

Finding Service and Ministry
Harmony M.B.C., June 21, 2009 (Evening)
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Luk 10:30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

Luk 10:31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

Luk 10:34 And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Luk 10:35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

I. Being faithful to observance of rites or not enough

- The priest and Levite both knew and practiced certain religious observances, undoubtedly. But with all the religion they lacked the internal elements that made them true ministers to men

- Lack of empathy was evident in their responses

- > Some of the most emotionless people on the planet are also very religious
- > Some of the least helpful of the down and out are also very religious
- > We have more trouble today with this problem as it relates to the spiritually down and out than we do with the physically or materially down and out. There are lots of soup kitchens, clothes banks, several homeless shelters that provide a place to sleep. But in the midst of all this we have variations on this theme of priest and Levite; people who can give physical assistance but do not have the depth of spiritual life to pick men's souls up out of the ditch.

II. Being in a time and place to minister is not enough provocation for some

- For the priest: just a glance (suggested by "when he saw him") sent the priest away. This is symbolic of an aversion to helping fellow human beings

- Most people have to bring an attitude like this under subjection to enable them to minister to strangers

- Coming and looking by the Levite did not give him sufficient empathy to provoke him to help. This is symbolic of a detached assessment and deciding to remain aloof despite what is observed

- > If we look for a reason, we can always find one for not ministering to strangers who are on hard times and who may actually make us feel threatened.

- This could be a setup; those robbers could be using the wounded man as a decoy
 - This could be a scam; how far would people go in bruising themselves up and looking wounded to get you to be sympathetic enough to fall for their scam
 - Even if this is not a scam, what if the robbers are still nearby...pausing to help this guy could give them time to do the same thing to you
- Behaving somewhat this way can be prudent, but too much speculation will almost always lead sons of Adam to a decision not to help

III. True ministering and service requires intent on our part

- The Samaritan represents a person who has no stock in the matter at all (explain that this was probably a Jew that was injured and that it was by consent that Jews and Samaritans did not interact at all. No Jew was of interest or any responsibility to Samaritans and no Samaritans were the responsibility or interest of a Jew)
- Despite having nothing to gain and despite the hatred such a Jew as this might have for him, the Samaritan intends to help anyway
 - > Many occasions in our lives to minister to mankind take this very form
 - > Few people have to be coached to minister or do service to family, near kin, or friends.
 - > However, for many this is as far as the term “neighbor” extends

IV. A fully helpful ministry requires more than a token action

- The Samaritan could have told the guy, “I’ll call an ambulance.” Or, “here’s a bottle of wine to help ease the pain.”
- Notice that Jesus makes a point of the “compassion”
 - > This is the missing element in a world where people won’t help people
 - > It was compassion that emboldened the Samaritan to stop anyway
 - > It was compassion that provoked him to make all effort to help with the man’s wounds
 - > It was personal initiative that revealed itself in the Samaritan when he made a conscious decision to postpone his own business to see to this need
 - > It is the single feature that often distinguishes believers whose intent is to make a difference where others are unresponsive
 - Let’s turn to Numbers 25:8 and see a historical example on that personal initiative in the faithful: Israel has fallen into its worst spiritual state to date; they were under a plague sent by the Lord. In the midst of this one brazen guy brings one of the Midianite women into his tent to commit wickedness in the sight of the whole camp. Phinehas is a type of believer taking personal initiative
- Notice the elements of the Samaritans assistance:
 - > actual physical assistance - this should be symbolic of our intent and success at actually touching people’s lives
 - > seeks to promote his healing - this should be symbolic of our attempt and purpose to round out both physical healing and spiritual healing
 - > sacrifices his own comfort to accommodate the injured - this Samaritan’s example teaches us that if ministering is worth doing, it is worth us sacrificing our own comfort to accomplish
 - > seeks and solicits the assistance of others - if we recognize that people need help beyond

our means, let's be ready to ask help from others for those in need.

- > spends money to provide for him - this is the acid test of whether we are ready to minister to the full extent that we are able.
- > makes arrangements for the wounded man's future care - we should be concerned about the future of those we minister to. Concern and action for their future will pay dividends in the future. Remember these words by Jesus in:
 - Mat 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
Mat 25:35 For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:
Mat 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.
Mat 25:37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?
Mat 25:38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*?
Mat 25:39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?
Mat 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

These words reveal much to us, but the thing I want us to notice is that this is future that Christ is talking about. AND...he is remembering and bringing up what was done for the needy in the past.

Caleb and Joshua are examples of believers making a ministry of exhortation and encouragement (Num 13:30, 14:6-9)