

“Go and Do Likewise”

When getting ready to film a movie scene, it all starts with the word “Action.” The actors know their lines, the set is ready, people are in their “places,” and the cameras are ready to capture the action. Words are just words until the action commences.

The same is true of our faith. While it is essential to read the Word of God, it is even more important to put our faith into action. Being a person of action is what God wants. “Go and Do Likewise” is the purpose of the Good Samaritan bible story. To set the stage: Jesus had been asked by an expert in the law what they must do to inherit eternal life. (see Luke 10:25-37). The expert wanted the assurance of a path to eternal life. He was seeking an easy path. An expert in the law is very knowledgeable about words, but he was about to find out that knowledge is not enough. Jesus told him the story of The Good Samaritan. A man had been beaten by robbers when traveling on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. The traveler was now clinging to life as he laid on the side of the road. Both a priest and a Levite (who, like the priest, worked in the temple) deliberately walked over to the other side of the road to avoid any contact with the beaten traveler. The Priest and Levite were men supposedly men of faith, yet they were “all talk and no action.” The third person to come by, a Samaritan man, took action to help someone he had never previously met. The Samaritan treated the beaten man’s injuries and paid for whatever the man needed in recovery. Today we look at a Samaritan with very positive feelings, but people from Samaria were considered a low class and were to be avoided. Yet, it was a Samaritan who was merciful and willing to help. So, when Jesus asked the expert in the law which of the three men acted neighborly, the lawyer answered: “the one who had mercy on him.” That is when Jesus said, “Go and do likewise.”



What does action look like? It is showing compassion for the needs of others because of our love for all of God’s people. The familiar scripture passage has two parts: (1) a human need, and (2) a response to that need through action. *I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me (Matthew 25:35-36.)* Jesus was particularly focused on serving the less fortunate. He said, *Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me (Matthew 25:40).* We serve God by helping the less fortunate.

The bottom line in our walk with Jesus is to be a person of action, not just knowledge, and empty words. We help others because of our love, first for God and then for all people. Jesus said for us to *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.* The bible also tells us, *faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:17).* Jesus is a man of action. The salvation sought by the expert of the law is much more than merely knowing scripture or a robust prayer life. It is seeking to actively serve God *because* of our faith. Then, we can receive God’s grace. Have mercy on others, as Jesus did. As we follow the example of Jesus, we should “*Go and do likewise.*”

The Bible Says: *Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers? The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.” (Luke 10:37)*

Question: Think of a time when you actively helped a stranger in need.

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord. We believe you came to live among us to show us how we are to live, including helping others. We pray that we will show our faith in you and love for others by how we step up to help people in need. Amen.