

**Sermon:** *Being a Good Samaritan*  
**Text:** *Luke 10:25 – 37*  
**Date:** *July 11, 2010 AM*  
**Place:** *Jesup First UMC*

In May 2006, David Sharp made the climb of his life. He arrived at the summit of Mount Everest in late afternoon. And then, as he descended the mountain, without oxygen, he fell unconscious into the snow and ice. At the age of 34, he had accomplished a life-long dream, but he didn't live to tell anybody about it.

But it's the rest of the story that really troubles me. You see, a few hours later, as David laid in the snow, struggling for his life, a team of 40 climbers came by on their way to the summit. And they decided that if they stopped to help him, they'd never make it to the top. So, they'd help him on the way back down. But when they came back, David Sharp was dead.

Recently, Fox News ran a video of a young man being beaten by a street gang in broad daylight. Now, I understand the reality of gang violence. That doesn't shock me anymore, but what did shock me was that while 6 boys were beating and kicking one boy, there were people standing along the sidewalk, watching it all and not doing anything to stop it.

Bishop King has challenged the members of the South Georgia Conference to be sowers of the Word. He says that as we go about our daily lives, you and I must sow the seed of God's Word into the lives of our Friends, Relatives, Associates, and Neighbors. Now, that doesn't mean that we preach on the sidewalk or go around quoting scripture all the time. It doesn't mean that we put an "*I Love Jesus*" bumper sticker on

the back of our cars. It simply means that we live out God's Word in our daily lives, that we become "doers of the Word and not hearers only."

In our text this morning, Jesus was stopped on the street by a lawyer, who asked Him: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" And you know the answer: "Love God ... and love your neighbor." But the lawyer asked a follow up question: "Who is my neighbor?" So Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan, a foreigner who saw a dying man in a ditch and stopped to help him. And then, Jesus challenged the lawyer and us by saying: "Go and do likewise."

Jesus hit the nail on the head, didn't He? You see, most of the time our problem is not ignorance of God's Word. We know it; we've read it and studied it; we've been to Sunday School, kidzone, UMYF, Vacation Bible School, and Bible Study. We know the God's Word, but sometimes we choose not to live God's Word. Someone has paraphrased Mark Twain: "*It ain't those parts of the Bible that I don't know that bother me; it's the parts I do know and have not lived that bother me.*"

That's the challenge for us too, isn't it? You see, we all know the meaning of this parable: that we are to love our neighbor regardless of who they are or where they live and that this love should be demonstrated by acts of kindness. We know that and yet, many times, we fail to live out or we choose not to live it out. So, this morning, I want us to consider five things we can do to express loving-kindness to our neighbors.

***First, Keep Your Eyes Open to the Needs Around You!*** I'm sure that the Samaritan didn't set out on his trip that day, thinking to himself: "*I'm gonna find a man laying in a ditch today and I'm gonna stop and help him.*" But Jesus said: "***But a Samaritan while traveling came near him, and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.***"

Friends, I believe in Divine Appointments. I believe that in the providence of God there are times when God allows people with great needs to pass right under our noses. Every time I am able to help someone through the Altar Fund, I spend a few minutes when that person and then, I pray with them and in that prayer, I thank God for bringing that person and their needs into the doors of our church. There are Divine Appointments; keep your eyes open for them.

A Good Samaritan is always looking for a Divine Appointment.

***Second, Let Jesus Love Others Through You.*** The Priest and the Levite saw the need and they might have even felt sorry for the man, but their love and concern were never expressed. Verse 33 says: When the Samaritan saw the dying man, "***He felt compassion for him.***"<sup>1</sup> And verse 34 says, "***He went to Him and bandaged his wounds. Then, he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.***" He felt compassion and then, addressed the needs in a very practical way.

Have you seen the movie, The Blind Side? It's the story of Michael Mohr, an African American

teenager who had chosen to be homeless rather than live with a drug-addicted mother or in the foster care system. Michael is one of those kids that fall through the cracks and end up selling drugs or serving time in prison or living off of the welfare system. But then, a good Christian family, the Touhys, took him into their hearts and into their home and it changed his life. He graduated from high school, went to college, and then played in the NFL. And it all started because the Touhys cared enough to get involved.

A Good Samaritan puts love into action.

***Third, Let Jesus Use your Blessings to Bless Others!*** The Samaritan loved sacrificially. He used *his* oil and wine to clean the man's wounds. Then, he put the man on *his* donkey and took him to the motel in town.

Brothers and Sisters, we have so much! The last year and a half or two years have been financially difficult for a lot of people. But ... we're still blessed! We have so much; our standard of living is so much better than others in our community and around the world. And I don't know about you, but I wonder why? Why are we so blessed? Is it because we're so smart? Is it because we work harder or make better investments? I don't think so.

I believe you and I have been blessed to be a blessing. In Genesis 12, God told Abram: **"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you; and all peoples of the earth will be blessed through you."** God

blessed Abraham so that Abraham could bless others. Isn't it possible that we've been blessed for the same reason?

A Good Samaritan uses use God's blessings to bless others!

***Fourth, Don't be Afraid to go the Extra Mile!***  
Verse 35 says: *"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.'"*

Sometimes it's easy and convenient to just do something and get it over with, to give someone a handful of pocket change or a quick drive across town, but in Luke 6, Jesus said: *"If someone asks you for your coat, offer them your shirt too. Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken from you, don't try to get them back."*

A Good Samaritan goes the extra mile.

Now, we know the Bible teaches two great commandments: *"Love God and ... love your neighbor."* But are we doing that? C.S. Lewis wrote: *"Do not waste your time bothering whether you 'love' your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this, we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you love someone, you will presently come to love him."*<sup>2</sup>

Now, I'm sure those hikers had a lot of good reasons for passing by David Sharp at the top of Mt. Everest. After all, it was cold; their oxygen was running low; how could they have carried him down, but doesn't love demand that we stop to help a dying man?

Every day, we encounter many David Sharps.  
Are we too busy? Are we too selfish? Are we not  
concerned? What's our excuse?

Every day they pass me by. I can see it in their eye  
Empty people filled with care headed who knows where  
On they go through private pain living fear to fear  
Laughter hides their silent cries only Jesus hears  
People need the Lord. People need the Lord  
At the end of broken dreams, He's the open door  
People need the Lord. People need the Lord  
When will we realize, people need the Lord?

We are called to take His light  
to a world where wrong seems right  
What could be too great a cost for  
sharing love with one whose lost  
In our hearts we all must feel all the grief they bear  
They must hear the words of life only we can share

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<sup>1</sup> NLT

<sup>2</sup> Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis