

Getting Close Enough to See

Scripture Reading — Luke 10:25-37

25On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" 27He 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'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." 29But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30In reply Jesus said: "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. 31A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34He 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. 35The 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.' 36"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." —

"A Samaritan ... came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him." Luke 10:33

The lawyer in Jesus' story is sharp. He reads the fine print and wonders who has a claim on his time and on his life. Each of us might be tempted to do the same: Who really has a claim on me, especially in a needy world that is so impersonal?

Jesus tells a story to enlarge our definition of what a neighbor is. He tells a story about a good Samaritan who cares for a hurt Jewish man because he wants the story to hit home to his listeners.

In those days Jewish people thought that the only good Samaritan was a dead Samaritan. Even Jesus' disciples thought so (see Luke 9:51-56). Samaritans were despised and considered the lowlifes of society.

In Jesus' story, two religious leaders see the wounded man, but they walk around him because they don't want to get involved and don't want to be late or made unclean for their religious duties. But when the good Samaritan comes upon the victim, he stops and approaches the wounded man.

Being the presence of Jesus in our world today means getting up close to the needs of the world. We need to overcome racial barriers, religious, social, and economic differences. We need to be with people who may be different from us so that we can show Jesus' heart of compassion.

Prayer

Lord, we confess that we really dislike feeling obligated to others. But your claim of love on us calls us to show your love to others. Help us do that today. In your name, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Missions](#)

Written by Martin Contant — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/martin-contant>

<https://today.reframemedia.com/devotions/getting-close-enough-to-see-2005-09-12>

Printed on July 16, 2019