Good morning. Please stand and welcome those around you. This morning we continue unpacking lessons from the parables of the greatest teacher who ever lived. This is not merely a good story but a life lesson that transcends generations: The kind Father teaching us how to be kind. It teaches us what it looks like in application to “love our neighbor as ourselves” ([verse 25](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke10%3A25&version=NKJV)) and answers the question, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Listen, Family, inheritance is not based on achievement or performance but on relationship. So let’s understand. Jesus was showing the questioner, a lawyer, that inheriting eternal life is a matter of the heart, not how well he knew the law. We may be able to quote every verse from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 and still be lost. Inheriting eternal life is about relationship, about being born again, about being washed by the Blood of the Lamb. The lawyer quotes [Leviticus 19:18](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus19%3A18&version=NKJV), but his quoting the scripture did so because, as we often do, wanted to justify himself. “Who qualifies as my neighbor?” he asks; in other words, “Who deserves my love?” or maybe, “How little can I do and still be in compliance?” Jesus was about to show him that it is never about checking boxes; no, it is a matter of the heart! He, and we, are to put aside the distinction and premise and simply help with a need using the resources we have, which are the Lord’s resources anyway ([verse 30](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke10%3A30&version=NKJV))!

Let me kind of give you the setting. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was seventeen miles of rugged terrain, a dangerous territory. Jericho lies 800 feet below sea level. From Jerusalem to Jericho, the altitude decreases from about

3300 feet. Along the way, plenty of caves and rocky places provided shelter for thieves. Travelers would be in danger. To this setting is a spiritual application: Beware of evil and the evil one ([1 Peter 5:8](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1Peter5%3A8&version=NKJV)). On the side of this road, the assaulted man lay in need of help. Now notice that in the tale, the two men who passed by without offering help were religious men. This detail reminds us not to be too busy to stop and help. And yes, this means that we should not be so busy doing the work of the Lord that we miss the work of the Lord!

The content of [verse 33](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke10%3A33&version=NKJV) would have caught the lawyer and other Jewish listeners by surprise. In the 1st century, Jesus, like most Jews, would not have considered Samaritans to be neighbors. The enmity between them had existed for centuries. Jesus was again pointing to the condition of the heart, a heart of compassion. The care for the injured by the compassionate Samaritan is the picture of Christ’s kindness for us. In verse 33,the Samaritan *saw him*. Before we can meet needs, we have to be aware of them. He, the Samaritan, opened his heart. His focus was on the battered man’s suffering. He didn’t just feel sorry for him; no, he opened his purse. He was willing to have his life interrupted. He put the wounded man on his own animal. He walked while the injured man rode. Sacrifice! The Samaritan paid two denarii, the equivalent to two days’ wages, to have the wounded man cared for ([verses 36-37](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke10%3A36-37&version=NKJV)). Jesus concludes the response to the lawyer with these words:

“God and do likewise.” Listen, Family, to show compassion and kindness motivated by the love of God is a true, pure, act of worship ([Galatians 5:14](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians5%3A14&version=NKJV)). We need never be fearful of circumstances: The Lamb’s love is sufficient anti-venom for any cultural poison; in Christ, we are covered! Fearless, in God’s love, we must respond to needs without stopping to wonder, “Do they deserve it?” We are representatives of the most High God. Love is a VERB! Love is the central message of Jesus. Kindness is expressed in care. And it requires commitment, and often, courage. The real question is not “Who is my neighbor?” but “To whom am I being a neighbor?” The hopeless, the helpless, the sinful, the rejected, the broken-hearted—all deserve our care in love.

No act of loving service is ever wasted. Being a neighbor has nothing to do with social standing, race, geography, citizenship, or political affiliation. Loving service is showing kindness to people made in the image of God. And here’s a nugget: We don’t have to agree on things to be kind. In fact, kindness is a fruit of the Spirit ([1 John 3:18-19](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1John3%3A18-19&version=NKJV))! We need to stop allowing “atmospheric conditions” to ruin our crop! Allow the Christ who abides in you to be seen by your neighbor. You don’t need a reason to help people, but I’ll give you one: Our God says we must! In Christ, we are enabled to love, empowered for compassion. Listen! We trust Christ for our salvation, we can trust Him to cause us to love our neighbor, not in word or tongue only but in deed and truth. Willingness to love our neighbor is evidence of our experiencing God’s love in our own lives.

How, you ask, can I go and do the same? First of all, one of the greatest kindnesses you can do is to pry for someone. Also, you can pick up the phone and check on someone. We put out a prayer list every week. Call someone on that list! See if there is need. Donate your time. Just be there for someone. Just being there can provide comfort or solace. The power of presence is an effective ministry. Volunteer! Offer your physical, mental, and emotional abilities as you can. And finally, in the greatest kindness of all, share the Gospel! Tell anyone who asks about the saving Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Say aloud that Jesus came, died, and rose again for their salvation. And trust the Holy Spirit to help you share this truth! That is true kindness.