

# (Be)friending

LOVING GOD BY LOVING NEIGHBORS

## **Devotional - 10/08/2024**

Erin and I don't take as many walks as we used to. By the time we get all three kids ready—Grace in her stroller, Luke on his bike, and Cait with her scooter—it's already a 30-minute ordeal just to get out the door. Then, inevitably, halfway down the street, something goes wrong. Someone suddenly needs to use the bathroom, someone doesn't want to ride anymore, and Grace is crying. By the time we've barely made it half a mile, my only goal is to get back home with my sanity intact.

In Luke 10, the passage starts with an expert in the law testing Jesus. He already knew the right answers—to love God and love your neighbor. But then he asked a follow-up question: “And who is my neighbor?”

Cue Jesus' famous parable about a man beaten and left for dead on the side of the road. If that story were playing out today, you can almost picture it: a pastor drives by, maybe glances, but doesn't stop. A church volunteer, heading to Bible study, sees the man but thinks, “Someone else will help—I'm running late.” And then along comes a Samaritan, the one no one expected to stop.

But today, let's focus not on who helped, but what they did. The Samaritan didn't just feel bad—he acted. He didn't go looking for someone in need, but he had his eyes open. When he saw the man, he responded with mercy. He met the man's practical needs—bandaging his wounds, providing transportation, and ensuring he had a safe place to recover. His love wasn't theoretical; it was tangible.

And that's what concerns me. I wonder if I'm so focused on getting my kids home that I miss what's happening in my own neighborhood. Honestly, I can't remember the last time I took a walk and really paid attention to what was going on around me.

Is there an elderly couple nearby who could use help with groceries?

A single parent juggling three kids and a flat tire?

Or a neighbor sitting alone on their porch every day, just waiting for someone to stop and say hello?

Don't ask me—I'm afraid I'd be too distracted to notice.

That's why I want to challenge myself—and you—to be like the Samaritan. Next time you take a walk around your neighborhood, go with your eyes open. Ask God to help you see what you've been missing.

Jesus ended the parable of the Good Samaritan with a simple, direct command: "Go and do likewise." It wasn't just a suggestion; it's a challenge: to see, to act, and to love in practical ways.

So, what's your move this week? Go and do likewise—your neighbor might just be waiting for you.