

Come and See 2024

Children & families

Loving our neighbour: [Watch on YouTube](#)

Hi, my name is Naomi and I work for Open Doors Youth. Now so far in this series we've learned about the love God has for us and how we can love him with all that we are, but there's a second part to this commandment and it's this, to love our neighbour as ourselves. Now when Jesus shared this commandment he wasn't talking about your next door neighbour or the people who live on your street no, but the people who were listening to Jesus we're thinking "well who is our neighbour then?" They ask him and Jesus responds by telling a story to explain or to illustrate who our neighbours are and I'm going to share with you his words, it's from the Bible, it's from The Book of Luke and this is Jesus speaking he says this, 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 and left him half dead beside the road, by chance a priest came along. and a priest was a religious leader well respected in the community and the audience would be thinking oh it's a good guy, he'll help. But when the priest saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by.

A temple assistant, also someone who the audience would be thinking ah well he's also respected, he's probably going to stop and help. Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there but he also passed by on the other side. Then a despised Samaritan came along and you guys need to know that Jews and Samaritans were enemies they were not friends in any way. In fact Jews saw Samaritans as unclean and would refuse to mix with them, they often weren't allowed in the same spaces and the people listening would have immediately heard Samaritan and thought bad guy, not someone who's going to help.

A despised Samaritan came along and when he saw the man he felt compassion for him, or he cared for him, going over to him the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins telling him, take care of this man, if his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here. Now which of these three would you say was a neighbour to the man who was attacked by bandits Jesus asked. The person who'd asked the question replied, the one who showed him mercy, then Jesus said yes, now go and do the same.

Jesus was trying to show that anyone can be your neighbour, it's not just the people that you expect. You see in the story everyone would have been thinking the priest and the temple assistant, they're going to be the ones to stop and help but they didn't. Our neighbours can be those who maybe we see every day, we've maybe made assumptions or judgments just because maybe they're a bit different, people we've maybe chosen not to interact with and maybe as I'm talking you're thinking, I wonder who my neighbours are? I wonder if there are people you sometimes find it difficult to like or to love or even to speak to.

See no one expected Jesus to say that a Samaritan was their neighbour no, but he did he was challenging the stereotypes of his day and today he challenges Christians everywhere to love all people, to see them as their neighbours. You see love takes many forms and it can look like including people who are on the outside, or showing kindness being kind and generous with your actions, with

your time and your resources and sometimes with your words. It can look like helping others like the Samaritan did with the Jew who'd been beaten and robbed.

Loving our neighbours can also look like forgiveness and I work for this organization Open Doors and it's an organization that supports Christians all over the world who have been persecuted or targeted for their faith, and I want to tell you a story about a guy called Pastor Shianth from Sri Lanka and he started just a little church for local Christians in his area, but there were members of the community who didn't like that Christians had started to meet and so they decided to take matters into their own hands and they beat up a group of Christians. One Christian was violently attacked and four other others were beaten and had rocks thrown at them. The church was in shock, they were kind of processing what had happened but then COVID-19 hit and you know the whole world shut down, but in particular their country went into lockdown. Without work in that community people started to struggle, during this time getting supplies to different places was quite difficult, remote villages were often struggling for food and aid and this village in particular was finding it challenging.

The pastor, pastor Shianth, because he knew some people from Open Doors, we supported him and his church community to be able to deliver food and supplies to that village, and the delivery came and the group of Christians gathered together to speak and they decided that the first thing they wanted to do with this aid was to go and deliver it to the people who had attacked them. Showing love to their neighbours. These villages were so surprised that the Christians were showing kindness to them that they said this, they didn't have to show us kindness, they didn't have to help us, but they did, why did we do such wrong to them? The Christians actually had enough food and supplies to be able to help the entire village, showing love to each member of that community, they could have kept it all for themselves, but they practice this teaching to love your neighbour as yourself.

Now we live in a world where people are often busy preoccupied and lonely showing love to someone can have a lasting impact. Whether it's holding a door open, or just smiling, or saying a kind word, these things might seem small, but they can change someone's day, doesn't have to be big. But Christians believe that loving your neighbour is a way to show your love to God too, by loving those he has created. I wonder if there are ways big or small that you can show love to your neighbour this week?