

## WHAT'S NEXT? OPPORTUNITIES IN TRANSITION, WEEK 6

### Jesus, Charlottesville, & the Gospel: Is there Hope?

Scripture used: Luke 10:25-37 (NLT)

#### OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon closed his 6-week sermon series "What's Next?" by addressing the violence in Charlottesville, and the events resulting from it. He used Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan. This story was an answer to a religious expert. Jesus made it clear that we must love God and our neighbors, which includes everyone. No one is beyond redemption, even the most aggressive. Often these people are actually the most wounded, and the most deserving of our love. Following Christ means seeing the image and likeness of God in everyone.

#### KEY POINTS

**The Big Idea: Even when pursuing justice, we must begin with love.**

This is a critical time for followers of Jesus to stand up and be heard. We offer a completely different perspective than other groups, since we understand how **our identities are rooted in Jesus** and not some racial, political, gender, or socioeconomic group. As it says in Ephesians 2:14 (NLT), we are all one in Christ.

**God also values each person the same.** Everyone is made in God's image, full of immeasurable value, and capable of redemption. No one is so sinful that they cannot be saved! Galatians 3:28 (NIV) In the same way, we should never allow other people's behavior to pull us down. As followers of Christ, we cannot start to hate in return.

The story of the Good Samaritan tie together these themes, demonstrating what it means to love others. The four categories of people in the story represent different parts of ourselves:

- 1) **The bandits.** These men beat and stripped the victim, leaving him for dead. The modern equivalent is people who deny others their individuality. That's why stereotypes are so harmful.
- 2) **The religious leaders.** Both the priest and the Levite passed by without helping. Each had justifiable concerns about stopping on such a dangerous road. But they were mistaken in worrying more about themselves and less about the person who was obviously in need.
- 3) **The victim.** The man was Jewish, a part of a long-suffering group. Yet his own people did not help him. It was a "despised" Samaritan who actually stopped to help. Jesus meant this as a critique of the Jewish culture at the time, particularly the educated elites.
- 4) **The Samaritan.** This man asked the right question: "what will happen to this man if I don't help him?" He acknowledged and treated the wounds. That's practicing the character of Jesus!

#### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** Racism and other forms of hatred are evil, full stop. Every human being is made in the image and likeness of God. Where am I robbing others of their identity by thinking in terms of stereotypes?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** Jesus wants us to understand that we must care for each other. This broken world is full of opportunities to love others. Where is God asking you to care for others, especially those who are lashing out because of their woundedness?
- 3) **DO** Each of us needs to "go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37) as instructed by Jesus. Pray to find people who aren't like you, and who are experiencing anxiety. Reach out to them in love, and without judgment. Pastor Hurmon wants us to commit: "I will go and love!"