

Finding Hope pt3

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Finding Hope / Luke 10:25–37; Galatians 6:2

When we are at our lowest we often feel the most alone. People don't like being around those who are at the bottom. And even close friends may stay at first but drift away as the magnitude of where we are becomes more than they want to deal with.

Christians, though, are called to be something very different. In fact, [Galatians 6:2](#) makes it abundantly clear that who we are to those who are hopeless are the people who rescue them. We are to “bear one another’s burdens” in order to “fulfill the law of Christ.”

Galatians (1) Bearing One Another’s Burdens (6:1–3)

The duty of bearing one another’s burdens is stated in the imperative mood; it is not an option but a command

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In sum, the “law of Christ” is for Paul **“the whole tradition of Jesus’ ethical teaching, confirmed by his character and conduct and reproduced within his people by the power of the Spirit”**

I don't think many of us realize how important this is. We are not always good at the long haul. We do triage and bandaids more often than we do rehab. (Bandaids don't fix bullet holes...) It is a lot easier to put a band aid on a boo boo than it is to teach someone to walk or feed themselves again, yet that is what it takes to restore someone to hope.

So today, as we continue our series on Finding Hope, I want to look at a story Jesus tells about a man who was hopeless and what it took to bring hope to him.

Turn with me to [Luke 10:25-37](#).

So, all of this starts with a lawyer wanting to know who is he is supposed to care about. He has no problem loving God, but he is wanting to make sure he only loves his neighbor, and not someone he doesn't have to love. So, he asks Jesus to define his neighbor. And Jesus' response is to tell him a story so outrageous that it removes all a doubt that a neighbor is anyone in need.

Luke Comments

And who is my neighbor? This is not the same question as the one asked by Jesus in 10:36. Luke almost certainly was aware of this. It is quite possible that he saw Jesus in the parable twisting this improper question, "Who is my neighbor?" (i.e., **what must a person do to qualify that I should love him as a neighbor?**) into a proper one ("**What must I do to be a loving neighbor?**").

But I want to look at the situation of the traveler today.

First off, **he is hopeless**. He is naked- no defense. He has been robbed- penniless. And he has been left for dead on the side of the road.

Folks, that is someone at their lowest point.

Hopelessness strips us of all our defenses. We are at our most vulnerable.

Hopelessness robs us of value. What are we worth? What do we have to offer anyone?

Hopelessness can even make us long for death. To put an end to the misery. To curl up and wait to die.

Some of you have been there.

And some of you have experienced what this man experiences. Being passed by.

The man was going DOWN from Jerusalem. That made him a Jew. No one hearing the story would have missed that. And no one listening would have missed that the priest and the Levite would also both have been Jews. They should have been on his side. Been concerned for his welfare. Cared.

Luke Comments

Passed by on the other side. **This is a colorful way of describing the priest's unwillingness to love his neighbor as himself**

Luke Comments

he was emphasizing that **neither the wise and understanding (10:21) nor the proud and ruling (1:51–52) practice being loving neighbors.** Passed by on the other side. The Levite behaved just like the priest.

But they passed by.

Folks, I know some of you have been at the lowest of lows and been abandoned by people who said they were followers of Jesus. Maybe even people who you had been there for previously. It is crushing.

Can you imagine this guy laying there naked and dying, seeing the hem of the robe of the priest passing by, expecting help only to see him step to the side?

Friends, we have to do better than that. When we live in a fallen world, hopelessness must be met with action, not disinterest.

So look at the Samaritan. What does he do?

First, **he stops**. Friends, when we want to bring hope, we are going to have to pause in our own agendas and attend to the person who is before us.

Second, **he has compassion**. The man didn't need judgement or advice or a kind word. He needed someone to be moved by his plight. If we are going to bring hope, we have to engage our emotions. We cannot be distant robots. Emotional investment is required.

Third, **he addresses the visible needs**. This guy needs to be cleaned and bandaged. When we are bringing hope, sometimes the default is to go super spiritual. That's not always the best path. Felt needs often need to be addressed so the pain dulls to the point that spiritual needs can be identified. (remember the scream and the whisper)

Fourth, **he sacrifices for the man**. Bringing hope will cost us something. We will have to be all in. He puts the man on his animal. He pays for his care.

Luke Comments

This indicates that sufficient money was given to take care of the penniless man. The Samaritan made wise use of his possessions (oil, wine, donkey, money) and thus provides the reader with an example of appropriate use of material goods demanded at Luke 6:32–36 (cf. also 16:9–12), for **he gave expecting nothing in return**

Fifth, **he is in it for the long term**. He tells the innkeeper he is coming back for the man. He does not leave him behind.

Church this is bringing hope.

Now one thing I hope you can see here. **One person cannot do it all**. Can you imagine if the load of bringing hope to everyone in a church fell on one person? That person would soon be in need of hope themselves!!

No this is an all call. We are ALL called to do this- as a result of our relationship with Jesus. (Go back to [Galatians 6:2.](#))

Galatians (1) Bearing One Another's Burdens (6:1-3)

burden bearing cannot be restricted to that one situation alone. The word for **"burden" (baros)** means literally **"a heavy weight or stone"** someone is required to carry for a long distance. Figuratively it came to mean any oppressive ordeal or hardship that was difficult to bear

How do we engage in bringing hope to one another?

Galatians (1) Bearing One Another's Burdens (6:1-3)

Because all Christians have burdens and since none are sufficient unto themselves to bear their burdens alone, **God has so tempered the body of Christ that its members are to be priests to one another**, bearing one another's burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ

Be present- you cannot bring hope virtually (remember COVID)

Be aware- you have to be engaged with people and notice what is going on...listen when people talk, prayer requests are made, etc

Be proactive- hopeless people are not going to ask you to bring them hope...take the first step

Be consistent- do not be a drive by

Jesus concludes this by asking a question. Who was the neighbor? The answer. The one who showed him mercy.

Jesus response says it all "Go and do likewise."