

Introduction: Becoming the Samaritan

⁸ *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and to the **ends of the earth**.*

Acts 1:8 (NIV)

“You don’t get to choose where you start. You start right where you are.”

There are two primary points that undergird racial indifference

Lack of understanding the _____ and _____ facts of America.

- It’s not our **fault**, but it is our **problem**.

²⁵ *On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”* ²⁶ *“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”* ²⁷ *He answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’[c]; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”* ²⁸ *“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”* ²⁹ *But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”* ³⁰ *In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’”* ³⁶ *“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”* ³⁷ *The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”*

Luke 10:25-37 (NIV)

What does it mean to become the Samaritan?

Answer: Becoming the Samaritan means coming close enough to realize what can't be understood from a distance.

- God is calling you and me to move beyond making judgements from a _____ and to come into knowledge through _____.
- God is calling us to come close enough to recognize in _____ what we recognize and know to be true about _____.
- God is calling us to move beyond our normal _____.

If we are to be who God wants us to be, we must take the risk of personal identification and make the sacrifice of privilege.

- It is the willingness to suffer discomfort on behalf of somebody else.
- Jesus calls us is to a calculus where our actions are not based on what we get out of it, it's what we give to it. It's not how it benefits us, it's how we benefit it.

Taking it another step

- The Samaritan makes provision for the man's long-term care.
- Jesus is calling you and me to be committed to the long-term; to be committed to lasting change; to want things not just to be well today.
- It is investing in long-term solutions

Jesus' challenge:

- He's challenging you to become the Samaritan.
- He's challenging you to enter into proximity.
- He's challenging you to take a risk.
- He's challenging you to inconvenience yourself.
- He's challenging you to be concerned about the long-term.

Jesus is not just saying, "I want you to become the Samaritan," but really Jesus is saying that He wants us to become Him.

Discussion Questions

1. Bishop Alexander also said that, as Americans, we are sometimes okay being witnesses for Christ “to the remotest [parts] of the earth (Acts 1:8), but are less comfortable being witnesses with those near to us. Do you agree? If so, why is this?
2. Why was it important for the Samaritan to get close to the man?
3. Are there any “half dead” people you tend to avoid?
4. How can you intentionally get close to them, in order to be a witness for Christ?
5. Don’t overlook the obvious. Until we accept the invitation of eternal life with Jesus Christ and receive Him into our hearts, we are all “half dead”—alive on earth, but on our way to eternal damnation. Only with Christ do we receive the promise of eternal life, and only with Christ do we have someone who loves us enough to get close to those who are unclean with sin.

Considering this, pray for opportunities to get close to those who are “half dead.” Also, pray to be like Christ, who saw no divisive racial lines between Himself and the woman at the well.