor says to Jesus; **And who is my neighbor.** This man is trying to stump Jesus by asking the question. In response to this questions Jesus tells this story. Verse 30.

**(OVERHEAD)**

***"A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.***

PRAY

***And who is my neighbor?*** I think until we answer that question we won't be effective in ministry. An isolated attitude will infect the church if we don't become involved in the issues that are confronting us and step outside of our comfort zones and start touching people and discovering 'who is our neighbor.'

**(OVERHEAD)**

**We have to Reach Down to find our Neighbor**

It can't just be people who look like you, think like you, vote like you, dress like you and live in the same housing complex. Jesus told us a certain man went down from Jerusalem, he didn't say what type of man it was. Just that he was going down from Jerusalem.

An interesting metaphor. Jerusalem sits at an elevation of 2,550 feet above sea level, whereas Jericho is about 1,200 feet below sea level. The man was descending into the place where he encountered the robbers.

People don't fall all at once. It's a gradual deterioration of the human soul that causes us to be vulnerable. We go down and then we fall into the hands of thieves. And the thief strips us wounds us and leaves us half dead. I like to get people in the early stages where you still have a shot at getting something done.

The bible says; "*He went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell in amongst thieves*". And the thief (V.30) *stripped him*, beat him and left him half dead. He wouldn't have been half dead if they hadn't of stripped him. They had to strip him first. Take away your dignity, your self esteem...had to strip him, take away your integrity, take away the truth.

The sword of the Spirit, the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, they had to strip him. As long as we remain covered we're not vulnerable to the enemy, but once we allow life to strip us, then we're vulnerable. The thief comes in, strips us, beats us, and leaves us half dead.

The real victory in this mans life is that if he was half dead then that means he was half alive. Sometimes you have to take the part you have left and use it to heal the part you lost and fight your way back.

How many here believe in fighting your way back. If you're going to have a life you have to fight for it, if you're going to have a family you have to fight for it. If you want to have any purpose in ministry you're going to have to fight for it because there is a thief who wants to strip you and leave you half dead.

**(OVERHEAD)**

*<sup>31</sup>A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup>So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.*

This man was laying there on the road to Jericho half dead and you know the story...how the Priest passed by and how the Levite passed by...basically, religion is what passed by.

**(OVERHEAD)**

**We have to Reach Down to find our Neighbor  
Religion is Blind to its Neighbor**

Religion has never been effective at touching people where they are in their pain. Jesus never chose religion to be the source of people's healing. Religion sits in the comfort of their pew...maybe they'll take a look, religious people may even write a check but they never really make a difference because you can't make a difference in the life of anybody you're not willing to touch. If there's going to be any healing done through you then you've got to be the type of person who is willing to go the extra mile, where they are, to reach them.

- **Religion says;** If I obey...God will love me –  
**Redemptions says;** in spite of who and what we are God loves us where we are.
- **Religion says;** the world is filled with two kinds of people
  - Good people or Bad people. Good people look, act and behave like them and bad people are everybody else.**Redemptions says;** there are two kinds of people
  - Bad people who repent and bad people who are unrepentant
- **Religion says;** It's all about what you do...Do you home school, Christian school, go to AWANA's, read out of the KJV 1611. Do this...do this – Don't do this. And none of it is in the bible.  
**Redemption says;** It's not about what you do or don't do...it's about what Jesus did – That's it period.

**(OVERHEAD)**

**We have to Reach Down to find our Neighbor**

**Religion is Blind to its Neighbor**

**We have to Partner to reach our Neighbor**

Verse 33.

**(OVERHEAD)**

***<sup>33</sup>But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. <sup>34</sup>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup>The next day he took out two silver coins 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.'***

The Good Samaritan is distinctive in this story because he came to where the wounded man was. He got in there...he altered his day to help him, he altered his week to make a difference in this man's life. We as ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ have the answer.

We're children of light and we must carry the light of Christ into the lives of people where they are. We need to encourage those who have fallen into the hands of the thief and let them know there is an answer. Let them know it is possible to move towards the light. Let them know there is a better way, a more abundant way that exists in Christ Jesus. We've got to let them know that a lifestyle building into God's principles really works. But we must go to where they are.

We must go in there with the attitude that we're going to fight with and for them. With the conviction that no matter how bad they've been beat up that Christ can heal them. I believe that with God we can do the impossible. Christ makes it possible to get out of any situation. And with Jesus as your Lord you can find your way back out of the pit. But we've got to take that message in there.

We have to be like the Samaritan who got down where his neighbor was...identified the need and responded. We can have good principles and right concepts in our heads but they don't mean anything until we're willing to get in there with those who are hurting. Until we weep for those who weep, feel for those who are broken. Real ministry is coming out of your comfort zone to the place where the need is and meeting it.

The bible says he set him on his own donkey and took him to the Inn. My fascination is not the connection with the Samaritan and this man who is wounded as much as it is the relationship between the Samaritan and the Innkeeper. They were on the same side of the healing process.

Until these two came together, the healing process wasn't complete. The Samaritan had the ability to get the man off the side of the road, but he wasn't able to attend to prolonged care. It took the Innkeeper to complete the process. When they came together the victim benefited from their partnering. Somebody has to minister and get them off the side of the road, and somebody has to open up the places to take them so healing can take place. If we would partner together...powerful things would happen.

- Pastors feeling too many needs (Have family)
- Community Resources

The bible says he took him to the Inn and spent the night. I think there must have been time for the Samaritan and the Innkeeper to get to know each other, to build into each other. Fellowship is not just getting together over coffee and cake, fellowship is when we spend the night together and get to understanding each other's uniqueness.

And we bind together to make for a common good that impacts a hurting world. And that's what they did. In the morning the Samaritan got up and gave the Innkeeper two silver coins and said; "take care of him". The Samaritan told the Innkeeper that if the bill were to run higher then he would pay him the next time he passed through.

There was no guarantee that the Innkeeper would get paid. But it didn't matter to him; he was willing to help in spite of the potential cost. Doing ministry will cost you, but it shouldn't matter, you have to get in there anyway. It's going to cost you time away from where you planned to be...It's going to cost you to extend yourself in ways that aren't comfortable. It appears that the Innkeeper didn't care about that. He knew that there was a man who needed healing...a man who was just picked up off the side of the road...so he made himself available.

Pain is all around us. I'm afraid it will be in abundance until the return of our Jesus.

Example of Churches being the bride.