

CHIEF

MINISTRIES

April 2011

Greetings to all my brothers!

In your “down” time have you allowed Him to lift you “up”?

“You shall 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 your neighbor as yourself” do this Jesus said and “you will live”. Living and existing. One in the same but yet, not really. I can exist on this earth without really living. There are people bound to hospital beds all over who are existing but they’re not really living. The things required for us to “live” are mostly interior changes that we begin to do: loving with all your heart, soul, strength and mind. Only God can really know if we’re loving Him that way, but that last one – ‘your neighbor as yourself’. Read on in Luke Chapter 10:30-37

30 Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ 36 Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” 37 He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.” (Luke 10:30-37 ESV)

This lawyer, like most lawyers who are good at skirting the issue, at first tried to justify himself by asking “Who is my neighbor”? Haven’t we all wondered that? And the reason we do that is because we want there to be someone who fits the bill as a “non-neighbor”. Giving us a way out! Allowing us some room for irresponsibility. Perhaps we should ask “How can I be a more loving neighbor?” Then we’ll have to realize our God-given responsibility to look after our

neighbors. The first one to come upon the man going from Jerusalem to Jericho was a priest. The Jew in the ditch obviously didn't look like him. He had on his priestly garments made by the finest garment makers in all the land. He would have to come out of them to cover the man's nakedness. He was a bloody mess, this thing in the ditch. This priest was a leader of people, they came to him with their problems. Perhaps someone should clean him up a little bit and bring him by the temple and he could counsel him on the dangers of travelling alone. No one's out here watching me be "priestly" so I'm not going to get any points with all the temple – goers. Nah, I'll just walk around him because I'm late for my class on "being prosperous in the kingdom!" "Gotta go!" Next comes the Levite, following in the priest's footsteps. He's being mentored by the priest, you see. He goes down to the temple to help out in whatever they can find for him to do. Usher, set up the altar, maybe even provide some of the music, pass out bulletins, but above all 'do as your leader does'! Hmmmm, the priest obviously passed by here a minute ago, I would have been with him if I didn't have to finish cleaning up the stinking temple. He said he was going to wait. Man this guy looks bad, but if the priest went around him, I guess that's the right thing to do. "Gotta Go!" Finally, the Samaritan came up around the bend and saw the naked Jew beaten in the ditch. Oh goodness! Is anybody looking? I can't be seen with this unacceptable culturally different person than myself? What? What am I thinking? God forgive me! I must see him through the Father's eyes and love him like I've been told to love by the Father. To be compassionate. Tender hearted, warm and caring. I don't need this silly turban, let's make bandages and this ointment I've been saving as a gift for my wife, what better way to use than to salve his open wounds. My goodness, he can't even walk, "Here I'm going to lift you up on my trusty steed and take you down to the hotel so you can heal properly. In fact, I've gotta go visit the nursing home and make a stop at the prison to share the gospel message the next couple of days, but on my way back I'll drop by and see how you are doing. Don't worry about what it's going to cost. I've got it covered. My Father always blesses me with more than enough to be a blessing to others."

Jesus then said to the lawyer, "Who was the neighbor?" Not being totally stupid like most attorneys (that's a joke) He said, "The one who showed mercy." "Yeah, you get it, now go do it"!

You know in the years I've spent in prison, I've seen all kinds of characters. The good, the bad, and the ugly. And it's been a real challenge to "love" sometimes when my cellie didn't act like me. Or the guy disrupting the entire pod wasn't my race. Perhaps the guy getting abused was soft, "he sure acts gay", or been labeled a "snitch" by someone, somewhere and we see them in a

ditch and we willingly go around and tell the ‘Levites’ around us “watch out for him”. You all know what I’m talking about now don’t you? Jesus said something that relates to all of this in Luke 6:27-36 and it may be the most difficult mandate in all of the New Testament for us hard-noses, bad dudes, players and shot caller who have found themselves taking the name of the Lord God as their leader. Remember the Old Testament command: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. I think everyone refers this to cussing. No, my friend, if you’re going to say you belong to the Lord God, don’t do it in vain! Don’t just exist under that covering. Live in it! Do it! But I say this to you who will hear:

27 “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29 To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. 30 Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. 31 And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. 32 “If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. 35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:27-36 ESV)

We’re coming down to some incredible happenings and events all over the world that are the fulfillment of Bible prophesy! Find yourself living the command at the top of this letter and walk in repentance and forgiveness for yourself and those around you, yes, your neighbors! Be a light in the darkness! Make a difference so that when you stand before your creator on that day, you’ll hear those words of blessing “Well Done! Good and faithful servant. Enter into the Joy of the Lord!”

Be blessed my brothers! My neighbors!

Chief

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Christ’s Heart In Every Felon