

## RED Letter Stories5 "Uninvolved"

Perhaps all of us have seen video footage of, or heard a story about, someone who was being hurt by someone else. And while others were in proximity, no one stepped in to help. When asked later about why they didn't help, the general reply was that they "didn't want to get involved". So they remained uninvolved. They didn't extend a hand or lift a finger of assistance. Being inconvenienced, by someone else's dilemma, was not an option for them. They wouldn't be bothered! They chose not to be bothered.

This story is probably Jesus' most popular story; close only to the "Prodigal Son". It's a story we call "The Good Samaritan". He didn't call it that, but He simply told it to teach a lesson...a lesson we could use re-learning ourselves. In this parable, He addressed prejudice, complacency, hypocrisy, and genuine love. Jesus reveals whom it is we love most. He shows that our actions declare whom we care about the most. When it comes to caring for the other people around you; would you say you are involved or uninvolved?

### Jesus' Story

#### **Luke 10:30-37 NAS**

*30 Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead.*

*31 "And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*

*32 "Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.*

*33 "But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,*

*34 and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.*

*35 "On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him;*

*and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'*

*36 "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?"*

*37 And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."*

### Jesus' Point

\*Background for story:

#### **Luke 10:25-29 NAS**

*25 And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*

*26 And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"*

*27 And he answered, "YOU*

*SHALL 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 YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."*

*28 And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."*

*29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*

-A lawyer questions Jesus about how to inherit eternal life. This lawyer was an expert in Mosaic Law, not a court attorney as we think today. The lawyer has the wrong idea about eternal life, but it's the most popular wrong view. It's the view that we earn our way to heaven by way of our works. Jesus, rather than correcting him outright, decides to talk to the lawyer about a genuine faith that produces an extraordinary love that goes beyond courtesy.

-Jesus answers the lawyer's question by asking him a question (Socratic method).

-The lawyer, again, asks a question, wanting the correct information. In verse 29, he asks Jesus to define "neighbor".

-Jesus presents the man with a story that illustrates what genuine love is and who his neighbor truly is.

-In the Hebrew (OT language), "neighbor" means "someone that you have an association with," while in the Greek (NT language), "neighbor" is broader in its meaning to "someone who is near." The lawyer's current Hebrew definition would only see a neighbor as a fellow Jew and exclude Samaritans, Romans, and other foreigners.

-Jesus tells this story of the Good Samaritan to correct the false belief that the lawyer had of who his neighbor was and what his duty was to his neighbor.

#### Cast of Characters:

1. The traveller – man who was robbed and beaten
2. The priest – he was to be a person of love and compassion, but was not
3. The Levite – he knew the law, but had no compassion either
4. The Samaritan – the one who looked across any racial or social barriers and simply showed compassion, sparing no expense.

#### **The Take Away**

1. We all see needy people; then we make a choice...to involve ourselves or not. What is your typical choice?

2. The Samaritan accurately saw "his neighbor" as anyone who was in need. How are you defining "neighbor" and "loving your neighbor"? Who would you help?

3. A Christ-follower is required to love differently. By differently, I mean get involved. How involved? More involved than you are now.

**Bottom Line – Love is not blind; it sees messy people and walks toward them.**