

## Who is My Neighbor?

“Who is my neighbor?” It can be a nostalgic question taking us back to memories of yesterday. It can be an inspiring question as we remember folks from our past who have been great examples or who have helped us. It can be a factual question as we get oriented to those who physically live near us. One thing it should never be, however, is an argument to justify inaction. In fact, as we will see from Jesus today, when we think about helping others it is actually the wrong question. When we think about helping others the question we should be asking is not “Are they my neighbor,” but “Am I a neighbor?” That’s the question Jesus wants us to ask!

**Opening Discussion:** “I find it easy to be interrupted when someone needs my help.” On a scale of 1-10 how would you respond (1 = strongly disagree; 10 = strongly agree)?

### Read Luke 10:25-37

1. What is the lawyer (i.e. expert in Jewish law) doing when he asks Jesus, “Who is my neighbor” (v. 29)? Why does he ask the question?
2. As Jesus often does, he answers the lawyer’s question with a story. What are the details of the parable (who, what, when, where, why, how)?
3. What did it cost the Samaritan to offer help?
4. How would Jesus’ hearers have heard the parable? What was shocking?
5. How did Jesus lead the lawyer to define “neighbor” (v. 36-37)? And how is the lawyer’s answer in verse 37 different than what he asked in verse 29? What is significant about this?

6. What natural inclinations make it easier at times for you to act like the priest and the Levite rather than like the Samaritan?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. In verse 33, it indicates that compassion was part of what moved the Samaritan to help the man. What is compassion? And why is compassion critical in helping us take action to help others?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. If you sense that your compassion-quotient is a little low, what can you do to grow in this area?

Sam said:

Jesus' last words in this passage are the only imperative command in the whole story -- You, go, and do likewise. The command was for the lawyer, but it was for you and me as well. How can we "go, and do likewise" -- how can you and I strive to say to those in need, "I am your neighbor, and I'd love to help"? What might it look like if we tried to demonstrate love as the Samaritan did in this parable?

9. How are you hearing Jesus' final command, "Go and do the same" (v. 37)? What might it look like for you to obey this command? What would it look like for Faith to obey this command?