



Compassion for Our Neighbors
Grace BFC Sunday Bible Class – March 2014
Mark Bickel

TEACHING NOTES

Note on Classes: *Other class offered today is “Compassion for Our World” – that will be offered again next week so you wouldn’t miss it! Actually, it will be in this very room, so simply come back here next week!*

Key References: *Generous Justice: How God’s Grace Makes us Just* by Timothy Keller
START: Becoming a Good Samaritan (DVD) hosted John Ortberg

Note: see Mark if you want to buy Generous Justice, or borrow any books

Pray

Who is My Neighbor?

- **Jesus defines neighbor – Luke 10:23-37** *(will be read in video in a moment)*

Luke 10:25–37 The Parable of the Good Samaritan (ESV)

²⁵ And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” ²⁷ And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸ And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.”

²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ³⁰ Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” ³⁷ He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”

- **Video Clip:** START: Becoming a Good Samaritan (excerpts from opening of Session 1 including Eugene Peterson, John Ortberg, Philip Yancey, Joni Eareckson Tada, Tony Campolo) (11:10)
 - **Themes:** read Good Samaritan from Message, View from a park bench, Define neighbor by showing not who out there is a neighbor but how we should be a neighbor, hurting / depressed need people not programs, so often we pull down the blinds so not see needy and not have to feel guilty, I John 3:17-18
- **Large Group Discussion:** Responses?
- **I John 3:17-18, James 2:15-17** – when see person in need give him what you have!

1 John 3:16-18 (ESV)

¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

James 2:15-17 (ESV)

¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Seeing the PEOPLE around us

- First step – **Observation!** (same as first step in Bible Study)
- **Do you see?** – so easy to look past the people around us every day
 - **Example:** Beth's testimony from week 1 service ...
- **Video:** Would You Help A Freezing Child? (Social Experiment) (Website Download) (2:38)
- **Examples:**
 - Help neighbor shovel snow, stop for someone we see struggling by road ...
 - Talk to person at convenience store, bank, grocery store ...
 - See people in cubicles and lunchroom around us and school hallways around us
 - Del thicket story of 1st dance ... father suggest he dance with those none dance with till they have good time

Seeing the NEEDS around us

- **Wallingford:**
 - 2007 Money Magazine 9th best place to live in all US
 - 88% white, 8% African American
 - 63% households married, 34% w/ children home, 10% no husband, 25% non-family
 - Median age 42, median income \$93,000 (wal/swat school dist. Median \$47K, same as US)
 - 3% below poverty line

- **Chester:**
 - Population: 34,000 – 27% under age 18 (PA is 12.7 million, 22 under 18)
 - 17% white, 74% black
 - HS Grad 78%, Bachelor Degree: 10%, Own Home 38% (PA 88%, 27%, 70%)
 - Median household income \$27,500 (PA \$52K), Below Poverty Line 42% (PA 16%)
 - Second hungriest congressional district in US (Bronx first), Poorest in PA
 - Of poor in Chester, 75% are single women, no husband present families!

- **World:**
 - ***Come back Next Week!***

- **Keller - Causes of poverty**
 - Oppression
 - Calamity
 - Personal Moral Failure
 - Complex intermixing of all the above, with structural issues that propagate it

- **Optional Example** – Sandtown (***Keller, page 35-38***)

- **Example** – Kensington, help family with finances, raising children ...

Seeing the OPPORTUNITIES around us

- **Example: Jesus!**
 - Ate with poor, talked with women, even immoral women, touched lepers, cared for sick, interacted with demon-possessed, invited children to come ... all outcasts in society
- **Luke 14:12-14** - Invite poor for dinner

Luke 14:12-14 The Parable of the Great Banquet (ESV)

¹² He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. ¹³ But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴ and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

- In NT day - went against patronage system – social and financial suicide
 - **Today** – uncomfortable, even potentially risky
 - **Example:** Drexel student who took in homeless man
- **Deuteronomy 15:7-11** - give to brother in need

Deuteronomy 15:7-11 (ESV)

⁷ "If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, ⁸ but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. ⁹ Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, 'The seventh year, the year of release is near,' and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin.

¹⁰ You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. ¹¹ For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.'

- **Acts 4:34-35** – no one with need among them because they met each others needs

Acts 4:34-35 (ESV)

³⁴ There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold ³⁵ and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

- **Opportunities Around Us - Lots of other opportunities** ... we will explore some over the next 6 weeks ... encouragement today is keep your eyes and ears open ... look for people, and look for opportunities to step in to their lives and/or invite them into yours

- **Video Clip:** START: Becoming a Good Samaritan (excerpts from middle of Session 1 including Karen Kingsbury, Steve Haas, Mile McPherson) (3:24)
 - **Themes:** We are created to serve, unsatisfying to sit around not serving, oil and wine used by priests and Levites in worship are here used by Samaritan to heal ... maybe serving the needy is true worship!, joy comes from serving, made to love people, need to walk by faith
- **Isaiah 58:3-5, Isaiah 58:3-5** – Fasting God requires is justice

Isaiah 58:6-9 (ESV)

- ⁶ “Is not this the fast that I choose:
 to loose the bonds of wickedness,
 to undo the straps of the yoke,
 to let the oppressed go free,
 and to break every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
 and bring the homeless poor into your house;
 when you see the naked, to cover him,
 and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
⁸ Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
 and your healing shall spring up speedily;
 your righteousness shall go before you;
 the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
 you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’

- **Micah 6:8** – what has God required – do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God

Micah 6:8 (ESV)

- ⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good;
 and what does the LORD require of you
 but to do justice, and to love kindness,
 and to walk humbly with your God?

- **Motivation ...**
 - **World's Motivation: can not go deep or sustain long-term**
 - Relativistic society – no moral reason
 - so look to love or benefit or logic ...
 - or look to long, sad tale (dog rescue ads)...
 - **Biblical Motivation: only motivations that can sustain** – allow depth, allow love, give perseverance
 - Worship
 - See people as God does
 - See God for who He is

The Compassionate Heart of God

How does GOD SEE people?

- **Video:** Truth Project - Rev. Sirico How We See the Poor (52 sec)
- **Created by God ...** True worth and dignity
- **Image of God ...** God's glory stamped on them
- **Eternal Beings ...** You have never met a mere mortal!
- **In Need of Physician ...**
 - Keller notes that Good Samaritan is not story of Samaritan by road and Jew coming to help ... it is Jew by the wounded and dying by the side of the road
 - The Religious Leader who is asking the question about neighbor is the one in the story in need of saving
 - And it is the one the Jews declared to be unclean, declared to be the enemy that is the only one willing to help
 - Keller “what if your only hope was to get ministry from someone who not only did not owe you any help – but who actually owed you the opposite? What if your only hope was to get free grace from someone who had every justification, based on your relationship with him, to trample you?”
 - Every person – you, me and our neighbors, are the sick and wounded in need of a physical
- **Actually - in Need of Resurrection**
 - **Ephesians 2, Romans 3 and 6** and elsewhere say we are all even more desperate – we are dead in transgressions and sin

How does GOD RESPOND to people?

- **Character of God**
 - **Deuteronomy 10:17-19**

Deuteronomy 10:17-19 (ESV)

¹⁷ For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.

- **Psalm 146:5-9**

Psalm 146:5-9 (ESV)

⁵ Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD his God,
⁶ who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
who keeps faith forever;
⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.
The LORD sets the prisoners free;
⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
the LORD loves the righteous.
⁹ The LORD watches over the sojourners;
he upholds the widow and the fatherless,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

- **Psalm 68:4-6**

Psalm 68:4-6 (ESV)

⁴ Sing to God, sing praises to his name;
lift up a song to him who rides through the deserts;
his name is the LORD;
exult before him!
⁵ Father of the fatherless and protector of widows
is God in his holy habitation.
⁶ God settles the solitary in a home;
he leads out the prisoners to prosperity,
but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

- **Matthew 11:4-5** – Christ on earth is working on behalf of the same people

Matthew 11:4-5 (ESV)

⁴ And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.

- **See also** alternative sacrifice, all rest on Sabbath, Sabbath year, Jubilee...
 - In ancient **culture gods** channel power and are concerned for elite ...
 - Keller - **God of Bible** is a God of “scandalous justice”, he is a God who is deeply concerned for poor and oppressed
- **God of Mercy and Justice**
 - Mercy and Justice are both words used of God - not two different things – mercy attitude in which we do justice
 - - **Mishpat** Hebrew word for justice is mishpat – occurs over 200 times in OT!
 - Justice not just giving just verdict, but fighting for justice – both refusing to treat anyone differently (not oppressing) and doing what it takes to reverse injustice (end oppression)
 - **God of Relationship**
 - Being **righteous often coupled with being just ...**
 - **Alec Motyer** defined “righteousness” as “being right with God and therefore committed to putting right all other relationships in life”
 - Rectifying Justice – punish wrongdoers and caring for victims of injustice
 - Primary Justice – living in right relation to others in such a way as to render rectifying justice unnecessary
 - **God of Healing ... and Resurrection**
 - **Mark 2:15-17** – came as physician for the sick

Mark 2:15-17 (ESV)

¹⁵ And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹⁷ And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

- **Keller - But while we were dead in our transgressions and sin Jesus came down our road ...** Jesus met our need ... and even though we hated him and would have killed him ourselves if we could have ... he stopped and reached out his healing hand
- **Romans 5:6-8** – while sinners Christ dies for us

Romans 5:6-8 (ESV)

⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

How does this change OUR RESPONSE to people?

- **Motivated by Grace instead of Guilt**
 - It is only now, now that we have seen ourselves and Him in the story, now that he has truly shown us what a good neighbor looks like, that he says **“go and do likewise”**
 - **Justification** – God’s acceptance of one who was unacceptable, unloved ... justification both proclaimed and practiced, is not dead but rather life transforming!
 - **Keller, page 108!** (answer objections with what Christ did for us!)
- **Love others as Christ Loved us**
 - **Ephesians 5:1-2** – imitate Christ, Love as Christ loved us

Ephesians 5:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

- **“Partner” with rather than “Save”** ... go to inner city pastor serving poor for years but seeing little growth of church to listen, cry, ask how to help rather than as man in shining armor on white horse to save the day with your programs

- **Love must act on behalf of the poor and oppressed!**

- **Proverbs 14:31** – oppression dishonors Lord, generous to needy honors Lord

Proverbs 14:31 (ESV)

³¹ Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker,
but he who is generous to the needy honors him.

- **Proverbs 19:17** – Generous to poor lends to the Lord

Proverbs 19:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD,
and he will repay him for his deed

- **Proverbs 31:8-9** – Open mouth

Proverbs 31:8-9 (ESV)

⁸ Open your mouth for the mute,
for the rights of all who are destitute.
⁹ Open your mouth, judge righteously,
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

- **Zechariah 7:8-14** – Render justice

Zechariah 7:8-14 (ESV)

⁸ And the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, ⁹“Thus says the LORD of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, ¹⁰do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.” ¹¹But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears that they might not hear. ¹²They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the LORD of hosts. ¹³“As I called, and they would not hear, so they called, and I would not hear,” says the LORD of hosts, ¹⁴“and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and the pleasant land was made desolate.”

- **Deuteronomy 27:19** – Do not pervert justice ... Amen

Deuteronomy 27:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ “Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

{This section optional if have time}

- **“Quartet of vulnerable”**
 - Widow
 - Orphan
 - Immigrant
 - Poor
- Step in for the **long haul** ...
- **Three levels** of help
 - Relief – immediate help
 - Development – give tools to move beyond relief and become self-sufficient
 - Social Reform – change structure, laws, society (what if we find a Jew beaten by the side of the road each week ... don’t just bandage, fix system)
 - Failure of “just change them one person at a time” - Story of Eve ... Bible study leader told her to resist efforts to recruit her as a prostitute ... she eventually gave in ... they beat her dad ... pastor asked why she did not go to police ... “who do you think “they” are?”
- **Justice and Gospel go hand in hand**
 - Can not preach gospel without justice
 - Also can not just do justice, it is not the full gospel
 - **Example:** Roman emperor Julian hated Christians, but wrote:
 - “nothing has contributed to the progress of the superstition of Christianity as their charity to strangers ... the impious Galileans provide not only for their own poor, but for ours as well.”
- **Justice and Shalom**
 - “in general, to ‘do justice’ means to live in a way that generates a strong community where human beings can flourish. Specifically, however, to “do justice” means to go to places where the fabric of shalom has broken down, where weaker members of societies are falling through the fabric, and to repair it”
 - Can only reweave the fabric by weaving ourselves into it
- **Case Study: Job (see next page)**
 - Entire life characterized by Justice
 - **Job 29:14** - I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban.
 - See also **Job 29:12-17; Job 31:13-22**
- **Paul’s last words to church before go to Jerusalem to die** (acts 20)
 - Teach word
 - **Acts 20:35** - Remember weak and poor – more blessed to give than receive

Case Study - Job

Job 29:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.

Job 29:12-17 (ESV)

¹² because I delivered the poor who cried for help,
and the fatherless who had none to help him.
¹³ The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me,
and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
¹⁴ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
¹⁵ I was eyes to the blind
and feet to the lame.
¹⁶ I was a father to the needy,
and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know.
¹⁷ I broke the fangs of the unrighteous
and made him drop his prey from his teeth.

Job 31:13-22 (ESV)

¹³ "If I have rejected the cause of my manservant or my maidservant,
when they brought a complaint against me,
¹⁴ what then shall I do when God rises up?
When he makes inquiry, what shall I answer him?
¹⁵ Did not he who made me in the womb make him?
And did not one fashion us in the womb?
¹⁶ "If I have withheld anything that the poor desired,
or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail,
¹⁷ or have eaten my morsel alone,
and the fatherless has not eaten of it
¹⁸ (for from my youth the fatherless grew up with me as with a father,
and from my mother's womb I guided the widow),
¹⁹ if I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing,
or the needy without covering,
²⁰ if his body has not blessed me,
and if he was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep,
²¹ if I have raised my hand against the fatherless,
because I saw my help in the gate,
²² then let my shoulder blade fall from my shoulder,
and let my arm be broken from its socket.

Next Steps

- **Seeing people**, needs and opportunities around us
- Getting to **know the heart of God**
- Asking God where he would **have you to be involved**
 - Next week (or last week) look at global needs and trends
 - Then 3 weeks of very practical discussions on how to step into people's lives
- **Video Clip: START: Becoming a Good Samaritan** (excerpts from end of Session 1 including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Shane Clairborne, Mike Huckabee, Lynne Hybels) (5:55)
 - **Themes:** sea is lots of drops of water, eat elephant one bite at a time, most important thing is love, child throw starfish back into ocean, one person can not save every child life but can save one and that is significant, find place God has you to be involved, find story that makes you cry and get involved there
 - Closing Quote:
"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do."
(quote from Edward Hale quoted by Lynne Hybels)
- **Optional – Small Group Discussion:** Close by responding to Hybels, or anything else from today and then praying for God to work in and through each of us in the weeks to come

Upcoming "Heart of Compassion" topics:

TRACK 1: Compassion at Home	Room 206
3/30 Being a friend to widows, the elderly, shut-ins	
4/6 Caring for the sick and dying	
4/13 Reaching across race, culture, social class	
TRACK 2: Relating to those with special needs	Room 104
3/30 Befriending those with physical challenges	
4/6 Befriending those with mental challenges	
4/13 Providing a place in church for everyone	
TRACK 3: Father to the Fatherless	Room 204
3/30 Mentoring children from broken homes	
4/6 Caring for the fatherless locally	
4/13 Caring for orphans around the world	
TRACK 4: Helping the Hurting	Room 6
3/30 Serving the poor and disadvantaged	
4/6 Loving the prisoner and the 'un-deserving'	
4/13 Helping the abused and addicted	
TRACK 5: Fighting for Justice for All	Room 103
3/30 Doing justice: Effecting change in society	
4/6 Ending slavery and human trafficking	
4/13 Helping without hurting	