

- ***Luke 10:1-3*** One of the greatest hindrances to our service to others in any capacity is that of apathy or simply a lack of care for those who are in need. This issue isn't something that only appears within the realm of Christianity, but it is something that unfortunately plagues humanity as a whole. In no way is this shown to be more true than when we consider the story of the murder of Kitty Genovese.
- In March of 1964, Ms. Genovese was returning home from her job in New York City when she was brutally attacked by a murderous maniac named Winston Moseley. She was stabbed multiple times in the back just a few feet from her apartment. Her screams pierced through the night air, and one neighbor opened her window to yell that the man ought to "let that girl alone!". Moseley was startled by the shouts from the building and fled while the injured Genovese laid on the ground. Without any aid coming to her, Genovese crawled into there apartment building towards her room, still without aid being rendered by any neighbors. Moseley, seeing that there was no one coming to Genovese's rescue, returned to finish the brutal job that he had started just minutes before. As Moseley resumed his attack upon the helpless women, one of the neighbors peeked out the door to see about all of the commotion. As the murderer's eyes met the eyes of that curious neighbor, the neighbor quickly shut the door and locked it behind him. Moseley's murder was complete just a few moments later, and it was still much time even after that before the authorities were called. Ms. Genovese lost her life because those around her just didn't care enough to intervene.
- This story has been the subject of many a psychological study and class, yet the cause of this sad case seems pretty simple...those witnessing this attack simply didn't care enough to do something to save this helpless young woman's life. We rightly would scoff and rebuke those who stood by and do nothing as a woman lost her life, but we would be wise remember that we are often faced with the same life and death situations. While the neighbors of Kitty Genovese were guilty and sitting by while her physical life was ripped from her, we can easily be guilty of sitting by while those around us have their souls ripped from them because they aren't washed in the blood of Jesus. This morning, I would like for us to consider 3 key recognitions that can help realize the necessity of serving those who are lost by sharing the life saving good news of Jesus Christ and what He has done for them and what He desires of them to do.

3 Key Recognitions

I. Recognize that they're lost.

- A. Kitty Genovese was in danger of losing her life and that alone should've caused her neighbors to act.
 1. As soon as her terrified screams cut through that cold night there should have been any handful of people who came to her rescue. However, some of the people who heard her didn't recognize that she was in any real danger.
 2. Some thought that this was nothing more than a prank by some neighborhood kids. Others thought that it was just a lover's dispute that they didn't need to get into the middle of.
 3. Bottom line seems to be that none of them cared enough to really investigate where or not Ms. Genovese was actually in mortal danger or not.
- B. Souls around us are in danger of spending an eternity in hell. This should motivate us to do what we can to save them.
 1. In **I Corinthians 1:18**, the Apostle Paul makes note that the word of the cross is foolish to those who are perishing, but that those who have trusted in it and are saved by it recognize that it is the power of God. Not that Paul recognizes that there are many in this world who are perishing. We must recognize that the world is perishing without the power of God that was displayed through the cross.
 2. Jesus recognized the lost and sad condition of those in this world, and Matthew makes note of this in **Matthew 9:36** when Jesus looks upon the multitudes and feels compassion for them because they were distressed and dispirited. What made them this way? They were sheep without a shepherd we are told...these people were lost with no where good to go.
 3. Jesus goes on to say later on that this was the whole reason He came to this earth, to seek and save those that are lost. **(Luke 19:10)**
 4. Jesus and His Apostles recognized that those around them were lost without the gospel, and if we want to strive to be servants as they were then we must recognize their condition just the same.

II. Recognize that it is our duty to serve the lost.

- A. Genovese's neighbors whiffed at the opportunity to love their neighbor as themselves.
 - 1. Those who heard the screams of Ms. Genovese had a prime opportunity to show their love for their fellow human by thwarting the gruesome attack that she had fallen prey to....
 - 2. However, instead of doing for them as they would certainly have wanted someone to do for them....they all sat back and allow for that young woman to be killed.
 - 3. They all had the responsibility as her fellow human beings to do something, anything to help her, but they all just stood to the side and did nothing. How sad?...
- B. We are to love our neighbor and fulfill our duty as disciples of Jesus by making more disciples.
 - 1. Our neighbor might not be the victim of a mugging or assault, but they are victims to their sin, and it is our duty as people who have found bread to share that bread of life with them. (Warren Berkley)
 - 2. Jesus was very clear with His closest disciples that it was their responsibility to share the Gospel with those around them. **(Mark 16:15,16 & Matt. 28:18-20)**
 - 3. They, as disciples, were to be busy giving every effort to make more disciples. This charge given to them was also passed along to further generations of disciples and we see them taking this charge to heart because as they were spread out from Jerusalem they took the Gospel with them to other places. **(Acts 8:1-5)**
 - 4. These disciples recognized that those around them were lost and in need of a savior, and they recognized that it was their responsibility to show them the way that had led them to life which is only through Christ Jesus. **(John 6:68)**

III. Recognize that we have the tools to serve the lost.

- A. The neighbors of Ms. Genovese had the means to help save her life.
 - 1. It would be one thing if those who heard the screams of a dying Kitty Genovese were totally helpless to aid her in her time of need, but that just wasn't the case at all.
 - 2. In 1964, phones were present and someone could've call the police to aid Ms. Genovese. There were far more neighbors that attackers and I guarantee these neighbors were in possession of knives, fireplace poker, bats, or maybe even firearms that could've been of a big help in fighting off her attacker.
 - 3. I mean...a person shouting from the building scared Moseley off once before. Surely seeing a group of people coming towards him would have run him off for good, right? However, the neighbors turned a blind eye towards her plight and acted as if they were powerless to do anything. This is simply is false and a mistake to believe on their part.
- B. We have been equipped with the means by which the souls of man can be saved.
 - 1. I can't imagine just standing by while I hear a woman being murdered just feet away from me. I just can't imagine in what world I would ever let that happen. Surely I would grab whatever I could get my hands on and use it to try to save a person's life, but how often might I freeze when I have an opportunity to share the Gospel but I don't because I don't think I am readily equipped?
 - 2. The truth is that I am equipped and each and every one of us here this morning are equipped to hand the task that has been set before us and that task is to save souls. Paul tells Timothy that God's Word will equip every man with exactly what is needed. **(II Tim. 3:16,17)**
 - 3. Paul says that God's Word can equip us and make us adequate for the work that has been set before us, but why do we still fail to serve the lost so often? I think it is because we don't recognize the fact that we have the tools.
 - 4. The Word is right in front of us, but maybe we neglect it because we don't see its importance. Maybe we don't see the fact that those around us are lost souls destined for hell if they aren't washed in the blood of Jesus. Maybe we don't recognize the fact that we are charged with making disciples in the same way in which we became followers of Jesus.
 - 5. We must recognize the lost condition of those around us. We must recognize that we are responsible for sharing Jesus with them. We must take advantage of the tools that God has given us. In doing these things then we can be effective at serving the Lost.

I can't think of any better a story that has all three of these recognitions in it than that of the Good Samaritan. He recognized the man's dire condition. He understood his responsibility to aid a fallen man. He knew he had the tools to assist. If only those neighbors of Kitty Genovese realized the same things. She might still be alive today if they had. May we take these lessons to heart and serve the lost around us well. They need Jesus. We have Jesus. May we share Jesus with them, and give them the greatest gift there is on this earth.....salvation through the gracious blood of Jesus Christ.