

SYNOPSIS

This message is about growing in the awareness of our neighbors and the awareness of our need for a Savior. It is a reminder of giving and receiving grace by looking at the familiar, but often misunderstood, parable of the Good Samaritan from Luke 10. The parable itself shows the lawyer that he does not love his neighbor as demonstrated by the fictional Samaritan, thus exposing his inability to keep the greatest commandments, and revealing his need for a Savior as the requirement for “inheriting eternal life,” which was his leading question. Jesus is that needed Savior and this story keeps us humble, even as we seek to love like the Samaritan did. We go on to love, having been rescued by our “good Samaritan” Jesus. With that point established, we can evaluate our lives in light of the Priest and Levite who lacked mercy. Our busy and hurried lifestyles can lead us to walking around opportunities just as they did. We explore combatting being distracted and unaware of the neighbors in our paths, slowing down with the help of Sabbath rest, silence and solitude, and limiting our distractions among our neighbors. A practical outcome of slowing down is being better able to recognize opportunities and drop meaningful Grace Bombs on our neighbors, and avoid becoming the “bad samaritans.”

BIG IDEA

Humility and rest help us to grow in the awareness of our neighbors.

KEY TEXTS

Luke 10:25-37

SERMON OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the Reloaded series with a brief reminder of what a Grace Bomb is, what has happened with Grace Bomb so far in your church, and the opportunity to now go deeper with this habit of loving our neighbors, no strings attached.

Share a personal story of when you pulled a “Priest” or “Levite” move from the story, in rushing by an opportunity to love a neighbor. The goal is to get us in touch with how easy it is to be a “bad Samaritan,” the opposite of the character in Jesus’ parable.

Setting the context of the parable in Luke 10.

SLIDE 1

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” Luke 10:25-26

- Notice the lawyer’s motives are not genuine – he has an agenda to test Jesus.

The lawyer pulls out a solid biblical answer:

SLIDE 2

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.” And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.” Luke 10:27-28

- This is a summary of the law – loving God and loving people
- It sounds like Jesus is offering a ticket to heaven – which is ODD
 - ***Ticket to Heaven Graphic 1***

SLIDE 3

Notice the lawyer’s response in verse 29:

SLIDE 4

But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Luke 10:29

- Self-justification – ***this is an important detail from Luke, as we see the heart condition of the lawyer that Jesus is seeking to expose***
- This is the important context in which Jesus will answer BOTH questions (what shall I do to inherit eternal life & who is my neighbor)

Recap the narrative in Luke 10:25-37 in your own words.

- A Jewish man traveling a dangerous road from Jerusalem to Jericho is jumped
- A priest is no help – a Levite is no help
- THE SHOCKER: The sworn-enemy Samaritan not only helps, but also goes above and beyond – Grace Bombing the dying man.

Then the conversation turns back to the lawyer:

SLIDE 5

“Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Luke 10:36-37a

- Here in an almost rhetorical fashion Jesus answers the lawyer’s question of “Who is my neighbor?”
- It is anyone who comes into our lives.

But then Jesus addresses the lawyer’s heart issue when He says:

SLIDE 6

“You go, and do likewise.” Luke 10:37b

- The record ends here, but the cliffhanger ends with us pondering: can the lawyer go and do likewise, can he love like this?

The main point is now made:

SLIDE 7

Jesus is revealing the reality that we cannot live up to the perfect standard of loving God and people all the time.

- Therefore we can't punch our ticket to heaven, and stand in need of a savior.

SLIDE 8

- ***Ticket to Heaven Graphic 2***

SLIDE 9

- ***Ticket to Heaven Graphic 3***

Transition: So the parable is an eye opener against self-righteousness - to humbly acknowledge our need for a savior.

SLIDE 10

The AWARENESS of our need to show mercy begins with us having received mercy.

SLIDE 11

Our MOTIVATION is born from the realization that we were the enemy left for dead on the ground.

SLIDE 12

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person— though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:6-8

SLIDE 13

We are Grace Built People!

- And this is the starting point of being a blessing to others.

From here that leaves a big question:

SLIDE 14

How can we avoid becoming “bad samaritans”?

Answer:

SLIDE 15

By slowing down.

The Priest and the Levite seemed ***hurried and distracted***.

- Picture the Priest walking by looking at his phone.
- We look at our phones a lot – iphone users touch their phones 2,617 times a day

Busyness has become an idol.

- Busyness is equated to success in America. (Not being busy is like leprosy)
- Everyone seems “Good, but busy”
- Do you every feel guilty for not being busy?

Question: What’s the problem with being busy and distracted?

Answer: Busyness and distraction hurt our relationships with God and our neighbors.

Benefits of slowing down:

SLIDE 16

***Slowing down allows us to:
Be more observant***

- simply seeing new things around us.

Grace Bomb example story

I am still amazed how good God is and how He works! I was coming home from grocery shopping with my cold items in a little cloth cooler in the backseat and had every intention of going straight home. But God had other plans. I had only been in the car about a minute when God said, “Offer that woman walking alongside the road a ride.” I pulled into the gas station just in time to intercept her. I called after her, but she kept walking. I pulled back out into the street with my hazards on and tried again. It wasn’t until I got her attention and she accepted my offer that I realized she was deaf. As rudimentary as my signing skills are, I told her I knew my ABCs. We found a way to communicate the entire time to her destination! The most moving part was when I pointed to my cross necklace and told her, “I listened.” She was overwhelmed with thanks to Jesus and told me she had prayed for help! The excitement in that car was like nothing I had experienced! When I dropped her off, I gave her the Grace Bomb. I explained these cards are a good reminder of showing God’s love to others and I told her how much she is loved. We hugged and parted with up lifted spirits. God is SO GOOD!

SLIDE 17

***Slowing down allows us to:
Be more observant
Be more creative***

- our brains get more creative with space

Grace Bomb example story

I was at the airport waiting for my flight, sitting at the gate with a terrible cold, and suddenly a very nice guy gave me a bag with tissue paper, a small box with cinnamon, ginger and honey, ear plugs and an iced tea. He wished me to feel better! That was one of the best surprises I have ever had in my life!

So how do we slow down?

Three ideas to...

SLIDE 18

Un-hurry your soul...

SLIDE 19

Silence & Solitude

(Slow your day)

This was the regular rhythm of Jesus' life – regularly pulling away in solitude to connect with God.

- A quiet time to center your mind and heart. Scripture/Prayer/Journaling
- Life stages will require different approaches.

SLIDE 20

Sabbath Rest

(Slow your week)

What is it? A day of worship and rest rooted in Creation. It's a 24-hour time to receive.

- On the seventh day God rested. Did He need to? He was giving us a pattern to follow – a day to be, enjoy, go slow.
- Not catching up on other work, but a day to drink deep with enjoyment.
- What feeds your soul? Gives you rest? Relaxes your mind. What brings you wholeness?

SLIDE 21

Periodic Fasting

- Put the phone away
- Put the work away
- Discipline is needed!

Closing Charge: What is one thing that you can change this week to help you slow down, be more aware, and be more prepared to love a neighbor?

Recommissioning of Grace Bombers:

Load, Listen, Let 'er Go!