

A Neighbor Without A Name

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[0:00] Luke chapter 10 this morning, Luke chapter 10. As we take a look here in Luke chapter 10, as we're going to be looking at a neighbor with no name.

We've been going through a series of talking about people in Scripture that had no name given for them, and that really most of these you'll find can apply to us.

I mean, instead of their name or not having a name given, you could put your name in a lot of these and apply the principles and the things that we're looking at for that.

But in Luke chapter 10, let's pick up here in verse 30 here quick this morning. And it says this, And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment and wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him and passed by on the other side.

[1:03] But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion on him. And he went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pants and gave them to the host and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showeth mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go and do thou likewise.

Let's pray. Heavenly Fathers, we take a few moments here to look at these individuals here within the passage, Lord, about answering the question of who is my neighbor.

Lord, to consider those things in our own lives as we look at others as we walk through life, and to take a look and to see who our neighbor is and what our responsibility is in regards to it.

[2:17] And Lord, we just love you and thank you in Jesus' name. Amen. You know, we find here this parable is told by Jesus in response to a question. I found up in verse 29, who, when the lawyer came and asked him this, he says, Who is my neighbor?

You know? Which brings to the forefront, what does a Christian look like? What does Christian love, what does charity, as the Bible call it, look like?

Because when we understand this question, because who is his neighbor? This man was asking a question, trying to get out of responsibility. Instead of we need to ask, you know, how is this our responsibility?

How does this apply to us? And, you know, when we think about this parable, it could really be summarized by three statements about people. You know?

Because there's three people you find in here. You find some spend their life beating people up. You know? You find some spend their life passing people up. And you find some spend their life helping people up.

[3:24] You know, that's really a great summation I found for this passage, because we're going to see each of these in what they do. But really, the choice is ours to which category is going to describe our life.

You know? Because you don't have to have great title or position or even great resources to understand the responsibility as Jesus is going to look here of who is your neighbor. What's our responsibility towards others?

Because when we consider those things, we need to realize the gravity of sin. Because really, in discussing this, we need to consider the reality of the gravity of sin that's involved in life.

You know, the victim of this story we're told very little about. You know? He's probably the one we know the least about or can make least assumptions. We really know nothing about the man who fell into what was a victim here of this brutality.

We find here, we're told he's going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and got into trouble. You know, we don't know whether he was going with right intentions or wrong intentions. You know, he doesn't give us a picture either way.

[4:33] But we do know he was going down. And you know, one of the things that's interesting in Scripture, oftentimes going down is always a reference into going someplace you shouldn't go. You know?

It's kind of an illustration that reveals to us. And we realize here that one of the greatest deceptions of Satan is to make sin look attractive or enticing.

And he makes us think that we'll be wise by following the temptation that's before us. You know? But it takes us down. It takes us away from God. And we're going to see this picture play out here. You know, consider Genesis chapter 3 for a moment. When it talks about Satan, it says, And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die. You know? We could take time just to break this down.

But she questioned, the serpent questions the word of God. What did God say about it? For God doth know that the day ye eat thereof, that your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

[5:31] And the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and the tree to be desired to make one wise. She took the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

You know? We realize what happened at that moment. They went from paradise and went down. They stepped away from God.

They stepped away from what God would have, because sin looks good, but always is way more destructive than you ever realized. You know, the devil has a way of painting the picture of sin that's going to make life better, but it always destroys.

It always tears down. And we need to see that, because notice the direction of sin. A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho there in verse 30.

You know, it's natural to assume that Jerusalem, when you look on a map, Jerusalem is north of Jericho. You know, and since we normally use the terms in that context today, when we look on a map, you know, we think about north as going up, and south as going down.

[6:40] But when you read your Bible, you have to understand that's not what it's talking about. When it's given descriptions, it's talking about geographic. You know? So even the directionally challenged can manage this, because if you're going that way, it's down.

If you're going that way, it's up. So instead of being north and south, we'll just start talking about being up and down, and so that might help people. I don't know. But pick on some of our directionally challenged folks, directionally handicapped, or whatever they...

If you shut their GPS off, they'd never leave home. But, you know, I want you to see here what's happening that, you know, in this, because the reason that Jesus spoke about him going down, it's based on altitude rather than direction.

Jerusalem sits about 2,500 feet higher than Jericho. So he's actually talking about the altitude of which they're going. In other words, we see this picture of going down to Jericho.

And the reason this makes perfect sense for Jesus to say, they went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, because literally it was the downhill direction that they would be going.

[7:51] You know? And God refers to Jerusalem as his own city, a place of his. Jeremiah 3 says this, At the time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all nations shall be gathered unto it in the name of the Lord to Jerusalem.

Neither shall they walk anymore after the imagination of their evil heart. You know, when he talks about going down from Jerusalem, it's a picture of going away from God, because Jerusalem is seen as the place of God, and leaving and departing is going away.

And it's going down, because I've never been over there to the Middle East, and over to Israel. It would be fun to probably go someday. But, you know, just to see the geography.

But they tell me, when you look at that, there's no place to leave Jerusalem that you don't go down. If you depart the city of Jerusalem, you're going downhill. It sits on top of a hill. So we see this picture being played out, and so we go down into sin.

That's the picture that we see here. You know, and the Scripture teaches the propensity to go down. It's amazing how many times this plays out. You know, Genesis 12 talks about Abram, and he goes down into Egypt to sojourn there.

[9:05] You know, we find that in Judges 14, Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath, and the daughters of the Philistines. You know, you find in Jonah chapter 1, in verse 3, he rose up and fled into Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa.

I mean, you see this illustration play out in Scripture. Many times as going down in that relationship to sin and the direction that they were going.

You know, when we understand the direction, but the depletion of sin, because the road down spiritually never leads where it promises. You know? Sin is a deceiver.

This man leaving Jerusalem that day probably had no idea what was going to take place. He had no idea what was going to happen on the road. You know, look here in our text here in Luke 10, verse 30, it says, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment and wounded him.

You know, when the devil promises us good, and that which is pleasant, he's lying. You know, the devil never tells you the truth. He's a master deceiver.

[10:19] John 8 says, He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it.

You know, the devil loves to deceive, loves to bring us away, and to draw us in to sin, promising something he'll never deliver. Sin never delivers.

It always consumes more. And it takes more. But also the deadening of sin, because ultimately the goal of the devil is death, and the wages of sin is death.

This is the believing him always takes us away from the promise of life and brings death. You know, death is always associated with sin. Think about what James tells us.

James 1, But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. And when lust hath conceived it, bringeth forth sin. And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

[11:20] You know, the man on the road to Jerusalem, down to Jericho, came frighteningly close to death that day. Notice here in our text in verse 30, and departed, leaving him what?

Half dead. You know, it damaged his life. It damaged the things around him. And those of us who are saved have a death-to-life experience because of what Christ has done.

Because the Bible makes it clear that you're dead in your trespasses and sins until you call upon the Savior and then you're made and transformed into life. It tells in Ephesians 2, And you hath he quickened who are dead in trespasses and sins.

That word quickened means made alive. You know, but when we realize that even after salvation sometimes we choose a direction away from God. You know, God's not a tyrant.

You know, sometimes people look at God today. How many people of you know you talk to that think of God as a tyrant? You know, if he's such a sole authority, why does he let this? And why does he do that? And why is all this? And they give God recognition, but they don't realize that God is a loving God.

[12:31] He's truly in the right context, a sovereign God. He's sovereign over his creation. But God also gives us the ability to make choice.

Because you can't experience love without a choice. God cannot be loving and not allow choosing.

Because you can't force somebody to love you. Love is a choice that we make. The Bible makes it clear that God chose to love us. That's the reason Christ came.

You know, we talked about that earlier, is because God loved us. He chose to love us. He didn't have to. He chose to. The same as we choose what we're going to do with what he has put on display for us.

Even after salvation, you choose, are you going to stay close to God? Or are you going to wander away from God? We need to understand the picture of what's happening.

You know, when we understand the dynamic, the gravity of sin, you know, God tells us very clearly, you know, 1 John 1.9 says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[13:41] That verse in 1 John 1.9 was written to save people. If you read 1 John, it's talking about our fellowship with God, not our relationship with God. Because sin causes a hindrance in the fellowship.

But God says they can always be restored if we come to him. That's the reason he's always throughout the Old Testament. The theme of the Old Testament, you'll find as you read through one of the themes that's very clear in there is God's calling people back to him.

God's calling Israel to return. Come back to me. It's a constant calling. You see it throughout the Old Testament.

And it's still the same story today. God's calling people to himself. But we see here first the gravity of sin, but then the greater sinners. Because, you know, he doesn't talk much about this man that fell into, that was robbed and beaten, even though we know that he was going away from Jerusalem for whatever reason.

We may not know, but the picture that we see, but we see the greater sinners because as the story continues, we have this man lying by the road half dead. You know, here he is beaten and bruised and barely alive.

[14:57] And then Jesus talks about a couple other people who come by. One a priest and the other a Levite pass him by without stopping for help. Without stopping to see what could be done.

You know, it's not difficult to see the callousness of the priest and the Levite in this passage. The problem is they're really more true to our life than we care to admit sometimes.

You know, sometimes when you read Bible stories, we get the idea, well, why wouldn't be that person in the story? But the reality is oftentimes we are that person in the story. We're the one that misses the opportunities that God has.

You know, how often do we pass up an opportunity with people of someone who's been robbed and left for dead spiritually? You know, we have people that have been beat up by sin and this world all around us.

Been robbed of the joy that God offers to them. They're dead in their trespasses and sins and we can walk on by. You know, when we think about and ask ourselves, has God put someone into your path perceiving, perhaps even repeatedly to whom we have neglected to minister?

[16:09] Maybe it's somebody that you're in contact with that you're always around and you just never say anything. You know? But let's look here at this greater sinners because we see a divine intervention that takes place because the Lord often sets up appointments for us.

You know, we aren't prepared for them unless we prepare ourselves to be ready for what God allows in our lives. The priest and the Levite in Jesus' parable weren't prepared.

Look here at verse 31. And it says, and by chance, there came down a certain priest that way. And it says, likewise, a Levite. And by chance, a chance meeting is always an opportunity to see what God is doing.

You know, this chance meeting was an appointment orchestrated by God who knows everything about what's going to take place, of what the need is. You know, including those who lead us to intersect with someone who has a need.

You know, we never know where somebody is. That we could be a blessing to them or help them or be able to direct them towards the Lord. You know, we can be sure that we find someone with a spiritual need and God intends us to help them.

[17:25] You know, when we understand that God wants us to be a part, He wants us on those appointments to step up and do what we ought to do. But

we find a deliberate indifference.

You know, when we aren't prepared ourselves, we will let things go. You know, we've been looking in the Old Testament and reading about the kings and one of the statements in there is he prepared his heart to seek the Lord is one of the phrases you'll find in there talking about the kings.

They either prepared their heart or they didn't prepare their heart and had two different outcomes. You know, when it comes to looking at this, a lot of this of how we look at the opportunities God's present is based on how we prepare our heart to be observant for it.

Because if you're not looking for something, you'll walk right by it. If you're not considering those things, you know, you might say that we need, Jesus is dealing with their spiritual eyesight here. you know, it's interesting that most Americans, you know, we're pretty diligent about our physical sight. I mean, just look around. It's another one of those popular places. You'll find eye places all over the place.

[18:33] You know, and we have great concern of things about being able to see and we spend great resources. It tells us that there's roughly 43,000 brick and mortar locations selling eyeglasses in the United States.

You know, there are about 197 million adult vision correction users. In other words, about 75% of the United States has some sort of vision correction that they're able to help them read or to see. You know, many of them are wearing prescription eyeglasses and doing all the different things to help, you know, even making sure they look good like why they see. You know, think about how much money people spend on frames.

You know, you ever been to the store and maybe want to make sure I look good. You know, they spend a lot of money on those things and the different elements to make sure we can see physically.

But you know, where are we at when it comes to our physical? We might be that diligent on our physical but where are we at in our spiritual eyesight of seeing those around us that God would have?

[19:45] You know, when we prepare our heart because look here at verse 31 and it says this, and by chance there came down a certain priest that way and when he saw him he passed by on the other side and likewise the Levite when he was at the place came and looked on him and passed by on the other side.

The priest saw, the Levite looked, they both deliberately chose to pass up an opportunity. Later they would have rationalized away their indifference. You know, it's interesting, the priest saw, that means that he was on the other side.

It's like, don't disturb me right now, keep moving. And the Levite, you might say, that's the rubber necker. You know, the one on the interstate that's got to slow down, you know, the rubber necker. Because it says he went over and he looked. In other words, he went over and says, dude, you're in bad shape. But you know, the problem with both of them is they just kept going. You know, they could say, well, I was in a hurry, I didn't have time, I didn't feel qualified.

You know, it looks too risky, you know, or, you know, these statements all ease our conscience sometimes, but it also seeds the indifference. Because we can become very indifferent to people sometimes and not understanding where they are.

[21:02] You know, look over to Matthew 24 for a moment. Matthew 24 and verse 12. Word of God tells us this, and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall what? wax cold.

You know, we need to understand the importance of what's taking place. You know, we need to be willing and paying attention to what God would have, how God intends for us to help those that cross our path.

But let's look here next at the Good Samaritan as we take the rest of this time here, because, you know, the third man is on his way to Jericho, the Good Samaritan. he looked and saw the man's plight as well, but this man chose to do something with it.

In other words, he didn't just drive on by. I got an appointment, I got to be there. He didn't stop and rubberneck along the way. He saw that there was something happening.

He took time and he went and looked, but then he took action. He said, what can I do to make a difference? You know, the Samaritan in the New Testament times were looked down upon.

[22:11] You know, think about, when talking about those of Samaria, this is not like the popular person. This wasn't the guy that said, well, I'm going to gain favor with everybody. He was already at the bottom.

He wasn't looking to see what he could get out of it. In society, the Samaritans were looked down upon. You know, think about when Jesus speaks about the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter 4.

This statement is made in verse 9. It says, Then saith the woman of Samaria, How is it that thou being a Jew askedest, drink of me which am a woman of Samaria?

For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. This man alongside the road most likely was Jewish. And here's a Samaritan that had no responsibility you may say directly stopped and took care of him, even though he knew the guy probably didn't even like him.

He was a doubtful candidate, you might say, because a Samaritan man in Jesus' story was not a likely choice to help out this wounded and hurting man, you know. He would have been, most would have never thought anything if he would have passed on by.

[23:15] If he just chose to go his own direction. We see he's a doubtful candidate, but he also had a determined compassion. Because the Samaritan's humility made him alert to the victim's need.

You know, the Samaritan saw the wounded man, he had compassion on him. Look at verse 33. What it says, but a certain Samaritan as he journeyed came where he was and when he saw him he had what?

Compassion on him. You know, the reality is if you're going to help somebody and truly be able to help, it starts in here. Of looking at somebody and says there's a need.

There's something that needs to be met. He had compassion on him. Because, you know, it doesn't start with the doing, it starts with the heart. Because you know what?

If your heart's in it, your hands are going to follow. Your hands will do what's on your heart to do. You'll find time, you'll find the energy to do that.

[24:14] And if you, you know, you figure out why you would serve and you'll figure out how. You know, when you want to do something, you figure out the how behind it. Because it becomes a priority.

You know, because compassion is a decision that also drives us and compassion is what helps us make a difference. Look over in Jude 22.

22nd verse of Jude. Notice what it says, and on some having compassion, doing what? Making a difference. You know, Psalm 126 says, they that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seeds shall doubtly come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. You know, that connection of the determined compassion for others of what God would have.

But while compassion drives us to choose to help others in need, compassion alone is not enough. You know, compassion alone is not enough because you actually need courage to step in to the life of another person.

[25:29] A devoted courage to step out, put yourself out there to another person to minister to their need. You know, the Bible records the Samaritan didn't just see the wounded man needs, he went to him.

Look there in verse 34. He didn't just do what the others did. He didn't just gawk, he didn't just stop and look and say, man, that guy's have problems. It says that he took a step, he went to him, you know, and the reality of going and doing what God would have for us to do, it takes courage to go, to speak to people about their need, to reach out to meet the needs of others.

You know, the reality we need to be bold for the Lord. You know, Proverbs 28 verse 1 says that the righteous are bold as a lion. You know, we can be bold in the things of God, but sometimes we'll let fear keep you from going on those paths to help others for Christ.

You know, to realize that God is with us. God's the one that's going to provide what is needed along the way. You know, to realize Isaiah 41 10 says, Fear thou not for I am with thee.

Be not dismayed for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee. Yea, I'll help thee. Yea, I'll uphold thee with my right hand of my righteousness. You know, when it comes to the greatest single need every person has is that of what?

[26:58] What's every individual's need that we meet? Well, what's the general need that every person you meet, what's the need that they have? Salvation. Think about that.

There's nobody you meet that you ever talk to that you ever interact with that doesn't have a need of salvation. Every one of them has the same need. But what keeps us from doing that probably is what?

That great four-letter word. What keeps you from speaking out sometimes? Fear. You know, it's an obstacle that Satan tempts us with to try to keep us from sharing the truth of the Gospels with others.

You know, to overcome that is to rely upon him and to be intentional about doing it, preparing yourself to do it. Because you know what? You fail to do things you don't prepare to do.

If you're not thinking about it, you'll pass on by. Because we see a deliberate charity that this man had. A good Samaritan, the good Samaritan had compassion, he had courage, he chose to minister charity to the wounded man by the side of the road.

[28:03] And notice what it says in verse 34. It says, And he went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine and setting him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

And on the morrow he departed and took out two pence and gave them to the host and said unto him, Take care of him and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee.

You know, the one thing about serving and being able to help is it going to cost you something.

You know, we live in a day and age, everybody likes everything for free. The reality in life is nothing is free. You know, the only thing that you have that we say is free is salvation.

Salvation isn't even free. It doesn't cost you anything because God already paid the price.

Something that's free to you means somebody else took care of the expense.

If you get it for nothing means somebody else paid. But we live in a culture that we like the idea of free. But free doesn't exist. It's just a matter of who's paying.

[29:04] Who's putting up the resource for that to happen. This Samaritan, it cost him to minister to the injured man and he chose to pay the price.

You know, you think about, you know, to ask ourselves, are we willing to invest our time and our treasure to help others? You know, we need to really consider how are we using those things?

You know, Philippians chapter 2 and verse 4 says, look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others. You know, what are we paying attention to others? You know, even as a church family those things ought to be.

But even outside the church we ought to be. You know, what are the needs? How can we meet that? Do we, as God provided what is needed, are we using those things properly?

You know, because we find here also a divine commendation because when we see here that God reveals, Jesus reveals something to him because, think about it, did the good Samaritan receive a reward for his ministry to the half-dead man?

[30:10] He didn't get a medal. You know, they didn't make a big ceremony. Nobody showed up to celebrate. You know, you'll see that a lot. Somebody does something, it might say, above and beyond to help somebody and we'll give them a medal or we'll make recognition of what they did.

But you know what? Some of the most helpful things are things you'll never get a medal or recognition for. If you're seeking recognition you're doing it for the wrong reason. You know, we don't know if anyone actually even saw what he did other than the innkeeper.

You know, we don't have any record of anybody else that even made note of it except for Jesus and the innkeeper. How'd the innkeeper know? Well, he's the one that saw it happening. He saw him bring the man in and bind up his wounds and to take care of him and to give resource to make sure he was continued to have that.

This innkeeper was aware of the benevolence of this man. You know, we do not know whether or not the man who was helped ever even expressed gratitude in return. We know nothing about the guy who fell by the way that was beaten and robbed.

Nobody ever says he came back and thanked the guy. We do know how much more was spent on the man's well-being and was later repaid by the Samaritan.

[31:30] We don't know how much more. He says, he has two pence, but he says, hey, if he runs up any bigger bill, just let me know. Next time I come through, I'll pay it. While there's no doubt many more facts of the story aren't given to us, but the Lord knew the minute details of this event and this unnamed man with compassion.

You know, Jesus sees what's happening. God sees what's going on and how we're responding to others. You know, Proverbs 15, 3 says, the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good.

You know, God sees what we do. He sees what's taking place. You know, this is another one of them stories that Jesus is speaking a parable in this format.

But it makes me wonder if Jesus is drawing from things that God saw because the story is so connected to reality that it's very likely it's something that may have actually happened. Nobody else saw it.

They passed by and it just went away. But God took note. Because I want you to understand ministry and how we minister to people is not always public.

[32:42] You know, sometimes people like to do things because other people see it. sometimes they do things because they're going to get praised for. But you know what? Ministry is you don't always get praised.

You don't always get a round of applause. Many times it goes without appreciation. But you know what? God always is aware. We ought not to do it because of what somebody else sees or does. But knowing that God is the one paying attention. look in the book of Hebrews for a moment. Hebrews chapter 6 in verse 10 it says, For God is not unrighteous to forget your works and labor of love which ye have showed towards his name and that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister.

You know? I want you to understand when we minister we ought not to be ministered for what others see but minister for what God sees. What's God see that you're doing? You know?

To understand the importance that we want God to say that we did well. You know? His approval is far more valuable than what you could get here for praise or reward here upon the earth.

[33:51] When we stand before him and he says well done thou good and faithful servant. That ought to be our objective of serving because of what God would have for us.

And we're often aware that God is aware of our sin but forget the fact that God's also aware of your service. God sees what you're doing. The little things.

You know throughout this week you know purposely notice the times you took an opportunity to serve someone else even if no one else noticed. You know? I want you to understand that might be something simple just to help others along the way to understand the importance of ministry and it's not always what everybody sees but it's what takes place in caring for somebody else.

You know it's stepping up and meeting a need and as God's people we often don't see people as God does. You know have you ever noticed it's easy to see people as a threat see people as a bother see people as insignificant but Jesus here brings this parable to teach us to set aside our preconceived things and to demonstrate the love of Christ to others just as he did to us.

To set forth those things because often times we operate like the priest and the Levite looking at the man and saying that's too much trouble or it's inconvenient or I have other responsibilities instead of stopping to say this is where I need to be this is what God would have for me to do to help.

[35:29] You know it's not one thing about serving others it's not easy it's not convenient you know it doesn't happen at the most convenient times you know ministry and serving God isn't on a time clock.

Sometimes it's inconvenient. Sometimes it costs us something but we need to be intentional in our service. You know when we understand the importance and ask the question and answer the question that Jesus asked here of who is your neighbor?

He gives an illustration. Your neighbor is the one that has need. Something to keep in mind this week to understand the balance as even as we help not only one another but help others also because compassion is just not inside a church family and I believe a church family ought to have compassion one for another.

We ought to care. We ought to do what we can to help one another but also outside also. What things can we do? How can we make an impact in the place that God has us? Where can you make an impact where God has you? Because you're going to come across people each day that somebody else in here isn't going to come across. They're people God has put in your path saying what are you going to do at that moment?

[36:59] Is your heart prepared to be a good neighbor to those around us? Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come before you this morning,