

Love Like This

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Preacher: Sam Bunnell

[0 : 0 0] Good morning, church. Listen, normally I will jump right into what I'm preaching about, and we are going to do that in just a moment.

But I want to let you know I just got back from El Paso. So since Wednesday, I left. And by the way, Mike Brown, thank you for filling in for my life group on Wednesday night.

I encourage you to jump into a life group if you're not already in one. There are multiple ways for you to plug yourself into Christian community here within the context of our church.

We have Sunday school classes meeting from 930 to 1030 every Sunday morning, except some of y'all who don't start at 930. Some of y'all know who you are. Technically on the schedule, we have 930 to 1030.

Sometimes they get started a little later than that, but that's all right. But that is a great spot to jump into Christian community, as well as our Monday night men's group, Tuesday night life groups, and Wednesday night life group here at the church.

[1 : 0 2] So take advantage of that. Mike, thank you for filling in this Wednesday night. But I got to go to El Paso. So this was an awesome opportunity to go down and see different ministry opportunities that are available in El Paso.

Texas Baptist collection of over 5,000 churches across Texas, like-minded in the area of loving Jesus, serving Jesus, and trying to reach people with Jesus.

We might differ in a lot of other areas or beliefs, but we really focus on that. So we're able to partner together under this banner of Texas Baptists. Some churches will be First Baptist churches in small towns like ours.

Other churches won't even have Baptists on their church name. But they've partnered together with us for this great cause. And so together we can do more. And part of that we talk about during the Mary Hill Davis offering that we just took up about a month ago.

And that helps support so many ministries across our state, some of which you may not even be aware are going on. For instance, I didn't know until this trip that Texas Baptist has a dedicated immigration ministry.

[2 : 0 7] It's called Isaac. And so they're going down to the border. They've actually moved that headquarters down to the border for this immigration ministry. And they are helping people get immigrants, get legal citizenship, or at least paperwork to be in the United States.

So they're trying to help meet that need. And that's also a space where there's a lot of scams going on, a lot of people taking advantage of others. We talked about that a little bit, that idea of taking advantage of other people in the sermon last week.

But that's happening today. And so Texas Baptist is trying to step into that space and meet some of that need. There's a lot of hunger ministries going on, feeding the hungry. We got to go see firsthand and take part in some of that.

Education of how to improve societies down along the border, as well as the longstanding river ministry. So they go across the river into Mexico and reach people with the gospel and with community development and human flourishing.

So that is all happening down at the border. And we had a small group of pastors able to go down and see firsthand and then come back and talk about with our churches and together as pastors on how we can help improve that.

[3 : 18] So that's what I've been doing the last few days. And it was an absolutely fantastic time. We're going to be in Luke chapter 10 today. Luke chapter 10. As you're finding your place, maybe you won't have to look at the screen this time as you're turning your pages.

But let's try this, our sermon call and response that we've done through this series on Jesus' generosity. Ready? God gives. We give back.

How do we give back? We give back. That's right. So we've been talking about this idea of generosity and what Jesus had to say about it. We're going to be in Luke chapter 25.

We've been talking about time, talking about talent, treasure, and our heart. If we're being honest, much of this has been a challenge. Rethinking what it means to follow Jesus.

How we see giving. How we see service. How we see sacrifice. Twice. But as we close this series today, I would like this, our time together to be a little different.

[4 : 19] So let me ask you this. What if the most spiritual moment you have this week doesn't happen in this building?

What if the most spiritual moment that you have this week doesn't even happen in your quiet time alone with God in prayer?

What if it doesn't happen in the sanctuary but on the street? What if it doesn't happen in your quiet time? Let's keep that in the back of our minds as we read in Luke chapter 10. Because in the end, being generous isn't all about giving.

It's about living. Being generous is more than just giving. It's more than just how you give or what you give.

It's about how you live. So, our goal, obviously, as followers of Jesus is to live like Jesus. And the story we're going to dive into today is not just a story about kindness.

[5 : 34] About passing it along. It's a story about the gospel of Jesus. It's a word you hear thrown around in church a lot. It simply means the good news, the Jesus story.

And how that applies to our lives. So today, we're going to be challenged to love like Jesus. Love like he has loved us. But, before we read this passage, I want you to hear from someone right here in our church.

Penny, if you would come on up. But, Penny Reardon recently found herself in a situation that was not on her calendar. Probably wasn't in her comfort zone.

I'll let her speak to that. But, it turned out to be a divine appointment from God. So, Penny, you come on ahead and share your story.

Good morning. Good morning. So, Sam wanted me to share this. Back on August 23rd, I had gone by the coffee shop. And there was a lady walking down the street.

[6 : 42] And I had just mentioned to my two workers, I said, you know, gosh, I wonder if she's homeless. And they said, no, she's not homeless. She has a really interesting story. She came in and told us about it.

And I said, oh, that's cool. So, I just went on, went to Wichita, came back, and it was about 430. And this lady was sitting on that curb at CDC.

And so, I looked at her, and my car just goes right over to her. And I just rolled down my window, and I said, do you have somewhere to stay tonight?

And she said, no. And I said, well, get in, and let's find you a spot. So, I went out to the hotel, and I pulled up, and I thought, oh, my gosh, this is hotter than hell weekend.

There's not going to be anything. No room at the inn. So, I thought, I wonder how Chris is going to like me bringing somebody home with me, because I didn't know what else I was going to do. So, I went in, and I asked the gentleman, I said, do you have any room?

[7 : 48] And he said, we just happen to have a room available. And I was like, go figure. So, I said, well, let's do two nights. And so, very nice lady from Colorado.

She's from Greenlee, Colorado. And she was, it's like 30 minutes from where Lizzie is. So, I thought that was interesting. And then, I got back to my shop, and I was sitting there, and God said, how do you think she's going to get home?

And I was like, well, I guess I'm going to buy her a bus ticket. And during all this, I'm thinking, okay, God, Chris doesn't have a job.

Real estate's slow. This is getting a little bit, you know, out of my comfort zone. But, so, I bought her a bus ticket.

And I told her, I said, you enjoy your, I called her, and I said, you enjoy your weekend. I'm going to pick you up at 11, and I'll take you to the bus station. So, that evening, I was going to have dinner with a couple of my friends.

[8 : 54] And one of them said, how do you know that she's here for her dad? Because she had told me her dad was in jail here, and she was trying to get him out, and he's 90 years old.

And I'm like, yeah, I believe that. So, we checked the jail roster, and, of course, he wasn't on it. And I'm like, okay, great. I'm just going to get knocked in the head Monday.

It'll be great. No problem. And so, I picked her up Monday morning, and I said, now, tell me your story again.

And what a strange story. So, her father was 90 years old. He lived in Dallas, and he was staying with his daughter.

He wanted to go to Colorado. His daughter rents Hill May car and puts him on the road by himself to Colorado. So, he gets stopped in Clay County, and they try.

[9 : 58] He has no ID. He's Apache Indian. He doesn't know anything here. He has no ID with him. So, they have to take him in and run his fingerprints.

His fingerprints aren't in the system, obviously. And so, ICE gets involved because they can't identify him.

So, ICE is holding this 90-year-old man in our jail. And this woman, she's just like, I don't know what to do. I have to wait until I have brought the paperwork down.

But they had to send him to Omaha to see a judge. I don't understand this. And so, we were chatting. And, I mean, we talked the whole way up there, just a wonderful lady.

And, you know, I said, how in the world were you going to get back home? She's got a backpack. That's it. And she said, God?

[10 : 57] She said, I knew God would send me somebody. And I'm like, well, here I am. And so, she, we kept in touch.

Her dad did get out. They did have to send him to Omaha. And, but he, they found out that he was born on a reservation with no birth certificate.

So, it was really hard for him. But the funny thing, I guess, or the blessing, one of the blessings that was a big blessing is, you know, God will use you if you let him.

And he's not going to stare you to somebody that's going to attack you or something. He's going to, the Holy Spirit is going to lead you what you need to do. And my husband, this has been a really, really tough year for us.

And my husband had applied for a job a month ago. And they were supposed to call him back in two weeks. And they never called back.

[11 : 59] So, he pulled his application. And so, two weeks after this happened, they called him and said, we saw you pulled your application.

We wanted you for this job. And would you still take it? And he's like, yeah. And it's working at Faith Mission with veterans that have PTSD like he does.

And it's just been a blessing for him. So, you know, I think it's twofold. If we allow God to use us, he'll use us.

And if you don't allow God to use you, he's not going to ask again. So, thank you. I did not know that part about Faith Mission.

That's so, so cool. Listen, I want to challenge you. Like she has challenged me. Love like this. Love like this.

[13 : 06] And that's actually kind of the theme that we're talking about today. So, let's go to Luke chapter 10, verse 25. We just heard a real life example in our town, in our context of needs that come through regularly.

And God used one of his chosen servants to meet that need. So, let's look at this example from Luke chapter 10. And we'll see something similar.

One day, an expert, verse 25. One day, an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus. You'd think these guys would have gotten tired of that at some point. Because they always failed when they tried to catch Jesus off guard.

So, they asked him this question. Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life? This was a common question that someone in the temple would ask a rabbi. What should I do to inherit eternal life?

That's kind of the goal. Verse 26. Jesus replied, what does the law of Moses say? He went straight to scripture. You tell me. You're supposed to be an expert in religious law.

[14 : 13] What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it? Verse 27. The man answered, well, here's what it says. You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.

Also, you must love your neighbor as yourself. He's referencing Levitical law here. You can read it for yourself in the book of Leviticus. Right, Jesus told him, do this and you will live.

The man wanted to justify his actions. So, he asked Jesus, who's my neighbor? Tells me to love my neighbor. Who's my neighbor? However, Jesus replied with a story.

As so often he would. And sometimes that was probably frustrating for those listening to him. When he didn't give them a direct answer, he said, I want you to think through this.

I was just talking with somebody recently about this. Said he didn't always just respond with the black and white answer. He wanted us to use this wonderful gift he's given us called a brain. And figure it out with the help of his spirit, his guiding.

[15 : 16] Oh, this is what he wants. This is what he means. It's not just a robot receiving a command. We're coming to it ourselves. So, he paints this picture. A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho.

And he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes. Beat him up. Left him half dead beside the road.

By chance, a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. Now, let's set this up. What exactly is happening here in Luke chapter 10?

Jesus is using this fictional story to illustrate a point. And he uses the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. It was a road travel.

Jericho was a very wealthy city. Obviously, Jerusalem was an incredible city. Very important. Very strategic. Obviously, the temple and all this is there. And so, a lot of important people are crossing the road between Jerusalem and Jericho.

[16 : 19] A lot of money traveling along this road. So, bandits would lie in wait. It was a rocky road up on mountains. And so, they would lie in wait, hide out in some of the clefts of these rocks.

And they would jump out and mug someone, beat them, rob them, and leave them. So, it happens to a Jewish man. Most of who would travel between Jerusalem and Jericho would be Jews.

About, I don't know, a percentage, but the vast majority of people on this road would be Jews. So, they stripped him of his clothes. Clothes held a lot of value. Not just his possessions, but also the very clothes he's wearing.

They beat him up and left him half dead with the appearance, maybe, to the casual passerby. Hint, hint. The casual passerby. That he would be dead.

The first casual passerby comes along. A priest. It's a rabbi. A leader in Jewish law. And he comes along and he sees the man lying there.

[17 : 23] And he crosses to the other side of the road and passes him by. Now, let's do a little audience participation. Why would he cross to the other side of the road? Why did the priest cross the road?

If you say to get to the other side, then we're going to have a problem, all right? Not a chicken. He's a priest. What's that? He didn't want to get mugs. Okay. Maybe.

All right. Wait. One at a time. We're going to have to do a raise your hand thing. Unclean. Who said unclean? Yes. That's it. The rest of you lost. Just kidding. It was because he would be ritually, according to Jewish tradition, he would be ritually seen as unclean.

Are you ready for this? If his shadow touched the maybe dead guy. Couldn't even confirm if he was dead or not.

But they were supposed to stay away from dead things. And so my shadow cannot even touch. Now, let me tell you that. Let me tell you something. The Bible never taught them that.

[18 : 33] Yes. There were some laws about priests and Levites and being unclean and not going and touching dead things. And you can read about Samson breaking those laws. He was a Levite and he went and touched a dead lion carcass and got honey out of it.

We're getting off track. But the point was, yes, that law did exist. But the hope they took it and went way farther than they ever should have gone. So now our shadow cannot even touch.

So I can't even go check and see if this human being made in the image of God needs help or if he, according to his appearance, is actually dead because that's, can't do that.

So that's what's happening. He moves on, crosses to the other side of the road, got to give it a wide berth. What happens next? A Levite, a temple assistant walks over and looks at him lying there, but then he also passed on the other side.

Do you think he got his shadow dirty? I don't know. He at least maybe started to kind of, oh, looks like that guy's been through it. And I love how it says up here.

[19 : 40] It's kind of hard to see. Thoughts and prayers moving on my way. Anybody ever done that before? Thoughts and prayers. It just sounds so, really, you didn't really have to say anything rather than say that.

So he's moving along. Then a despised Samaritan comes along. And when he saw the man, his first thought was, eh, probably a Jew.

Can't stand the Jews. They can't stand me. And he moves along, right? Nope. Not what happened. Not what happened. His next thought was, how do I even know if this was a good guy?

What if he's a terrible person and he deserved what happened to him? He did not filter any of his response. He just responded to a need.

He saw the man. And his first thought was compassion. He felt compassion for him. Verse 34, going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine.

[20 : 51] Why would he use olive oil and wine? Olive oil would obviously soothe it. Wine, the alcohol content in wine would cleanse, disinfect the wound. So he's using his own expensive products, olive oil and wine, to meet this man's needs.

And then he bandages the man. And then I'm wondering if maybe some of us might have done that to meet his immediate need of not bleeding out on the side of the road.

And then maybe prop him up under a shade tree and say, hey, I hope somebody comes along that can help you further. Get some rest. You'll feel better tomorrow. Instead, he actually put him on his donkey, his own donkey.

So now he's probably leading the animal, which is a position of servitude. Anyone passing by would think whoever's sitting on the donkey is in charge and whoever's leading the animal is his servant.

But, you know, I feel like this Samaritan might have been okay with that. Because it seemed like he saw himself as a servant of his fellow man. And so he takes him to an inn where he took care of him.

[22 : 12] The next day, verse 35, he handed the innkeeper two silver coins. Penny, when you were telling your story, you said you paid for two nights in the hotel. And I'm sitting here thinking he went and seemingly paid for two nights in the inn.

And then said, hey, if it costs more than that, he said, if his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here. Do you realize innkeepers, especially back then, didn't have a great reputation?

Maybe weren't always the most ethical or trustworthy people. And so the Samaritan, probably knowing this, gives the innkeeper an incentive to take good care of the guy.

He said, listen, you let this bill run up as high as you need it to, but just care well for this man. Love him truly. And then I will pay the cost.

So, Jesus tells this story to this expert in religious law. And he says, which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?

[23 : 23] Which of these three was his neighbor and treated him as a neighbor would? The man gave the obvious answer. The one who showed him mercy. Notice what he didn't say, what he didn't call him.

He didn't call him a Samaritan. He's become known throughout all of world history for anyone who reads the Bible.

And this is one of the most commonly referred to stories in the Bible. He's become known as the good. Right. But this guy, maybe, I don't know what his reasoning was, but it seems like he didn't even want to use the word.

Don't know. He said, the one who showed him mercy. Jesus said, yes. Now go and do the same.

You know what Jesus was saying? Love like this. Love like this. When we read this story, that thought should echo in our minds and make its way down to our heart.

- [24 : 30] Love like this. When we hear Penny's story of how God used her to help this woman and meet this need. And she's not trying to lift herself up and say, hey, look at me.
- Look how like Jesus I am. That's not the heart that goes and meets a need like that. But the thought should be echoing in our minds. Love like this.
- So this is where we find ourselves. Number one, generous people move toward the mess. Generous people move toward the mess.
- Messes are something we always want to avoid. What happens when there's a spill in a store? We put out cones or caution signs or whatever.
- Be careful. Don't slip. Floor's wet. Whatever. There's an intercom message. It goes out. Clean up on aisle. Whatever. Whatever. Because the whole point is you want to avoid the mess.
- [25 : 32] That's what we want to do. We always try to avoid messes. We don't want to make a mess. And we sure don't want to go clean up somebody else's mess. Except there's one person who moves toward the mess.
- Who is it? It's a janitor. It's a custodian. They move toward the mess. First day of the school year.
- First official day back. We had the teachers all out there. And they had a great event going on at the school. And the church and other community organizations and companies went out.
- And they set up booths. And the teachers went along and got free swag. And we invited people out to our lunch. So we're all getting there early. And we're setting up all our tables and booths.
- And the poor guy from... It was the juice place. Fruit guy. That's it. Thank you, Penny. The fruit guy. The fruit guy was out there. And he had these big old containers full of lemonade and whatever kind of juice.
- [26 : 37] And he was going to hand out free juice to the teachers. And he had it all set up. And then somehow the table wasn't working right or something. And he tried to fix it.
- And it all went crashing to the floor. Just big old barrels of juice just everywhere. I mean, it was very colorful and very wet. I felt...
- We all felt... I mean, you couldn't... We're standing in the hallway. Boom. Big old crash. And it's just everywhere. Like, I felt so bad for the guy. Yeah. It was rough.
- So we're all avoiding the area, right? And thankfully, it was down at the very end. So you just didn't go past a certain point. But who came? Somebody went and found the janitor.
- And he came running. And they got a machine. They, like, sucks it up. It was amazing what they were able to do. They got it cleaned up. And I think somebody eventually came out. He had enough kind of left in the barrels.
- [27 : 32] He got to hand out most of it. And then somebody came and brought him refills. But it... I was just like, man, that was such a mess. And I felt so bad for the guy. And everybody then just avoided the area.
- And the whole reason he came was to hand out the juice. And now the juice is gone. But somebody ran toward it. And that was the janitor. He had a job to do. He said, this is where I come in.
- This is where I show my worth. This is where I get to go solve a problem. It wasn't convenient. He could have just stayed doing whatever else he was doing and not had to stop and go clean up the mess.
- But generosity is rarely convenient. But generosity always moves toward a need. Let me say that again.

Generosity always moves toward a need. When Jesus calls us to love our neighbor, he calls us to interrupt our comfort zone.

[28 : 41] Interrupt our place of comfort and satisfaction and move toward a need. Toward someone else's healing.

That's what Jesus wants for us. Listen, I want to throw a picture up. If you guys, did we get it? Yes, let's go. I literally just texted this to Matt while Penny was talking because her story sparked something that I just found out about this last week.

This guy right here, look at that, man. These guys are awesome. This is Pastor Ariel Martinez from down in El Paso. I met him. Actually, I met him before, but I saw him and got to know him better on this trip.

He's pastor of Del Sol Church in El Paso. Very successful church. They've got multiple campuses. They're doing awesome ministry down there in that border city. We are around Texas Baptist.

Many of us know Pastor Ariel. He's doing a great job. Think of him with respect, thanking God for his ministry. What we didn't know until this last week is his story. Not his dad, but his grandfather came across the border.

[29 : 47] He's pretty sure he was illegal when he came across the border. He was a migrant worker. Probably did not come here legally. His dad was born here.

His dad was naturalized, and he was born in America. But they grew up very poor. I mean, dirt poor in El Paso. And that's real poverty, all right?

And so he's growing up with very little, very avoiding anybody who could maybe get his family out of the country in just a really difficult situation.

But his dad was born here, and he's growing up, and he goes to high school down there. He's growing up here in El Paso and starts playing an instrument in the band. How many of y'all play in the band or maybe did play in the band? Wave at me.

Yeah, there you go. I like it. Al. Al's our band guy. There you go. I like it. We got a lot of band members. Listen, our band is awesome, too. People like that have a unique window into the lives of the young people under their care.

[30 : 47] And this band director noticed Pastor Ariel. And he noticed that he had a talent, and he took enough care and paid enough attention to this young man's life, he realized this kid probably has no chance to go to college.

Well, he was right. No one in his family, going back generations, had ever gone to college. So the band director takes matters into his own hands and contacts the band director at UTEP, University of Texas, El Paso, and said, I've got exceptional talent here in high school, but there's no way he can afford to go to college unless you give him a scholarship.

Well, they gave him a scholarship, full-ride scholarship for band at UTEP. He became the first in his family to ever attend college. Fast forward to today, that man's son is Pastor Ariel at Del Sol Church in UTEP, reaching thousands of people along the border with the gospel of Jesus.

Pastor Ariel has three brothers. One of them is an astrophysicist. One of them is a mechanical engineer working on space shuttles.

And one of them served in the U.S. Armed Forces in the Iraq War and is now a highly successful attorney in Dallas. That band director, moving toward a mess and doing what he could, change the trajectory of an entire family for generations.

[32 : 39] And not just that family, but the far-reaching effects, we'll never know until we get to heaven someday. Just how much was impacted by someone moving toward a mess.

Love moves toward the mess because that's what Jesus did for us. He could have sat on his heavenly throne and said, Look at all the wrong they've done.

Look at all the laws they've broken. Look at all the things that they have not done right. They made this mess themselves. Let them clean it up.

Let them suffer for it. And how many times do you and I find ourselves seated on our imaginary thrones and saying that kind of thing?

When instead, we must not forget that Jesus showed us the very kind of mercy, the very kind of compassion that he's now asking us to show to others.

[33 : 50] 1 John 3 and verse 17. Y'all can close that picture out. Thank you. 1 John 3 and verse 17.

If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need, but shows no compassion, how can God's love be in that person?

Do you understand what it's saying? It's not saying living well. We think of somebody who's just rich and can buy whatever they want. I don't think that's at all what it meant.

I think it meant you have enough to meet your daily needs. Maybe you can't go out and buy the truck you want or the size of TV you want or take the trip maybe you want to take or whatever it is.

But you've got enough money to make it through this life and you're okay. And you see somebody else who's clearly not okay. But you have no compassion for them.

[34 : 49] And not just having, but showing. You show no compassion for them. Then how can you say that God's love is in you? That's the question.

Questions convict. Are we convicted by this question from John? So we see this principle from the good Samaritan who showed the compassion, saw the need, and took the lead, so to speak.

He had enough compassion to cross the road. So that's my question for you. Do you have enough compassion to cross the road? Or does it depend on who's lying on the other side?

Does it depend on who's in need? Because oftentimes we've been hitting this every single Sunday of this series, and today's the last one. So don't worry, we'll move on. But I wanted to hit it again. Does the person that we go help have to be inside our lines?

Because if they're outside the lines of what we approve or who we'll accept, they're not going to get our help. They're not going to get our compassion. Or do we judge them on this centered set idea on the right that Jesus showed compassion to everyone?

[36 : 02] Jesus died for the sins of all men and all women. Jesus died for the sins of all of us. He offers mercy and compassion to all of us. And so if we're going to follow Jesus, then we got to do the same thing.

We can't just help the people who fit inside our circle. Inside our lines. Jesus drew no lines. He extended it to everyone.

So love doesn't look the other way. Love steps directly into the mess, into someone else's story, and becomes part of the story. And you know what happens when you do that?

You get an incredible story to tell, just like we heard from Penny just now. And then you get to be a vessel for God to use to help inspire someone else and say, wow, I could have done that.

But instead of just looking backward and saying, how many times have I missed an opportunity? Let's look forward and say, God, help me not miss the next one. Help me meet the next need that comes along.

[37 : 07] Help me see with your eyes and notice and not look the other way, but step into the story. Number two, interruptions are often God's invitations.

By the way, there's only two points in this sermon. So we're nearly there. All right? Stick with me for just a couple more minutes. Interruptions are often God's invitations. Every time you and I step up for someone, we're stepping into a divine appointment, like we just heard about, from God set up long before this need ever showed up on your doorstep or across your path.

The Samaritan did not set out on his journey as a ministry trip. He wasn't going on a missions trip. He was traveling between Jerusalem and Jericho.

He had a separate purpose for his trip. And that's usually where we find these divine appointments happening. God brings us something when we're doing something else.

We're in the middle of something else. It's a little inconvenient. How in the world am I supposed to stop what I'm doing and go help this person? He was just traveling.

[38 : 23] But love doesn't check our calendars. Love seizes the opportunity. So my dad went to seminary down at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth studying ministry and God's Word and theology.

And he had a professor down there who was a favorite of many who went to Southwestern Seminary. And his name was Roy Fish, Dr. Roy Fish. He taught principles of evangelism or sharing Jesus with other people.

And so Dr. Fish, I heard tell a story that I thought was amazing. And I've heard others reference this story. He had a seminary student in class who came up to him before class one day and said, hey, I'm pastoring a small church outside of Fort Worth and we're going to have a revival in the fall or the spring.

I'm sorry, this was a fall semester. He said, we're going to have a revival in the spring. And I would love if you would come and be the featured guest speaker for our revival. And Dr. Fish looked at him and said, how do you know?

The guy probably looked at him like, you're looking at me right now like, what? He said, we're going to have a revival. And Dr. Fish said, how do you know? What is a revival?

[39 : 43] That is where God's spirit fills his people, recenters their vision off of themselves and their world and puts it back onto Jesus Christ and God's kingdom.

And then the fruit of that happens in their lives and often spreads throughout their church, throughout their town, throughout their community. Sometimes we've read in past history of revivals sweeping across the entire nation and even traveling to other nations.

It's been a long time since we've seen something like that in America. So Dr. Fish says, you put that on your calendar? How do you know God's going to do that? I think what the young man meant to say was, we're going to schedule a meeting where we pray and ask God to send us a revival.

He said, let's be careful how we think about this. Revival isn't something you can schedule. It's something God does when our hearts turn to him.

Reviving a dead church full of distracted people, look around us. We're distracted. The Holy Spirit of the living God has to do that.

[41 : 01] And it can't be scheduled. It has to happen as heart by heart gets arrested by the Holy Spirit of God.

And when our hearts are arrested by God, change happens. And it starts inside. And then it goes to the outside. And we go help somebody.

And we spend money we weren't thinking of spending. And we spend time that we weren't thinking of spending. We spend energy that we weren't thinking of spending. Because our plans are no longer the priority.

Now God's purpose is our priority. Revival in our hearts is more likely to come from the interruptions of life that we didn't plan for, but they're actually invitations from God back into the way of Jesus.

So maybe revival has less to do with planning and with programs, and it has more to do with pursuing the person of Jesus. So, Proverbs chapter 16 and verse 9.

[42 : 07] We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps. What a reminder of God's sovereignty. He's in charge. And if we walk in His way, He'll bring us invitations that won't seem so much like interruptions anymore.

Colossians chapter 2 and verse 14. Colossians 2 and verse 14. We're never more like Jesus than when we stop for someone who can't repay us.

This is the other side, all right? This is the other side to it. The other side to this story other than, wow, what a great guy. He stopped and really cared about this person.

The other side is, this points us to the Savior. This points us to Jesus and reminds us of what He did for us. We're never more like our Savior than when we stop for someone who can't make it worth our while.

Someone who can't repay us because that's what Jesus did for us. Colossians 2, 14. He canceled the record of our sin, the charges against us, and took it away by nailing it to His cross.

[43 : 13] What a thing Jesus did for us. All of our wrong that He could have held against us. Instead, He took it away and nailed it to the cross, so to speak, that He was crucified on.

And then 1 Peter 2, 24. This is a quote from Isaiah, the prophet Isaiah. He says, He personally carried our sins in His body on the cross so that we can then be dead to sin and live for what is right.

By His wounds, you are healed. That's what Jesus did for us. So what's our takeaway this morning? When you and I love like Jesus, generosity stops being something we do and becomes who we are.

That's the takeaway. When we love like Jesus, like the Good Samaritan, like we just heard God do through Penny, when we love like that, generosity is not just something we do, and God starts to change who we actually are.

So that's our challenge. Go and do likewise. That's what Jesus said at the end of this story. Your Bible might say likewise. It might say go and do like this. But that's our challenge.

[44 : 25] Go and do likewise. You do the same. I do the same. And when we together do the same, the community starts to change. Our community starts to change.

So let's say it one final time together, can we? God gives. We give back. How do we give back? We give back. God, I pray that you would allow us to do that.

To give back. Hands open. Eyes up. Because when our eyes are fixed on you, we will see where your eyes are. And your eyes are noticing the man laying on the side of the road.

Your eyes are noticing the woman who needs help. Your eyes are noticing the people that cross our paths every day who need a generous follower of Jesus to step into their story.

Teach us how to do that, God. Give us opportunities and we'll give you all the glory for it. It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Would you bow your heads with me for about the next two minutes?

[45 : 27] We're going to give this time to God and just say, God, move in my heart. If you need to come forward and pray with Jared or myself, you can do that. If you need to come down and kneel at this altar, you can do that. Linda's going to play for just a moment.

If you need to sit in quiet prayer and let God speak to you, then you do that for this moment before we dismiss. Amen.