

**Summer Series:** “Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World”

**Sermon #7:** “Joining Jesus in His Mission”

**Scripture:** Luke 10:30-37

**Text:** John 14:12 (CEB): I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing. You will do even greater things, now that I am going back to the Father.

**Theme:** Loving our neighbors is the mission of every Christ-follower in every local church!

**Blurb:** How do I love my neighbor? We do the work of God by offering aid, advancement or advocacy to our neighbors who need our help. Which of these three ways of serving is our congregation doing well? Where could we improve? We have the power to reach across the street, across town and around the world. How will our church family use our gifts and talents to be the hands and feet of Jesus? Sharing God’s love in the world is the work of every disciple. Look for one unexpected way to reach out with love to someone this week?

**Gathering Song:** “God of Wonders” - Sanctify

**Welcome** - Pastor David

Welcome - Introductions, Welcome Center

**Songs:** “Heart of Worship” - Sanctify

“How Great Is Our God”

“I Surrender All”

**Worship Prayer**

**Missions Moment:** Wildfire Faith Sharings - Nick Masterjohn & Emily Masterjohn

**Prayers** - Prayer Wall

**Staff - Parish Moment** - Welcome to Amelia Buschena as Director of Spiritual Growth

**Hospitality Training**

Introductions - “Help me with your name.”

Connections - Connect new people to others with similarities

Intentions - 10-5 Rule: For 10 minutes, before and after, talk to 5 different people

Intercessions - Pray for those you meet, by name, each day for a week

Intersections - Create time to get to know them better - share a meal, prayer concerns, etc.

**Offering**

**Opening Video:** “Vital”

**PP#1:** “Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World”

“Joining Jesus in His Mission”

“I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing. You will do even greater things, now that I am going back to the Father.” -John 14:12 (CEB)

“Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World.” “Joining Jesus in His Mission.” John 14:12 Jesus says, “I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing. You will do even greater things, now that I am going back to the Father.”

**PP#2:** *Images for Shalom. I don't know, find something!!*

Vital life. Abundant. Full. Jesus is life, and came so that we might have life, and have it to it's fullest (John 10:10).

The concept of vital life is best expressed, I think, in the biblical concept of *shalom*. It's an ancient word for an ancient concept. *Shalom*. It is most often translated as “peace.” But that translation only captures a part of it. *Shalom* also includes a sense of wholeness, well-being, harmony, completeness, prosperity, welfare, content, blessing. It's a sense of being *at* peace. It's not so much the absence of conflict, but more of being centered in spite of what's going on. *Shalom* is possible no matter what's happening to you. It's about how you can deal with what's happening. It means nothing missing, nothing broken. It's health in the fullest sense. Wholeness. Rightness. Balance. Blessing.

Think for a minute. Assess. Are you well? Are you at peace? Are you steady despite the craziness around you? Are you balanced and emotionally centered? What's missing? What's broken? What is not in *shalom* in your life?

In American Sign Language, the word for peace captures this a bit better. It's a combination of the words “become” and “settled.” Do it with me: “become” and “settled.”

[Instructions for Signing "Peace" - The hands are clasped together. They are then reversed so that the other hand is on top; both hands are then opened and move downward and outward assuming the "five" hand position.]

Now, turn the those around you right now and wish the blessing of *shalom*, as you sign “become” and “settled.” Turn to them and say, “*Shalom* to you!” while signing peace. When they say it to you, respond the same back: “*Shalom* to you!”

God's people, who live with the Life who is Jesus, receive and pass on the *shalom* from God. It's a gift. It's something God puts into us. We need to receive it, and allow it to center us. Abundant life.

**PP#3:** *A pile of threads heaped up in a mess.*

Timothy Keller once talked about *shalom* by pointing to a pile of random threads heaped on a table (“The Beauty of Biblical Justice”). This is not fabric. They're just threads. “Threads become a fabric when each one has been woven over, under, around, and through every other one. The more interdependent they are, the more beautiful they are. The more interwoven they are, the stronger and warmer they are.”

**PP#4:** *A beautifully woven blanket, perhaps Native American?*

A woven blanket, for example, is strong. It can hold up under strain. It is usable. Closely woven to keep warmth. Patterns of weaving bring a beauty that can be astounding.

Your life is full of blessings. They are just heaped up. But those blessings won't be impactful until they are woven together well. We all have time, talents, resources, opportunities, relationships, blessings, poured upon us by God, heaped up. But the impact of those blessings comes when we

allow God to also order them aright in our lives. It comes when we align our lives to God's ways, prioritizing with God's priorities, putting who we are and what we have, under God's leading. *Shalom*.

How can we have *shalom* when a coworker is so difficult? Treat them as Jesus. How can we have *shalom* with our finances? It comes from declaring that we have enough, and then living within our means, with discipline, consistency, and generosity. How can we have *shalom* when our relationships are strained? By giving them over to God, letting God change ourselves, and being who God is calling us to be no matter how we are treated. Hard stuff. But this waving brings strength and beauty. *Shalom*.

This *shalom* is for you. Jesus died on the cross for you. He took away death. He satisfied forgiveness. What do you really need to fear? Your pride only comes in what He did and who He is. When our fear and the pride go away, we see the beauty of what He's done. Then we can act, behave, live, from His beauty in us. And how we live, affects others.

**PP#5:** *Images of Native Americans weaving blankets.*

You see, we not only receive this *shalom* in our own lives, but we become weavers of God's *shalom* in the lives of others, and in the world around us. We become God's weavers of beauty. This is a way for us to talk about what it means to be living for God in our world. This is God's mission for us, each of us, individually, and for all of us, together. Vital churches are churches in which people weave, and are woven. Vital churches experience and share the abundant life of Jesus.

**PP#6:** *Image of the book Vital: Churches Changing Communities and the World*

This summer we've been exploring what it means to be a vital church. The author of this book identifies five biblical characteristics of vital churches. One is spirit-led leadership - faithful, fruitful, accountable. Second is churches unleashing the whole of the Body of Christ: God's dream in us, unleashed by the Holy Spirit, lived out as we mature in Christ. Third is authentic worship, when God's people worship with their bodies, emotions, finances, and resources. Fourth is that vital churches help people grow in small groups. And today, the fifth characteristic of vital churches is that they join Jesus in His mission in the world.

That mission is weaving *shalom*. We take threads, whatever we are able to grasp—this, that, here, there, whatever God has placed near us—and we weave them into whatever God is doing. Grab what you can, and push it into God. Grab whomever you can, and push them into God.

**PP#7:** *Joining Jesus in His Mission - Weaving Shalom*

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

-Luke 10:30-37

Let's give this visual a bit of concrete application. What does it look like for us as God's people to be joining Jesus in His mission, to weave *shalom*? An excellent example comes in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Remember how the story begins? It begins with an expert in the Bible asking Jesus how to get life. Jesus asks him, "How do you read this in the Bible?"

He answers, to love God completely and to love your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus simply responds, "Do this and you will live!"

But the expert wants to know what this looks like. “Who is my neighbor?” he asks. How do we weave *shalom*?

**PP#8:** Luke 10:30-34 (NLT)

30 Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

31 “By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. 32 A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

33 “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him.”

“Jesus replied with a story: ‘A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. “By chance a [pastor, OK, it literally says] priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A [church leader, I mean,] Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side. Then [an illegal immigrant...oh, it actually says,] a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him.”

**PP#9:** Joining Jesus in His Mission - Weaving *Shalom*

1. We love our neighbors by giving immediate AID

Luke 10:34 “Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.”

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Weaving *shalom* means seeing the strands that are right there in front of you. It means having the eyes of a weaver. It means seeing. And it means acting on what you see. If a person is in need, go help. Put aside your own personal issues, like the priest and Temple leader, taking the time, and helping. If there are obvious needs right there in front of you, jump in!

This Saturday is Community Care. It’s our church’s food distribution. It’s food for all of us. Come, and get food. But it also helps people struggling to get food to get it. So, grab the thread and start weaving. Before you take your own food home, come and serve for a couple of hours to make it happen. Come any time between 6 - 11 a.m., and you’ll be put to work.

This Wednesday is our church’s backyard BBQ. It’s free food for you. Come on by! But it is also a time for us to connect with people from our community. So, grab a thread and start weaving! When you get your food, seek out someone who is alone, and sit with them. Talk with them. Connect them with someone else.

Tomorrow is VBS. It’s a time of sharing the love of Jesus with kids and their families. Grab a thread and start weaving! Come over in the mornings, and be a prayer walker. Pray over the program, it’s kids, it’s leaders. Pray from home. Provide prayer cover.

At work, as you see a coworker struggling, start weaving. At the gas station, pay inside and offer words of encouragement to the crabby person there. At the restaurant, say something that tells your server you care about them as a person. Grab a thread, and push them into God.

**PP#10: Joining Jesus in His Mission - Weaving *Shalom***

1. We love our neighbors by giving immediate AID
2. We love our neighbors by giving on-going ADVANCEMENT

Luke 10:35 “The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’”

Give aid. But don’t stop with just the quick and easy. Weaving takes time, and patience. The Samaritan kept coming back and weaving some more. Verse 35, “The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’”

This is how treatment was handled in that culture. What would ongoing treatment look like in ours? How do we invest in people over time? We like the “one and done” approach, because it doesn’t mess up our lives too much. But continuing to weave is a commitment. It changes our days. It changes our lives.

But it has the power to change their lives, too. When we were on the Wildfire mission trip, I was really impressed that we worked through a local church. We just didn’t show up, help people, and then leave. We worked with a local church who had an ongoing relationship with the people. That church went back again and again into the lives of those people. The desire was not to just provide aid for immediate needs, but to help equip people, over time, with the tools for advancement.

I think this requires building a relationship with those we touch. As staff of this church, we have funds you give to the Good Samaritan Fund that we can share with those in need. But we have to be careful. We need to build relationships with people first. We need to truly assess their needs. Sometimes the needs aren’t what are asked for. Sometimes to really help a person towards *shalom* it means *not* providing what they ask for. It means not enabling destructive behaviors and choices. It means loving them enough to build a relationship with them so we can better understand what will truly help them. Tough love. Weaving takes time.

It also means getting to know them well enough to not put on them what we think they need. It means loving them as God’s people, and treating them that way. Remember, *shalom* is not just the absence of a problem. It is to “become” “settled.”

**PP#11: Joining Jesus in His Mission - Weaving *Shalom***

1. We love our neighbors by giving immediate AID
2. We love our neighbors by giving on-going ADVANCEMENT
3. We love our neighbors by giving continual ADVOCACY

Luke 10:36-37 “‘Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?’ Jesus asked. The man replied, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Then Jesus said, ‘Yes, now go and do the same.’”

Now, having told the story, with all its shocks and surprises, Jesus gets back to the man’s question. But Jesus doesn’t answer who is his neighbor. Instead, Jesus turns it to say who acted like a neighbor. Rather than identifying who your neighbor is, Jesus is more concerned with you acting like a neighbor.

Verse 36, “‘Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?’ Jesus asked. The man replied, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’”

Jesus lifts up the hated and despised Samaritan as the hero of the parable. He gives a voice to a voiceless man. He puts on a pedestal for all to see the one who is least likely to be considered a neighbor in the Jewish crowd he is addressing, “This guy,” Jesus says, “gets noticed by God.” Jesus advocated for people on the margins.

It’s changing how we see all people on the margins. It’s changing how people on the margins experience life. It is weaving them into the tapestry of God’s people, of God’s kingdom on earth, of who gets to be included in the beautiful work that God is doing.

Aid, advancement, and advocacy. This is what it means to join Jesus in His mission in the world. Mother Teresa said it so well:

It is not enough for us to say: “I love God,” but I also have to love my neighbor. St. John says that you are a liar if you say you love God and you don’t love your neighbor. How can you love God whom you do not see, if you do not love your neighbor whom you see, whom you touch, with whom you live? And so it is very important for us to realize that love, to be true, has to hurt. I must be willing to give whatever it takes not to harm other people and, in fact, to do good to them. This requires that I be willing to give until it hurts. Otherwise, there is not true love in me and I bring injustice, not peace, to those around me. It hurt Jesus to love us. We have been created in His image for greater things, to love and to be loved.”

*(An Address at the National Prayer Breakfast” Feb. 3, 1994.)*

Mother Teresa is right! We have been created in God’s image for greater things. Jesus ended His story with this charge, “not only to us individually but to the local church, “Go and do likewise.”

**PP#12:** “I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing. You will do even greater things, now that I am going back to the Father.” -John 14:12

Vital churches, living and life-giving churches, “go and do likewise.” Weaving *shalom*. Jesus said, “I tell you for certain that if you have faith in me, you will do the same things that I am doing. You will do even greater things, now that I am going back to the Father.” This is our work.

I want you to take a look at one more video. This is about a church that reached out to their local school kids. See if you can see here an example of waving *shalom*, and as you do, reflect on how we can “go and do likewise.”

**Video:** #6 from the CD. “Church Rethinks School Lunches” (3:28)

**Song:** “Here I Am, Lord”

**Closing Song:** “Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble” - Sanctify

VBS

Wednesday BBQ

Saturday Community Care

**Announcement & Benediction** - David

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR AUG. 9, 2015

**Summer Series:** “Vital”

**Sermon #7:** “Joining Jesus in His Mission”

**Scriptures:** Luke 10:30-37

Opening prayer

Introductions: Introduce yourself and share about a time when a stranger helped you out.

Read Luke 10:25-29.

1. What is going on in this passage?
2. What is the question that the following parable is supposed to answer?

Read Luke 10:30-37

3. Jesus answers the man’s question with a story. This is the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Who would you liken a priest and Levite to in today’s culture?
4. Why do you think they passed by this man? What are some possibilities?
5. Who would you liken a Samaritan to in today’s culture? Notice how Jesus describes him in verse 33.
6. What does it say that caused the Samaritan to help him?
7. What does the Samaritan do for the Jewish man the first day? Discuss what this says about how Christians should be ready to give immediate aid.
8. What does the Samaritan do for the Jewish man the next day? Discuss what this says about how Christians should give ongoing aid.
9. The man originally asked who *was* his neighbor. After the story, Jesus turns the question around and asks who *acted* like a neighbor. What does this say about what Jesus is concerned about?
10. Jesus says, “Go and do likewise.” What does this mean for us today?
11. Application: What will you take away from this passage? How will you live it out?