

is the very one who saves us from them. Jesus is our hope. He saw us when we were beaten, bloodied and left for dead by the side of the road. He came and gave everything to heal us and to give us life. Isaiah said *“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”* (Isaiah 53:5) Jesus is our hope to live as kingdom neighbors. Because not only does He save us and give us the call, but His grace sustains us and empowers us to live out the call, according to His power that is at work within us. It’s impossible without Him. I hope and pray that God would move in us in a mighty way, that we might live as kingdom neighbors and change this messed up city of Chicago and the world for Jesus Christ.

Oct. 25, 2020
The Kingdom of God (2)
Kingdom Neighbors
Luke 10:25-37
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Today we are going to talk about what it means to be Kingdom Neighbors. What does Kingdom Neighbors mean? As we are going to look at a favorite parable again, we are going to talk about becoming Kingdom Neighbors. The first thing we are going to look at in this passage is the teacher’s questions. There was an expert in the law who came to meet with Jesus. We can learn about being Kingdom Neighbors from his questions. An expert in the law asked a question to test Jesus. How did he test Jesus? Here is the first question he asked. *“Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”* (25) He believed that he could do something to inherit eternal life. Jesus asked him, *“What is written in the law? How do you read it?”* (26) And then the man 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.”* (27) Jesus said, *“You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.”* (28)

The expert in the law asked a second question. *“And who is my neighbor?”* (29) Now that sounds simple enough. Who is my neighbor? But what he was really asking is “Jesus you know what? There are some people that I want to love and then there are some other people that I don’t want to love at all. I want to find a way to turn the law around to justify me not loving them. There are people who are not like me, and I don't want to love them. So I am going to look for a way to twist the command so that I will not be guilty.”

The expert in the law went on and Jesus pulled it out further in the next point. Jesus began to tell a story in verse 30. It said a man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes. They beat him

and went away leaving him half dead. Now, when the expert was listening to this, he thought, "That happens all the time on that road. Who's going to help this man?" In verse 31, Jesus said, "A priest happened to be going down the same road." Now we think a priest, that's good news. He was somebody who worked in the temple and helped lead the people of God in worship. Surely the priest will stop and help this man in desperate need. When the priest saw the man, he passed by on the other side. Another person came along who was a Levite, another religious person who worked in the temple. What happened? When the Levite came to the place and saw him, he passed by on the other side. Now, it does not say why the priest and Levite passed by on the other side. Maybe they thought it wasn't safe. If this guy got beat up, maybe the same thing would happen to them. Maybe they were afraid. Maybe they said, "Well, we didn't know him." Maybe they said, "Well, he should have been more responsible. He got himself into this mess. He should get himself out of the mess." Maybe they thought, I don't have time.

Here is the dramatic point. A Samaritan came where the man was and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He was moved on the inside. He saw this man hurting. His heart broke for the man. He didn't sit around calculating whether or not this man was worthy to be helped or not. This man was probably somebody of a different race, a different class than he was. But none of that mattered. When he saw the hurting man, it broke his heart. But, not only was his heart broken, his broken heart moved him to action.

Verse 34 says that he went to him and he bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. He got close to the man. He gave of his time, his energy and his resources. And then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. Then the next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper and said, "Look after him and when I return I will

reimburse you for any extra expense you may have." (35) He saw him in need and he gave of himself to meet that need.

The Samaritan in this story shows us what it means to live as a Kingdom Neighbor. Picture yourself being the expert in the law and you are listening to Jesus telling the story. As I told you before, Samaritans and Jews at that time were horrible enemies. They hated each other. What Jesus did here was he showed us not only what kingdom neighboring looks like, but he showed the expert's own heart and his own hatred for somebody else. Jesus made the hated one the hero. What about us? Who is our Samaritan? If Jesus told that story to us, who is the person that we would look at? Jesus pushes us to answer that question. We look at our calling as a church and as Christians.

After telling the story, Jesus asked the expert in the law, "*Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers? Did you notice what happened?*" (36) He changed it from "Who is my neighbor," to "Who was a neighbor." In the kingdom of God, neighbor is not just a noun. It's a verb. It's an action word. It isn't who is my neighbor. It's how do we live as neighbors. How do we love as neighbors? The expert in the law got the point, saying "*The one who had mercy on him.*" (37) And then Jesus gave him, and he gives us, the call of kingdom neighbors saying, "*Go and do likewise.*" (37) He was saying, "As you have seen mercy, and as you have received mercy, now go and demonstrate mercy."

Step back and think about what that means for us. What would it look like for us to go and do likewise? What would it look like for Faith Church to go and do likewise? What would it look like for each of us to go and do likewise? Where do we find the power to go and do likewise? Where do we find the strength to go on? Where do we find the power to see our hearts change? This is the good news of the gospel. The very one who shows us our sins