Who is my Neighbour?

This sermon companion is a way for you to engage with the sermon at your own pace - I understand I can talk fast, but I want to make sure you get the most out of the message as possible.

Below are a collection of Bible verses, summaries, reflection questions and external links that will enrich your journey with God. I hope you find this passage moves you as much as it did me.

God bless,

Theo Doraisamy
Luke 10:25-37

The Parable of the Good Samaritan
25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
26 “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”
27 He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”
28 “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”
29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

30 In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

36 “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”
37 The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”
Who is my Neighbour?

Introduction

“Gospel”, literally translated, means Good News. It is what we, as Christians, use to describe being saved by Jesus through his death on the cross and resurrection - you may have just heard about it in detail at Easter. It’s a big deal for us!

- Ephesians 2:8-9 sums it up pretty well- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.”

- In light of Easter, Salvation, and the fallenness of our world, we should ask ourselves the following questions.
  - What does the Gospel look like in Action?
    - And
  - Who is my Neighbour?

NOTE: An explainer of the Gospel
Who is my Neighbour?
Part 1: The Image of God
Deciphering the Great Commandment

- Accounts of the Great Commandment [1/2]
  - Leviticus 19:18
    Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord.

  - Matthew 22:35-40
    One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

  - Mark 12:28-31
    One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”
    “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”
Who is my Neighbour?
Part 1: The Image of God
Deciphering the Great Commandment

• Accounts of the Great Commandment [2/2]
    On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus.
    “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
    “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”
    He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’”
    “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

  ○ John 13:24-25
    “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
Explaining the Image of God

- Genesis 1:26-27
  Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”
  So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

- Genesis 9:6
  Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind

- James 3:9
  With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness.

- Psalm 8:4-6
  ...what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?
  You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour.
  You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet
When we honour other people, we honour God.
When we show love to people, we show love to God.
When we dishonour people, we dishonour God.

If we neglect our neighbours, we desecrate the image of God.
Who is my Neighbour?
Part 2: The sin of "othering"

Defining "others"
(These definitions were sourced from my old Psychology textbook - still useful 10 years later!)

**Ingroup**: “Us” - people with whom one shares a common identity.

**Outgroup**: “Them” - those perceived as different or apart from one’s ingroup

**Ingroup bias**: The tendency to favour one’s own group

Types of Neighbours
(These are not official definitions - they are just my opinions)

**Immediate**: Within our sphere of influence e.g. friends, coworkers, people who live near us.

**Global**: Those outside our sphere of influence e.g. other nations

Samaritans

- Had strayed from God
- Considered heretics and impure
- **Calling a Samaritan "good" was deliberately controversial** to Jesus' audience
- Jesus does this to draw out **ethnic, cultural, religious and racial prejudice**.
Long-term Christians are in the high-risk zone of becoming Pharisees.

We become *complicit* when we close our hearts.
Who is my Neighbour?
Part 3: Action

Biblical models for Action

Jesus
Modelled Grace through the Cross and Gospel
Met the needs of the people he encountered through healing and companionship

The Samaritan
Luke 10
Took pity (v33)
Sacrificed his time (v33-35)
Personal Risk (v33)
Treated wounds (v34)
Enlisted Help (v35)
Sacrificed Money (v35)
Who is my Neighbour?
Part 3: Action

Meeting Needs

Guarding mouths, opening Hearts

Seeking answers
Who is my Neighbour?
Reflection Questions

Introduction
- What is the first person you think of when you hear the question "who is my neighbour"?
- Is there anything in the passage that is sticking out to you already?

Part 1: The Image of God - Deciphering the Great Commandment
- Which depiction of the Great Commandment speaks the most to you? Why?
- Does being made in the image of God guarantee eternal life? Why/why not?
- "If we neglect our neighbours, we desecrate the image of God" - do you agree with this statement? Why/why not?

Part 2: The sin of "othering"
- Why was the term "Samaritan" deemed controversial?
- Which character in the parable are you most like?
- Which groups, individuals or causes has God placed on your heart?
- Can we make our sphere of influence a safer place? How?

Part 3: Action
- Look at the actions the Samaritan did to help the man in need
  - Which of these actions do you do the most?
  - Which of these actions do you do the least?
  - What changes can we make?
- What groups do I speak pejoratively about? Is God calling me to open my heart to them?
As this section is about taking action, this part of the document is a little more interactive.

Click the links on the next few pages to find out more information.
NGOs, charities and aid organisations

The following organisations are not the *only* people you can look at, but they are a good mix of Christian and Secular organisations making good on loving neighbour both at home and abroad. Click their names to go to their websites and find out more.

World Vision Australia
Baptist World Aid Australia
Compassion Australia
International Justice Mission
Refugee Council Australia
Centre for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees (CARAD)
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC)
Anglicare WA
Baptistcare
Salvation Army
Devotion Recommendation

Common Grace, an Australian Christian advocacy group, is one of my favourite voices in the Australian public sphere. They have spent over 5 years giving voice to important causes such as asylum seekers, Aboriginal justice and the Environment.

The following is a devotion series titled "Love Thy Neighbour", originally made for Lent 2016. In 2017, the Mounty Young Adults adapted this series and ran it as a group Bible Study. It is presented here in its original form as a video series devotion.

There is a wide range of theological and denominational from Conservative Anglican to Liberal Catholics, but it is a valuable resource nonetheless, and will stretch and challenge you, even when you might disagree. The words highlighted in purple below are their introduction for the devotion. I would strongly recommend you check it out.

Click here (or on the logos) to go to their video devotions.

What does an Aboriginal Pastor, a Catholic Environmentalist, an Anglican Dean, a Uniting theological lecturer, a young Anabaptist changemaker, a Pentecostal worship leader and a Baptist missiologist all have in common?

A concern to listen to the voice of Jesus as he calls us to love our neighbours!

As Christians, every year at Easter we pause to reflect upon the breathtaking, sacrificial love found in and through our saviour Jesus' death and resurrection.

In 2016, we journeyed together through Lent contemplating what it means to follow Jesus' example of extravagant love by obeying his instruction to "Love Thy Neighbour" in our 21st century world.
I primarily drew on these three books for guidance for today's message. Each are a valuable reflection of the heart God places on believers. I strongly recommend them all.

**Tim Costello - Faith**
Tim Costello is a former CEO of World Vision Australia, one of the country's leading aid organisations. His book, Faith is a collection of short chapters/essays that speak on particular issues and anecdotes from his career. He brilliantly weaves core Biblical truths with the complex and difficult issues facing the world today. He manages it all with a strong sense of justice and grace. Sadly, this book is hard to find in print. Thankfully, on Google Play Books, Kindle and other services, it is still available for download.

Purchase link - eBook only (Google Play Books)

**Jen Wilkin - In His Image**
This is a concise yet comprehensive look into the idea of the Image of God - and how we, as his followers, should strive to emulate his character. I used the early chapters as inspiration, because I wanted a clear idea of how people reflect God, and this book did not disappoint. Well worth a read.

Purchase link - Physical copy (Koorong)
Physical copy bundle (Koorong)
eBook (Google Play Books)
I primarily drew on these three books for guidance for today's message. Each are a valuable reflection of the heart God places on believers. I strongly recommend them all.

**Martin Luther King Jr. - I Have a Dream**

This collected work from Martin Luther King Jr. captures much of his philosophy, heart, and his theological underpinnings. His writings, speeches and sermons contain rage, disappointment and sorrow, but also inspiration and hope in the face of perseverance. Highlights would be the Letter from a Birmingham Jail - written to white clergymen who criticised his methods. That letter is King possibly at his most confronting and fiery - a side of him often forgotten when his story is retold.

But no matter how confrontational he gets, or how much you might disagree with his analysis, I would challenge anyone to read this and not be moved. If you have struggled to understand the Black Lives Matter movement, King’s writings might be useful for you.

**Purchase link - Physical copy only (Booktopia)**