

25-0709, The Truth Project, Tour 12

Community & Involvement: God Cares, Do I?

The Call to Be a Neighbor Who Helps

On July 9, 2025, Scott led a transformative class on Lesson 12 of *The Truth Project* by Focus on the Family, titled “Community and Involvement, God Cares, Do I?” Presented by Dr. Del Tackett, this final lesson in the series’ worldview tour calls Christians to reflect God’s heart for the needy by embracing the role of the “neighbor” who helps, as defined in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:36). Anchored in the greatest commandments—to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:36-40)—this lesson redefines neighborly love as an active, merciful response to human need. Through scripture, reflection, and a call to action, Tackett inspires believers to embody God’s compassion by serving the marginalized.

Redefining the Neighbor: The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Tackett begins with the parable of the Good Samaritan, reframed as the “parable of the good neighbor” to highlight Jesus’ teaching in Luke 10:36: the neighbor is the one who shows mercy, not the one who receives it. When a lawyer asks, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus responds with the story of a Samaritan who aids a wounded stranger, challenging the tendency to limit love to those within our social or cultural circles. The Samaritan’s actions—binding wounds, providing shelter, and covering costs—demonstrate that being a neighbor is a choice to act with compassion, regardless of the recipient’s status.

This perspective expands the neighbor’s role to anyone who serves the marginalized, including the poor, orphans, widows, prisoners, and outcasts. Tackett emphasizes that this call is not optional but flows from the greatest commandments, making compassionate action a core expression of faith. By identifying the neighbor as the one who helps, Jesus shifts the focus from defining who deserves our love to embracing our responsibility to take initiative in serving others.

God’s Heart for the Lowly and Humble

Tackett explores God’s deep care for the lowly, as seen in Psalm 138:6, where God “looks kindly on the lowly,” and Isaiah 57:15, which promises revival for the humble. The Greek word *tapeinos* (humble or lowly) in Matthew 11:28-29 describes Jesus as “gentle and humble in heart,” a quality reflected in His acts of service, such as washing His disciples’ feet (John 13) and sacrificing His life (John 14:9). These actions reveal the Father’s compassionate heart, which prioritizes the defenseless and marginalized.

Scriptures like Psalm 35:10, praising God for rescuing the poor, and Isaiah 65:1-2, showing His outreach to a rebellious people, further illustrate God’s relentless compassion. Jesus, as the ultimate neighbor who helps, models how believers should engage with the needy. His humility is a call to action, urging us to take on the role of the helper, as the Good Samaritan did, by serving those society overlooks.

Humility, Not Timidity: Jesus as the Model

Tackett stresses that Jesus' humility is not timidity but bold, sacrificial action. While humble, Jesus confronted injustice and served others courageously, embodying the neighbor who helps in Luke 10:36. His life—marked by acts like feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and ultimately dying for humanity—shows that humility is active and costly. This distinction challenges believers to move beyond passive sympathy and embrace the boldness required to serve as neighbors who act.

The Good Samaritan's initiative—risking personal safety and resources to help a stranger—mirrors Jesus' approach. Tackett's insight from Luke 10:36 underscores that being a neighbor means choosing to help, even when it's inconvenient. This call to proactive humility invites us to engage with the world's needs, whether through volunteering, advocacy, or personal acts of kindness, reflecting the Father's heart as Jesus did.

God's Call to Holiness and Humility

Tackett draws a parallel between the command "Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16) and the scriptural call to "humble yourselves" (James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6), inspired by God's humble nature. While holiness sets believers apart, humility drives us to serve the needy, as exemplified by the Good Samaritan. God's care for the marginalized—evident in His concern for the poor, widows, and orphans—obligates us to take on the role of the helper, actively reflecting His compassion.

This call aligns with the parable's lesson, where the neighbor is the one who acts with mercy. Tackett emphasizes that humbling ourselves is a response to God's humility, seen in Jesus' life and ministry. The teacher, Scott, notes that the next week's discussion will explore practical ways to live out this call, building on the foundation of active, humble service established in Lesson 12.

Looking Ahead: From Understanding to Action

The Truth Project provides a theological framework for being a neighbor who helps but stops short of offering specific steps for involvement. Scott highlights that Tackett addressed this in *The Engagement Project*, developed over the two decades following *The Truth Project*. This forthcoming series, which the class will explore next, equips believers to translate compassion into action, building on the principle from Luke 10:36 that the neighbor is the one who shows mercy.

For example, the Good Samaritan's practical actions—providing immediate aid and ongoing care—offer a model for community involvement. Whether through supporting local charities, advocating for the marginalized, or helping a stranger, believers are called to act. The Engagement Project will provide tools to make this a reality, moving from understanding God's heart to living it out in tangible ways.

A Challenge to Act

Lesson 12 challenges us to embody God's heart by becoming neighbors who help. The parable of the Good Samaritan, coupled with Jesus' humble example, shows that faith is active, not passive. We're called to humble ourselves, reflecting God's compassion through bold service. As we anticipate *The Engagement Project*, let's ask: Who are the "wounded strangers" in our communities? How can we take initiative to serve them? God cares for the needy—let's be neighbors who do the same, transforming our world through acts of mercy.