

“The Good Samaritan”

Summary

This powerful message takes us deep into the familiar parable of the Good Samaritan, but with a fresh lens that challenges us to move from being mere observers to active participants in God's redemptive work. At the heart of this teaching is a convicting question: Who are we passing by on the road of our daily lives? The sermon unpacks three critical actions that distinguish true compassion from religious busyness. First, we must dare to look—to actually see the broken, the marginalized, and the hurting around us rather than averting our eyes. There's a profound connection between seeing and releasing compassion, and when we refuse to look, we cut off the flow of God's heart through us. Second, we must dare to get involved, allowing the Holy Spirit to interrupt our carefully planned schedules. The most effective ministry happens when we're willing to stop, even when it's inconvenient. Third, we must dare to make a commitment until the task is finished—not just offering token gestures that soothe our conscience, but ensuring long-term restoration. The challenge rings clear: Are we like the priest and Levite who were too busy and too important to stop, or are we like the Samaritan who saw, felt compassion, and acted? The sobering reality is that people around us are half dead and half alive, and their eternal destiny may hinge on whether we're willing to cross to their side of the road.

Small Group Study Guide – The Good Samaritan

The Good Samaritan - Living the Difference

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Share about a time when someone stopped to help you when they didn't have to. How did that make you feel?

Sermon Overview

Steve Wheeler shared the parable of the Good Samaritan, challenging us to move from being observers to active participants in God's work of redemption. The message focused on three key actions of the Samaritan: he dared to look, he dared to get involved, and he dared to make a commitment until the task was finished.

Key Scripture

Luke 10:25-37 - The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Key Verse: *"Go and do likewise"* (Luke 10:37)

Discussion Questions

Part 1: Daring to Look

1. **The priest and Levite weren't bad people—they were just busy.** How does busyness prevent us from seeing the needs around us? What are the "appointments" or priorities that cause us to "pass by on the other side"?
2. **Steve shared that "the greatest enemy isn't dislike or hatred—it's indifference."** Do you agree? Why is indifference so dangerous in the Christian life?
3. **Reflection:** When was the last time you truly *looked* at someone in need rather than just seeing them as "scenery on the way to your destination"?

Part 2: Daring to Get Involved

4. **Steve prayed, "Lord, help me to live the difference today," and immediately faced a test.** Have you ever prayed a prayer that God answered in an unexpected or challenging way? Share your experience.
5. **The sermon mentioned that we often put conditions on our giving** (like telling someone not to buy drugs with money we give). Why do we do this? What does "give to those who ask" (without conditions) challenge in our hearts?
6. **Steve said, "The most effective ministry is when we allow the Holy Spirit to interrupt our schedule."** What would it look like practically for you to be more interruptible this week?

Part 3: Daring to Commit

7. **The Good Samaritan didn't just provide first aid—he ensured long-term restoration.** How can we move beyond "token offerings" to genuine commitment in meeting needs?
 8. **Steve shared about building a house for Mr. John, who then didn't move into it for over a year.** How do you handle disappointment or frustration when people don't respond the way you expect after you've helped them?
 9. **The sermon emphasized that reaching the lost is a "team effort"—some provide immediate help, others provide long-term care.** What role do you think God is calling you to play? Are you more of a "Good Samaritan" or an "innkeeper"?
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Key Takeaways

1. **Redemption is the theme of the entire Bible** - God's work of bringing Christ to a world that needs Him, through us.
 2. **There's a connection between seeing and compassion** - We must dare to truly look at people to have compassion flow through us.
 3. **Ministry is never convenient** - Meeting needs requires sacrifice and allowing the Holy Spirit to interrupt our schedules.
 4. **We're all called to missions** - Either as senders or as those who go.
 5. **People are "half dead, half alive"** - Lives hang in the balance based on the actions of those who pass by.
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: "Live the Difference"

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

1. **Dare to Look**
 - Pray each morning: "Lord, help me to live the difference today"
 - Make eye contact and truly see three people you would normally pass by
 - Journal about what you noticed
 2. **Dare to Get Involved**
 - Keep cash/gift cards in your car specifically to give when asked
 - Practice giving without conditions or lectures
 - Allow one "interruption" to your schedule to help someone
 3. **Dare to Commit**
 - Research one local ministry serving the homeless, poor, or marginalized
 - Commit to volunteering once this month
 - Consider supporting a missionary financially (even \$10/month makes a difference)
 4. **Go on a Mission Trip**
 - If you've never been on a short-term mission trip, talk to church leadership about opportunities
 - If you have, consider mentoring someone who hasn't
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Group Activity

Mapping Our Community Needs:

- As a group, identify 2-3 specific needs in your local community (homeless population, single mothers, elderly, immigrants, etc.)

- Discuss: What would it look like for our group to "dare to look, get involved, and commit" to one of these needs?
 - Make a concrete plan with specific dates and responsibilities
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Closing Reflection

Steve's Story About the Homeless Man: Read this quote again: *"Did I ask you to build a house for him? Yes. Did I ask you to put conditions on him? No... You were obedient."*

Question: What does this teach us about obedience versus outcomes?

Prayer Focus

- **Pray for sensitivity** to the Holy Spirit's leading when He wants to interrupt your schedule
 - **Pray for compassion** to truly see people the way Jesus sees them
 - **Pray for courage** to get involved even when it's inconvenient
 - **Pray for your church's missionaries**
 - **Pray for opportunities** to "live the difference" this week
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Next Steps

1. Share with the group one specific way you'll "live the difference" this week
 2. Exchange contact info to check in and encourage each other mid-week
 3. Come prepared next week to share testimonies of how God used you
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Additional Resources

Books mentioned in the sermon:

- *Adventures of Faith* by Steve Wheeler
- *Through the Shadows: Overcoming Fear in the Midst of a Pandemic* by Steve Wheeler
- *Notes from My Father: Foundations for Successful Living* by Steve Wheeler

For Further Study:

- Matthew 25:31-46 (Sheep and Goats)
- James 2:14-26 (Faith without works)

- 1 John 3:16-18 (Love in action)

"Go and do likewise." - Jesus (Luke 10:37)

Main Points – The Good Samaritan

Title: Go and Do Likewise: Living the Difference Through Compassionate Action

Sermon Summary:

This sermon challenges believers to move from passive observation to active participation in God's redemptive work. Using the parable of the Good Samaritan, the message emphasizes that the greatest enemy of missions isn't hatred but indifference—the tendency to pass by those in need while focused on our own destinations. The sermon calls Christians to dare to look at human suffering, to be moved with compassion, and to get involved in meeting both physical and spiritual needs. It emphasizes that effective ministry happens when we allow the Holy Spirit to interrupt our schedules and reminds us that reaching the lost is a team effort requiring both senders and those who go. The core message is that Jesus commands us to "go and do likewise"—to be exact duplicates of the Good Samaritan's compassion and action.

Key Points:

- The theme of the entire Bible is redemption—God's work of bringing Christ to a world that needs Him through us
- Three responses to human need: the priest ignored it, the Levite acknowledged but avoided it, and the Samaritan stopped and acted
- The greatest enemy of missions is not hatred but indifference—passing by on the other side of the road
- The Samaritan did three critical things: he dared to look, he had compassion, and he got involved
- There is a direct connection between seeing people and releasing compassion—if we refuse to look, compassion won't flow
- Effective ministry requires allowing the Holy Spirit to interrupt our schedules
- Meeting someone's need is never convenient and often requires sacrifice
- Reaching the world is a team effort—some provide immediate help while others ensure long-term restoration
- We are all called to be missionaries, either as senders or as those who go
- "Go and do likewise" is not just a suggestion but our marching orders from Jesus

Scripture Reference:

- Luke 10:25-37 (The Parable of the Good Samaritan)
- Supporting references to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-18)
- "Give to those who ask" principle

Discussion Questions – The Good Samaritan

When have you found yourself 'passing by on the other side' like the priest and Levite, and what prevented you from stopping to help someone in need?

Steve Wheeler suggests that indifference, not hatred, is the greatest enemy in missions. How does this perspective challenge your understanding of what it means to love your neighbor?

What does it mean practically to 'dare to look' at suffering around us, and what fears or discomforts might we be avoiding by choosing not to see?

The sermon emphasizes that effective ministry happens when we allow the Holy Spirit to interrupt our schedules. How do you balance having plans and priorities while remaining open to divine interruptions?

Steve shared that he prayed 'Lord, help me live the difference today' and was immediately tested. What would change in your daily life if you prayed this prayer authentically?

How does the connection between seeing someone and feeling compassion work in your own experience, and what prevents this connection from happening?

The story of Mr. John reveals that obedience to God's call doesn't always produce the results we expect. How do you handle situations where your sacrificial giving doesn't seem to be used as you intended?

Jesus tells the lawyer to 'go and do likewise,' meaning to be an exact duplicate of the Good Samaritan's actions. What specific aspects of the Samaritan's response do you find most challenging to duplicate in your own life?

The sermon describes people as being 'half dead, half alive,' with their fate hinging on those who pass by. Who in your life might be in this precarious balance, waiting for someone to stop and truly see them?

Steve mentions that most missionaries are called during short-term mission trips because it opens their eyes to needs beyond their comfortable bubble. What steps could you take to expose yourself to the reality of human need in a way that might change your life direction?

Scriptures – The Good Samaritan

Scripture References from the Sermon

Explicitly Referenced:

1. **Luke 10:25-37** - The Parable of the Good Samaritan (primary text, read in full)
 - Verse 25 - The lawyer's question about eternal life
 - Verse 27 - Love God and neighbor commandment
 - Verse 29 - "Who is my neighbor?"
 - Verses 30-37 - The complete parable
 - Verse 33 - The Samaritan saw and had compassion
 - Verse 34 - Bandaging wounds, pouring oil and wine
 - Verse 37 - "Go and do likewise"
2. **Matthew 28:19-20** - The Great Commission (alluded to)
 - "Go into all the world, make disciples of every nation, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit"
3. **Mark 16:15-18** - Signs following believers (alluded to)
 - Speaking in new tongues, healing the sick, protection from harm
4. **Matthew 5:42** or **Luke 6:30** - "Give to those who ask" (referenced during the Penang story)

Devotional – The Good Samaritan

Day 1: Daring to Look

Reading: Luke 10:25-37

Devotional: The priest and Levite saw the wounded man but passed by. They weren't necessarily bad people—they were just busy, focused on their own destinations. How often do we do the same? We drive past the homeless, scroll past needs online, and insulate ourselves from suffering because looking requires response. The Samaritan "saw" and was moved with compassion. True seeing connects our eyes to our hearts. Today, ask God to remove the filters that protect you from inconvenient needs. Pray that dangerous prayer: "Lord, help me live the difference today." When you dare to truly see people as Jesus sees them—as souls worth dying for—your life will never be the same. The greatest enemy of missions isn't hatred; it's indifference.

Day 2: From Seeing to Compassion

Reading: Matthew 9:35-38

Devotional: There's a sacred connection between seeing and compassion. Jesus was "moved with compassion" because He truly looked at people. The Greek word for compassion literally means "to be moved in one's bowels"—a gut-level response that compels action. When we refuse to look, we cut off the flow of divine compassion through our lives. The wounded man by the roadside wasn't scenery on someone's route—he was a soul in the balance, half-dead and half-alive. His future hinged on who would stop. Today, people around you are in that same balance. Will you be the one who stops? Ask God to break your heart for what breaks His. Let Him interrupt your schedule. True compassion always costs something, but it reflects the heart of the Father.

Day 3: The Inconvenience of Obedience

Reading: Philippians 2:1-11

Devotional: The Good Samaritan had appointments, a schedule, places to be. Helping wasn't convenient. He sacrificed his transportation, time, finances, and reputation. Jesus did the same—He left heaven's glory for a manger, exchanged a throne for a cross. Following Jesus means embracing inconvenience. Steve said, *"When we built houses for Mr. John and Veronica's mother, we didn't have a 'house for others' budget. It stretched us. But we never went without."* God always provides when we obey His voice. The most effective ministry happens when we allow the Holy Spirit to interrupt our plans. This requires having ears that hear and hearts willing to sacrifice. Today, hold your schedule loosely. Be available for divine interruptions. What seems inconvenient to you might be life-changing for someone else.

Day 4: Committed to Restoration

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Devotional: The Samaritan didn't just offer first aid and move on. He ensured long-term restoration, paying whatever it would cost. He demonstrated that redemption is both immediate rescue and ongoing restoration. Jesus does the same for us—He doesn't just save us and leave us; He commits to our complete transformation. We were the ones dying by the roadside, and He saw us, had compassion, and paid everything to restore us to our rightful place as sons and daughters. Now we're called to do likewise. Reaching the lost is a team effort—some provide immediate help, others offer long-term care. You have a role: sender or sent one, short-term responder or long-term restorer. Don't just soothe your conscience with token offerings. Commit to seeing people fully restored.

Day 5: Go and Do Likewise

Reading: Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-20

Devotional: "Go and do likewise" isn't a suggestion—it's our marching orders. Jesus didn't say, "Think about helping" or "Feel bad for the hurting." He said GO and DO. The theme of the entire Bible is redemption: God bringing Jesus to a world that needs Him. Missions is simply God bringing Jesus to a world that needs Him through you. Every believer is called to participate—either by going or by sending. The Holy Spirit confirms the word we preach with signs following. This is partnership: you go with God, share His word, and He backs it up with power. Today, commit yourself afresh. Say, "Lord, wherever You want me to go, I'll go. Whatever You want me to do, I'll do. Whatever You want me to say, I'll say." Then watch how God uses your obedience to change history—yours and others'.