

Fil-Am Community Church

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Key Verse: Luke 10:30-37

“GIVING YOUR TIME”

This morning we're starting a new series on giving which will run for the next four weeks. Now, don't be alarmed. Pastor Dave and I are not going to bombard you with verses and statements about giving your tithes and offerings because this series is not what you think it is. Although one message will touch on that which is inevitable when you have a series about giving. Especially now that the Lord is giving us a building soon, there's the **expectation** that we'll be more faithful in our giving.

So, in this series, we'll be talking about giving in a way that reflects the attitude of Jesus. We're calling this series “**Giving Like Jesus**”. And for the next four weeks, we're going to talk about “Giving Your Time” (Showing Love and Compassion), “Giving Your Treasure” (Stewardship of God's Money), “Giving Your Talents” (Using Your Abilities for God), and “Giving Your Testimony” (Lifestyle Witnessing). Each of this message will be based on a parable of Jesus.

Jesus taught more than 40 parables. Going through all of them will take us about a year. And so, we're going to spread them out. Maybe, another series before the year is over and then next year and the years after.

One-third of all the teachings of Jesus consist of parables. He taught in parables because he wanted to illustrate profound, divine truths in stories any person can easily understand. A parable, in fact, is commonly defined as “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.”

Today, I’m going to begin with one of the most loved and famous parables of Jesus. The Parable of the Good Samaritan. The title of this message is **“Giving Your Time”**.

One night a wife found her husband standing over their newborn baby’s crib. Silently she watched him. As he stood looking down at the sleeping infant, she saw on his face a mixture of emotions: disbelief, doubt, delight, amazement, skepticism. He would stand back, shake his head and say, **“Amazing”** while smiling from ear to ear. Touched by his unusual display of emotion and the deep feelings it aroused, her eyes glistened as she slipped her arms around him. “A penny for your thoughts,” she whispered in his ear. “Isn’t it amazing!” he replied. “When you take the time and really look close, how can anyone make a crib like that for only \$50!”

This man gave his time...but to the **wrong** object of affection. You see, giving your time is essential in **expressing your love**. You cannot really love if you don’t have the time to show it.

Tony Campolo is a pastor and author. In his book “The Kingdom of God is a Party” told how, upon arrival in Honolulu, he made his way unwittingly to a seedy part of town for a snack at 3:30 in the morning only to be surrounded by eight or nine prostitutes who had just gotten off work for the night. He overheard one talking to her friend, “Tomorrow is my birthday.” Her friend rebutted, “So what do you want from me? You want me to get you a cake and sing, ‘Happy Birthday?’” The birthday girl protested, “Why do you have to be so mean? I was just telling you, that’s all. Why do you have to put me down? Why should you give me a birthday party now when I’ve never had a birthday party in my whole life?”

When the prostitutes left, Campolo’s heart was touched. He decided to throw her a surprise party. He decorated the place the next night with the help of the bartender, who happily chipped in the cake. The next day, the stunned girl was deeply touched when the whole bar sang a birthday song to her. Campolo offered to say a prayer for the woman before the stunned crowd, and after the prayer, the bartender remarked,

“Hey! You never told me you were a preacher. What kind of church do you belong to?” Campolo replied, “I belong to a church that throws birthday parties for prostitutes at 3:30 in the morning.” The bartender then sneered, “No you don’t. There’s no church in the world like that. If there was, I would join it.”

Campolo gave like Jesus gave. He gave **his time** to make a difference in that poor girl's life. You see, Jesus was a friend of sinners. He ate and drank with people that the religious elite of His day would not. He loved the unlovely. Learning to love means that we love like Jesus. To do this I want us to look at the story of the Good Samaritan:

We begin in verse 30 where Jesus replied to an expert of the law who asked, "Who is my neighbor?"

Please get your Bibles and open them to Luke 10:30. Please follow along as I read the verses: *"30 In reply Jesus said: 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of 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, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two silver coins 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.'"*

So what does it mean to give your time to love others? It means

1. PAYING ATTENTION

“But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him...” (v. 33)

Paying attention to someone means looking and listening with keen interest in the need of others. In the parable, a man was badly beaten by robbers. He was left for dead. Three men passed by. First was the Jewish Priest who saw the man but avoided him. This was a religious guy, someone in charge of the temple. Someone who offered sacrifices and prayed on behalf of the people. But he turned a blind eye, pretending he didn't see or hear anything. The same way with the second man. He is a Levite. A Levite is a person who comes from the tribe of Levi. It is from this tribe that God has designated priests would come from! He too saw the robbery victim but just like the priest avoided him. And the third man is a Samaritan, meaning, he comes from Samaria. Jews consider them as half-breeds. To them, Samaritans are the descendants of Jews who have intermarried with non-Jews during the Assyrian captivity of Israel hundreds of years before. Therefore, no Jew would dare come near them. The Jews and Samaritans were enemies. Now, the Samaritan saw what the priest and the Levite saw. The difference is that he paid attention.

Paying attention to the needs of others is what can **make a difference** in **someone's life**. We may see what's happening around us. We may take notice of someone's problem, the troubles they're going through, the need in their life, but if we're not really paying attention, we're not showing we care.

Paying attention means **to come near**, to listen, and to speak with the person. Just like what the Samaritan did. The trouble is many people are just like the Priest and the Levite who may appear so religious outside but never really give a thought about how they can be of help to others. Tell me, "Don't we see people who need to know Jesus, and pass them by on a regular basis?"

Don't we see people every day that are hurting from emotional problems, or physical problems, or living with the result of "bad choices" that they have made, and pass them by every day?" It is so easy to care enough to look; but, then do nothing about it! James in James 2:15-16 (NLT), tells us: *"Suppose you see a brother or sister who needs food or clothing, and you say, 'Well, good-bye and God bless you, stay warm and eat well' - but, then you don't give that person any food or clothing - what good does that do?"* The answer, of course, is that it doesn't do any good at all!

Speaking of James, I remember one snowy night after we came from our home group, James Abell, with his family in his SUV, the old one not the sleek one he has now, was driving ahead of us. We were coming from the

Ericsons in Reston. I followed behind him and we were driving slowly and carefully. Then, upon reaching Sterling, at the intersection of 7 and Dranesville St., I saw this vehicle stuck in the middle of the road. It looked like it spun out of control and just stayed there by itself. No police was in sight yet. Other cars were just passing by and going around it to avoid hitting it.

Then, I saw Jim stopped his car when he came near to it, got off his vehicle and came over to the stalled car. I saw him talked to the driver. Afterwards, I called Jim to ask about the situation. He said that the guy seemed okay although he looked a bit dazed. The guy had already called 911. I told Jim what he did was admirable. He said, “Pastor, there were times in the past when something similar had happened and I didn’t do anything. And I would leave with a sense of regret knowing that I could have done something. This time, I made sure I did something.”

I thought that was a good gesture. Many people saw the problem, including me, but only one person paid attention. Then, I looked behind us and saw the lines of cars that were waiting for us to get out of the way. Just kidding!

Reader’s Digest , recently asked, “What has 6 eyes and cannot see?” The winning answer? “Three men, in a house with dirty laundry, over-flowing trash cans, and a sink full of dirty dishes.”

It is easy to get comfortable in your surroundings. When you move into a new house at first everything is a mess. However, any mess left long enough becomes the norm and you no longer see it. We need to see our situation from God's perspective. That requires fresh vision. Do you really see what is happening in the lives of your wife and children? **Do they have your attention?**

I remember my wife once asking me a question as I sat at the computer. She asked me a question and I answered, still typing away. She asked me the same question again and again I answered as I typed. When asked again I turned to look at her and she said "I wanted your attention, not your answer". One of the greatest ways to love is by simply giving our attention. Giving your time also means

2. EXPRESSING AFFECTION

"...he took pity on him" (v. 33)

To give your time to others means you not only need to see their needs but also to feel their needs. It is easy to become indifferent to the needs of people that you see every day. We need to pray that God would not only make us aware but that He would touch our hearts with the needs of others.

George Bernard Shaw said, “The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that’s the essence of inhumanity.”

On Aug. 8, 2004, the Vietnamese community of Westminster, California, celebrated one of the kindest and bravest acts performed by a stranger on them. On Nov. 13, 1985, ninety-six Vietnamese refugees despaired for their lives and their families’ lives when the engine of the boat carrying them across the South China Sea went dead.

The boat people crammed onto the rickety boat could see a tropical storm headed their way. For four days they had watched the ships passed: 1, 2, 3, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, but none would stop to rescue them. When the 51st ship passed, the refugees waved, screamed, and clamored in vain.

The South Korean fishing ship traveled on but turned around 10 minutes later to save them. On board the ship, Jeon, a captain employed by Koryo Wonyang Corporation for 16 years, was returning from the Indian Ocean with 25 sailors and more than 350 tons of tuna. As Jeon’s ship, the Kwang Myung 87, approached them, the captain could see the dire straits the people were in. He called the sailors together because it was against company policy to pick up boat people, but Jeon told them he’d take responsibility. The sailors told Jeon they were with him. Only years later did the refugees know what had happened to Jeon. The shipping company fired him for picking up the boat people against the company’s rules. He couldn’t

find another captain's job and survived through his savings and by helping out at friends' businesses.

On Aug. 8, 2004, nineteen years after the dramatic boat rescue, hundreds of people in the Vietnamese community of Westminster paid back a debt they can never repay. They honored the ship's captain, Je Yong Jeon, after survivor Peter Cuong Nguyen managed to track him down." Nguyen said, "He has the biggest heart. Without his rescue, there would be no today. We would have been dead." Jeon, now 62, shrugged off the compliments, saying, "If I wasn't there, other people might have done the same thing that I did. As a fisherman for 25 years, I've caught a lot of fish. And during the 25 years, it was with God's grace that we found the boat people and were able to save all of them."

When others hurt and you feel their hurt, that's compassion. And that's what the Samaritan felt. He took pity on him. It didn't matter whether the victim was Jewish or not, Samaritan or not.

The thing is, there wasn't any hesitation on the part of the Samaritan - somehow he had developed his heart in a way that the Jewish priest and Jewish Levite had not! He didn't stop to wonder about what others might think; or, about the time he would have to spend; he simply did what had to be done: he went instantly into the "sympathy mode!"

Now, we cannot force ourselves to have a heart of compassion - it comes with time as we fellowship and have relationship with Jesus. The more we know Him, the softer our hearts become and the more likely we are to instantly begin to feel the way that the Samaritan felt!
Finally, giving your time means

3. TAKING ACTION

“He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.” (v. 34)

To give your time to others means you not only see and feel the needs of the people around you, you also need to do something about it. Remember that AGAPE love is an act of the will, it is a choice that you make. The priest and the Levite both saw the man. Perhaps they both even had pity on him. What was different about the Samaritan was that he acted. He did what he could to meet the man's needs. We should follow up our words and feelings with action.

A guy said to his girlfriend, “Sweetheart, I love you so dearly. I’m willing to give you everything I have, even my life. I’ll die for you.” And the girl replied, “You always say you love me and you’ll die for me. But you never do it.”
Follow up your words with action.

Howard Hendricks of Dallas Seminary is probably the most renowned and influential teacher in the field of Bible study. He has taught thousands of students.

Hendricks' parents separated before he was born, and he was raised by a loving grandmother and an alcoholic grandfather. He tells of how a man named Walt led him to Christ:

One day Walt told the Sunday school superintendent he wanted to start a Sunday school class. "That's great, Walt," he was told, "but we don't have an opening for you." Walt insisted, however, so the superintendent said, "Good. Go out and get a class. Anybody you find is yours." So Walt came into my community. The first time we met, I was playing marbles out on the concrete. "Son," he said, "how would you like to go to Sunday school?" I wasn't interested. Anything with school in it had to be bad news. So he said, "How about a game of marbles?" That was different. So we shot marbles and had a great time, though he whipped me in every single game. By then I would have followed him anywhere.

Walt picked up a total of thirteen boys in that community for his Sunday school class, of whom nine were from broken homes. Actually, I can't tell you much of what Walt said to us, but I can tell you everything about him...because he loved me for Christ's sake. He loved me more than my parents did. Eleven of the thirteen are now in full-time vocational Christian work. He used to take us hiking, and I'll never forget those times. I'm sure we

made his bad heart worse, but he'd run all over those woods with us because he cared."

Folks, this is the story of a man who not only had good intentions. He went out and did what was required. As a result many lives were changed.

When we take action, it would require a sacrifice on our part. The Samaritan certainly took pains to helping the man. He didn't have to do it. He could have made excuses like the Priest and the Levite. "There are others who will pass by." "The robber might still be around and I could be the next victim." "This guy is a Jew, my enemy." I'm late for my appointment."

No, he didn't make any excuses. He didn't have a second thought. Without regard for himself, he approached the man and offered the best help he could. The Samaritan understood the truth of that old saying, "If you're gonna talk the talk, you gotta walk the walk." There needs to come a point in our display of compassion where we are willing to do whatever is necessary to bring healing to the minds, bodies, and souls of the people we are ministering to - no matter how unpleasant it might sometimes seem! We are not fulfilling the call for compassion until we are willing to do whatever it takes to help the person in need!

The Samaritan was even willing to pay the cost financially. However, the main point is not the money, the main point is that he was willing to risk his reputation by helping a Jewish individual - he was willing to take the time

necessary to help - he was willing to inconvenience himself - to step out of his "**Comfort Zone**" - he was willing to put this man's needs ahead of his own!

Oswald Chambers, author of the best-selling devotional "My Utmost for His Highest" said that his philosophy in serving others was "Spend and be spent."

In conclusion, while I don't believe that Jesus was referring to Himself in this parable, it is very easy to draw some parallels, isn't it? Jesus Christ had compassion for the human race, even though we had wronged Him and turned our backs on Him! Jesus Christ, was willing to offer Himself in order to heal us from our sin and diseases! Jesus Christ had the desire to pay the ultimate cost and he took action on that desire when he went to the Cross at Calvary and died in our place!

Jesus asked the religious scholar, in effect, "Which one was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" When the scholar replied correctly - "the one who showed him mercy" - Jesus said, "Go and do likewise."

Let Us Pray....