

Do Not Pass Me By

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Early Friday morning, I and a sister in Christ arrived at work and noticed a body was lying on the ground about 50 feet from our work place. We were shocked to see several people walking around the body yet none of them taking a moment to see if the person was alive. We were so upset. She went into the building and informed the security team that a man was laid out on the middle of the sidewalk and we weren't sure of his condition. I couldn't believe what I was witnessing. One man was with his child. He stopped, pulled out his cell phone, took a picture of the man and kept going. Another person was crossing the street with his briefcase and coffee, and entered our building, but didn't stop to look at the man. He, too, walked around the body. Then, a young lady in her early twenties was texting and "stepped over" the body without looking back. My mouth dropped! Can you imagine how long this man had been out there before we arrived to seek help for him? The security came and took action immediately. No one had reported the person lying on the ground; this young man was homeless and rested in the middle of the block for God knows how long. He was afraid when security approached him, and grabbed his belongings and went away. As we entered the workplace, my coworker said, "God forbid," if she would pass out on the road. Would anyone attend to her aid?

This reminds me of the parable of the Good Samaritan. **Luke 10:25-37** He said to him, **"What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"** So he answered and said, **"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."** And He said to him, **"You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."** But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, **"And who is my neighbor?"** Then Jesus answered and said: **"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'** So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, **"He who showed mercy on him."** Then Jesus said to him, **"Go and do likewise."**

If we were to go out today and ask everyone we came into contact with, "Who is your neighbor?" the response might be, "I don't have a neighbor," or, "the lady upstairs," or, "the person three houses down." But Jesus' definition of a neighbor was Love. The parable explains loving the Lord with your whole heart, all your soul, all your strength and your neighbor as yourself. So, if we love ourselves we ought to love "people", our neighbors who may be of a different race, denomination, have a disability, be poor, homeless, of the other gender, a liar, a thief, a murderer, unattractive, or a non citizen. Love people. Jesus says to **LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR!** We need to preach this more often to **ourselves** as Jesus came to seek and save the lost. He loved the Samaritan woman at the well, a foreigner. He healed the Syrophenician daughter because of her mother's faith, and saved Paul to preach to the Gentiles. We were once lost, stranded, but Jesus did not pass us by. It was His Love and kindness that drew us. He came to preach, heal, restore and set free. We are no longer strangers. **John 15:13, Luke 4:18-19**

The Levite and priest believed their strict laws forbade them from handling unclean things, but the golden rule still applies to us. We were once filthy and unclean, but are now called to represent our Father. Read **1 Peter 2:9**. We need to let our light shine. **Matthew 5:16** **Let our light shine so they may see our good works and they may glorify our Father in heaven.**

It is scary at times, but **2 Timothy 1:7** states, **For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.** When Jesus was rejected from his own neighbors, did he stop loving? No, he continued on the journey to find more people and so shall we. We may be rejected, but at least try and help, and don't just pass a wounded soul by. If you're not received, brush the dust off your feet and keep moving. **Luke 9:5** Everyone deserves a chance no matter what the case may be. The next time you encounter a homeless person or someone different from you, say hello and introduce them to a loving God. It was compassion that drew us. God bless, love you all and be encouraged!

Romans 5:8 **But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**