

# **“The Ugly Neighbor”**

**(Luke 10:29-37)**

**Dr. Richard S. Koole**  
**Chapel Pointe**  
**April 3, 2011**

---

## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Story of Kitty Genovese**

1. The story
  - a. 1964 in Queens New York
  - b. Brutal rape and murder
2. The 38 who did nothing
  - a. Turned up their radio so they wouldn't hear her cries
  - b. “I didn't want to get involved”
3. New York Times headline “38 who saw murder and didn't call police”
  - a. “The 38”

### **B. “Good Samaritan Laws”**

1. Protection for those willing to get involved
2. Named for the story in the Bible of the “Good Samaritan”

### **C. The power of this story**

1. Learned it as a child
2. Powerful life-changing lessons

## **II. Review...Luke 10**

### **A. While Jesus was teaching**

1. Interrupted by a man of distinction
  - a. An expert on religious law
  - b. The “Do’s and Don’ts” of Judaism
2. The expert posed life’s most important question

(25) *“Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”*

### **B. Jesus answered the question with a question**

1. “You’re the expert...you tell me”

(27) *He 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.’”*

- a. Gave the correct answer
2. Taken from the Old Testament
3. They recited it every morning and evening

### **C. God wants more than our “Leftover Love”**

1. With all your heart
2. With all your soul
3. With all your strength
4. With all your mind

### **D. Also told to love his neighbor**

1. That raised two more questions
  - a. How much should I love my neighbor?
    1. *“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*
  - b. Who is my neighbor?

(29) *But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”*

2. Jesus used a story to show him

3. A powerful lesson in the importance of “*mercy*”

### **III. Text....vs. 30-37**

#### **1. *Mercy Understands Something* (vs. 30-32)**

*(30) In 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.*

- a. “From Jerusalem to Jericho “
  1. Jerusalem at 3,000 feet above sea level
  2. Jericho about 1,000 feet below sea level
  3. 4000 foot drop in 17 miles
- b. The Jericho Road
  1. The dangers on the road
    - a. Narrow path
  2. Called the “bloody pass” (Joshua 17:17)
  3. Robbers hiding behind rocks
- c. The brutal attack
  1. They stripped him near naked
  2. They beat him
  3. They left him for dead
  4. Would die without help
- d. Would anyone stop to help him?
- e. **The Priest** (v. 31)

*(31) A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.*

1. Priests were supposed to be good guys

2. Claimed to love God and their neighbor
3. But walked on by
4. He got as far away as he could
5. His excuses?
  - a. “I didn’t want to get involved
  - b. “I’m in a hurry”
  - c. “It might be a trap”
  - d. “Someone else will help”

f. **The Levite** (v. 32)

*(32) So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.*

1. Descendant from Levi (but not Aaron)
2. Assisted the priests
3. They too were considered to be “religious”
4. Claimed to love God and their neighbors
5. The need was obvious....and he avoided it
6. When you see a homeless guy coming
  - a. Get to the other side of the street
7. Guy downtown last week
  - a. God was testing me

g. **The Samaritan** (v. 33-35)

*(33) But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him*

1. Jews and Samaritans hated each other
  - a. To them there was no such thing as a “good” Samaritan

- b. An oxymoron
- 2. Jews traveling between Galilee and Jerusalem
  - a. Would go around Samaria
- 3. Jews shaking the dust off their feet
- h. Mercy **understands** a person's need...regardless of who they are
  - 1. Helping those with the greatest need
    - a. James 1:27

*(27) Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress*

- i. Mercy should be part of a Christian's DNA

## **2. Mercy Feels Something (v. 33)**

*(33) But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him*

- a. Two feelings are mentioned
  - 1. He felt **Pity**

- a. Definition

*Sorrow or grief aroused by the misfortune of another; compassion for suffering*

- b. There but by the grace of God go I
  - 1. Board members at Mel Trotter
  - 2. Guys with brothers in the program
  - 3. Only one bad decision away from being on the streets
- c. God's pity on you
- 2. He felt **Mercy**
  - a. Definition

*Kind and compassionate treatment of an offender, enemy, prisoner, or other person under one's power. To be kind and forgiving.*

b. Luke 10:37

*(37) The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."*

c. God's mercy toward you

1. "Wonderful, Merciful Savior"

b. Our need to feel and act on "pity" and "mercy"

1. Love INC.

a. Neighbors in need

2. Nancy Berends and Larry Golin

a. Medical

3. Alpha

a. Young women

4. Mel Trotter

a. Homeless, hungry and hurting

c. Remember the mercy God had for you

### **3. *Mercy Does Something* (v. 34)**

*(34) 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.*

a. Used his own oil and wine to cleanse the wounds

1. Draped him over his donkey

2. Took him to an inn (there today)

3. And took care of him

b. Mercy demands action

## 1. James 2:14-18

*(14) What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? (15) Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. (16) If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? (17) In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (18) But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.*

c. Our church....Amanda Chapman

## 1. Human trafficking in West Michigan

4. ***Mercy Costs Something*** (v. 35)

*(35) 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."*

a. The two silver coins

1. Would cover between 30 to 60 days of lodging

2. Offered more to the innkeeper

b. This for a man that probably hated Samaritans

c. Loved him like he loved himself

5. ***Mercy Proves something*** (vs. 36-37)

*(36) Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"*

a. Two religion men....without love

b. One outcast with love

c. Demonstrates the heart of God

*(37) The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."*

d. Our marching orders.... "Go and do likewise"

e. Jesus has the moral authority to ask this of us....I John 3:16-17

*(16) This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. (17) If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? (18) Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.*

- f. Otherwise it's hypocrisy

### **III. Summary**

#### **A. Henry's story**

1. Did everything together in college
2. Debate partners
3. We argued over everything
  - a. Especially some of the foolishness we saw in Christian circles
4. The three things that bothered us the most

##### ***a. Harshness***

1. The truth without love is harsh
2. Quoting verses like weapons
3. Taking pleasure in using the truth to hurt people
4. Piling on those who were hurting

##### ***b. Hypocrisy***

1. All talk...little action
2. Pretending to be perfect
3. Not what we appear to be
  - a. Strip clubs and secret sins of leaders
4. Cold hearts devoid of mercy

##### ***c. Holier-than-Thou attitude***

1. Think we're better than others

2. Unwilling to forgive certain sins
  3. Picking on certain types of sinners
  4. Criticism of other believers and churches
  5. Separation from other believers (Billy Graham)
5. We both went on to get our doctorates
    - a. He walked away from the church and now teaches philosophy at a university
  6. We both saw some of the terrible injustices done in the name of Christ
    - a. He threw out the baby with the bathwater
    - b. I kept the baby...and am trying to clean up the bathwater
  7. We don't need to choose between "truth" and "love"
  8. My goal for Chapel Pointe...the right balance of truth and love

## **B. The controversy over "Love Wins"**

1. How it applies to the "Good Samaritan"
2. I believe the Bible clearly teaches no second chance after death
3. A big question is "Why"
  - a. Why are so many attracted to something not in the Bible
4. Maybe, like Henry, they are reacting to some of the ugliness they've seen in their old churches:
  - a. The truth spoken in *Harshness*
  - b. The truth spoken in *Hypocrisy*
  - c. The truth spoken in *Holier-than-Thou*
5. The call of pure love sounds attractive
6. In response, they throw out the truth with the bathwater

7. ...and risk the eternal souls of many by telling them they'll get additional chances after they die.

### **C. Let me share some history**

1. The battle that was raging 100 years ago
  - a. Theological Liberalism threatened to decimate the American church
  - b. Over core issues
    1. The Trustworthiness and Authority of the Bible
    2. The Deity of Christ...was he God in flesh
    3. The Virgin Birth
    4. The Bodily Resurrection and Return of Christ
  - c. Mainline Protestant denominations, churches and seminaries were being sucked in
2. Some courageous men and women stood up and drew a line in the sand
  - a. Listed beliefs worth fighting for
  - b. The "Fundamentals of the Faith" published around 1900
    1. *The inerrancy and authority of the Bible*
    2. *The virgin birth of Jesus*
    3. *Substitutionary atonement*
    4. *Bodily resurrection of Christ*
    5. *The glorious return of Jesus Christ*
3. They tried to bring the denominations back to the truth
4. Finally started breaking away from liberal denominations in 1930's
  - a. They were fighting for the truth of God's word
  - b. Were called the "fundamentalists"
5. But then many in the next generation came and got distracted

- a. Gave fundamentalists a bad name
- 6. Focused on methodology, instead of theology
  - a. Lifestyle issues
    - 1. “*Hair...Hemlines...and Harmony*”
    - 2. The *hair* instead of the *heart*
  - b. Separation from other believers
    - 1. Primary, secondary, tertiary...
    - 2. Attacks on Billy Graham
  - c. A new form of legalism
    - 1. It severely damaged many of my generation
    - 2. And in turn their offspring
- 7. The result...Religion by rules
  - a. Soon it became apparent that they were far from optional. These manmade standards became every inch as important as the scriptural laws and in some instances far more crucial.
- 8. Some churches prided themselves on preaching the truth
  - a. But seemed to ignore the people lying on the Jericho road
  - b. They began to look like “the 38”
- 9. Many began searching for love regardless of truth

#### **D. Francis Schaeffer’s crisis**

- 1. Religion in the 1950’s and 60’s
  - a. Judged a person’s spirituality by outward appearances
  - b. Looked good on the outside...but cold hearts
- 2. His blockbuster book in 1971....“*True Spirituality?*”

- a. The heart has to change first
- b. Not behavior and dress
- 3. True spirituality is *from the inside out*
  - a. God wants to change your heart first
- 4. Don't try to change behavior...without changing the heart

## **E. My vision for the people of Chapel Pointe**

- 1. We do a pretty good job
- 2. People attracted to a church balancing truth and love
- 3. Must strive to keep this church free from the 3 abuses
  - a. From Harshness.....to Mercy*
    - 1. The truth will always be told in love
    - 2. Mercy
    - 3. Forgiveness
  - b. From Hypocrisy.....to Transparency*
    - 1. We'll never pretend to be what we aren't
    - 2. We'll strive for authenticity
    - 3. Address suffering
  - c. From Holier-than-thou.....to Humility*
    - 1. None better than others
    - 2. A hospital for the hurting
    - 3. "Who am I that I should boast...except in Christ"
- 4. Ephesians 4:15 "*speaking the truth in love*"
- 5. Where mercy is part of our DNA