

Get Uncomfortable

Love Your Neighbor(hood) series

by Pastor Chris Famisaran

Let's pray. Father in heaven, Lord, as we continue our series on loving our neighborhood be with us now. In Jesus name, amen.

How many of you by show of hands like to be uncomfortable? No one. All right, this is a first. Now life is going to sometimes be a little uncomfortable. Say for instance, you know, you want to maybe improve your health. So you go for a walk or run. And at times, it can be a little uncomfortable, right, especially if you push yourself. What are maybe some other areas that you could be uncomfortable? Maybe you're new to driving and driving around LAX three days into your permit is probably not the most comfortable thing to do. Amen. Public speaking, I'll tell you what, I've been doing this for like 16-17 years. Just before I get up here, I still have butterflies in my stomach. So don't think that I've got everything together. It's probably good to because if I were to arrogantly come up and say, I know what I want to say, well, Pride goeth before the fall about this, and have you maybe have a a adventurous streak. How many of you love to have you ever done cliff diving? cliff jumping? None of you. Man, I'm in the wrong crowd. So several years ago, I think it was 2015. The journalist Steve Hartman was reporting for CBS, NBC, one of the big networks. And he decided to share a story of a young man who was four years old at the time, his name was Dylan Stitch. And he was four years old, and he was afraid to jump off the diving board. Anybody relate? Okay, now the diving board. Was it the small little diving board had a little hype to it. Now Dylan's mom, Marla said, you know, he had no interest in it. Ever. We were just saying, hey, why don't you just try? Why don't you give it a shot? Come on. Well, here we enter 95 year old Daniel bliss, who was a veteran of the Air Force during World War Two. And the Korean War budget. Right. He may know a little bit about fear. He knows about that. But also he knows about bravery. And so when he saw the neighborhood kid had a family pool party, and everybody was trying to coax him. Come on, just jump off the diving board. He knew what Dylan needed. So he asked to borrow a swimsuit, put the swimsuit on and with his cane.

He walked in climbed onto the diving board. Everybody uncomfortably watched what was going to happen? I mean, should we really try to intervene and Daniel jumped. And as he jumped, everybody kind of held their breath. He jumped, he landed as best he could. And shortly thereafter little Dylan also jumped in.

so, Dylan served as an inspiration to little Dylan. He didn't have the best dive. He didn't have the prettiest dive. But what he did was he went first he helped to lead the way. And now little Dylan, who's not so little anymore, jumps with no problem. All it takes is somebody to show some courage to help ask a question, or lead by example.

I'd like to go to the book of Mark, Mark chapter 10. The story that some of us may be familiar with, I think we actually studied not too long ago, but it's good to come back and look at some other things, some different perspectives. As friends here, we will learn about a man by the name of Bartimaeus. Who was Bartimaeus? Well, let's find out. So, Mark chapter 10, verse 46.

All right. So maybe you may be wondering because I just got this asked recently, why don't you put the words up. We don't make it that easy here. We want you to be able to on your own read from your own Bible, or if you have a tablet or a phone, or preferably, we'd love to have you bring a Bible or we have a Bible supplied for you. All right, let's go ahead and dive into this. Verse 46 of chapter 10. When they came to Jericho, as Jesus and his disciples, together with the large crowd were leaving the city, a blind man by the name of Bartimaeus, which means son of Thomas, was seated, sitting by the roadside begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me, and many would be quiet, rebuked him and told them to be quiet. But he shouted all the more Son of David, have mercy on me. Jesus stopped and you said "call him". So they call to the blind man, cheer up, on your feet. He's calling you. Thrown up his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. What do you want me to do for you? Jesus asked him. And the blind man said, Rabbi, I want to see, go said, Jesus, your faith has healed you. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus along the road.

What an amazing story. I love this story. So Bartimaeus sent it to me this was a man who could not what he could not see. And his life was reduced to what? Begging, not the greatest job in the world, right? In fact, if anything, some would consider him what a burden. He's an outcast. Some of them are probably thinking would, what did Bartimaeus do? Or what did to me is due to warrant that his son is afflicted with this physical handicap. To be blind at that time, was a burden. It wasn't easy. If his parents were not around, he would have to depend on others. That's he was begging, he couldn't work. And so here we see this man, though, who doesn't care. He sees Jesus or he hears chanting, see Jesus hear that Jesus was coming. And guess what he does? He starts to ask, Hey, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me so much so that the rest of the people around him are telling him to be quiet. Because why? They were uncomfortable. Hey, be quiet. You're making a scene. The Bartimaeus doesn't care. So Bartimaeus, his courageous faith saved. And it's interesting to see how for Bartimaeus it took someone to stand up for him, Jesus of all people, Jesus was the one to acknowledge him to see who he was to see his plight, and ask them, hey, what can I do for you? And what does he do? He restores him, he acknowledges them, he ministers to him.

Now let's be real. Is it uncomfortable to be confronted by somebody who is in need or has an obvious need when you're walking down the street? It is. Recently, I went to go get some food. And there was no place to sit. So I just put it in my car. And I was eating. And I should have known better because it was maybe late at night. And somebody walking down the street saw that I had my light on. And he comes around to my driver's side door standing in the middle of the road of road that cars go by pretty quickly. But it was late at night. So you know, he thought he was okay. And then he's like, you know, he wants to hit my door. Fortunately enough, he didn't. I cracked it just a little bit. He's like, Hey, man. And then he goes on to let's just say a very interesting rant that I can't repeat here. And he asked me, Hey, can you go and buy me something? And I'm not gonna say what it was, because it wasn't legal. And I was like, Dude, I am so sorry, number one on so many levels. I wish I could help you. But if I do that, number one, I don't want to get arrested and I don't want to get fired. But it's okay man, I'm uh Oh, should I say this. But let's just say he was very upset that I was not going to help him in his need. And if I were to, I would not be helping him, right. But there are many other people who who have an obvious need. And you know, it doesn't

even have to be something big. How many of you, when you look around, maybe in your neighborhood, or your complex know of somebody who you live next to or nearby? Who lives alone, doesn't have the ability to go to the store to get groceries, doesn't have their ability to leave their bed. And often what happens is they become what? They become isolated. Do you think Bartimaeus ever felt isolated at all? Quite a bit, because everybody could see him. But nobody paid attention to him? Because they didn't want to do what? They didn't want to help them. He was a beggar he was what a burden. Let's just be honest. How often do we try to avoid those situations? And yet, who has God called us to minister to everyone? So everyone has a desire to belong and be accepted. In fact, if you go to, let's just quickly jump to Luke 14. Okay, Luke 14.

And let's also note, the day. Luke 14 says, On what day, the Sabbath, I hear a few more pages slipping, we'll give you one more second.

On Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent, prominent, prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully what watched, they're making sure what are they going to? What's he going to do? They were trying to set him up. And he saw that there was a man who was suffering from, from abnormal swelling from his body. And Jesus asked him, hey, Is it lawful for me to heal him on the Sabbath or not? And they, what did they respond with? Nothing. So he takes hold of the man, and he heals them. And he sends him on his way. Every time I think of this story, I think there's this joke, you know, when you see when you see a cat that's upset with you? And what's he going to do? He gets on the mantel, and what does he want to do? He wants to knock the picture down, right? Or the plate or whatever. And you just see Jesus waiting to see what are they going to do? He's got them cornered. They're trying to put him in a box, and yet he's going to overcome it. Later on. He says, hey, if your child or all people, if your child or an ox falls into a well on the Sabbath day, are you just going to leave them there? Number one, if your dad and you leave them in the ditch, what do you think mom is going to do? come after you. Okay? So they don't say anything.

And then he starts to.... everybody starts to sit. And there are people who try to give themselves the better seats to be close to maybe the person who invited them. And he gives a parable of hey, when you go to a wedding feast, don't try to

take the best seat because just in case, it may not actually be your seat, you may think your name is reserved at that seat, but it's not. And how embarrassing when you would have to be asked to move down to the unreserved or to another reserved table. That's the end of the hallway, the end of the banquet or at the very end of the other side of the table. Instead, what you do to take the lower seat, be humble, give it up for somebody else. It's better to do that. And then let's say somebody says, hey, no, I want you to sit right next to me. It's much less awkward. It says for in verse 11, for all of those who exalt themselves will be what? Be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted. Or when you give it luncheon or dinner, don't invite your friends, your brothers and sisters, but invite, invite the poor, the crippled, lame and the blind and you will be blessed in this is very important in verse 14, although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. And he also says other words, elsewhere, too. It's better. It's so much better to give than to but receive truly. When you're able to help somebody else doesn't give you that best if you lean, because yes, it's nice to receive something. But it's even better when you make a difference in people's lives and Jesus off also made a difference in Bartimaeus his life, all of this requires humility, to think of others. Did Jesus ever think of himself first? Never. So look out for others just as Jesus did.

Now, you can look out for yourself, but you're probably going to end up being humbled. Right? So Jesus points out, it's better to serve, because you will actually gain a better, bigger blessing. So can you think of anyone in your life right now who may be isolated because they're sick? Or they don't have anyone to care for them? They're physically challenged, they're bound at home. Whatever it may be, how can you minister to them? Now what's interesting, too, is Bartimaeus could relate to those who had been afflicted that others could not. Those of you who have been sick, you've, you've dealt with a bout of cancer, you've overcome some difficult financial challenge. You've whatever challenge that you've experienced, or are going through right now. You have an ability to minister to somebody who's going through that same experience, amen. But the challenge is not to try to tell them what to do. You have to develop a relationship with them. Right? Because, especially for us, guys, we like to try to fix stuff, right guys? We do. I try helping my wife solve something. And she informed me she didn't want my help. She just wanted me to listen. So I do a lot more listening now. But when you

when you earn somebody's trust and respect, and then they ask, Well, what do you think, then you can be able to share your perspective, and how you were able to deal with the situation, rather than just trying to tell somebody what to do. Because we don't really like to be told, do we? I don't.

And when you reflect on Jesus life, whenever he was challenged, whenever whenever they tried to put him in a box, how did he respond? He asked the question with another question. He never tried to tell people to do to tell them what to do. But he always made them think of a solution. Oftentimes, they really could think about it. And they could come up with a solution, but they sometimes did not want to admit it. Because it would have to require them giving something up of themselves that they don't want to. loving our neighbors means going out helping seeking not necessarily them coming to you. And how to how, if you don't know, then you're never gonna know.

So it's good to get to know your neighbors, not just your close neighbors, but everyone. There may be somebody that you know, who may be older may be sick, and you haven't seen them in a while. Is everything. Okay? There's a there was a story that I read recently of an older individual who had nobody to care for. There was another neighbor who hadn't seen them for several weeks. And when they knocked on the door, they're able to answer the door and the person was in dire straits, because nobody had checked up on them. Fortunately enough for this neighbor, they were able to get the care for this neighbor that needed help. And what does this require? Well, being uncomfortable, especially serving in our neighborhoods, sometimes may require us to try something that is new that can be also challenging a new ministry.

But does Jesus call us to be comfortable or uncomfortable? Oftentimes, we're gonna be uncomfortable. I mean, when Jesus he said it, did he have a nice house over his head. Sometimes he had a roof over his head, but oftentimes, he had the ground. As Jesus says, foxes and birds, they have their own place, but I don't have any place to lay my own head. Can you grow if you're comfortable? You can't. So where in your life? Were you uncomfortable? And you had a major breakthrough? Where did you accomplish something with God that helped you to overcome that which was uncomfortable, and you can reflect back and you can

learn from that experience? And think, Oh, it was way worse back then. It's not as bad right now. So where are you uncomfortable in serving others? loving our neighbors and And for this week, I want you to face a fear. face your fear by trying something new this week. Okay? Some of you, it might be like little Dylan trying to jump off a diving board. Some of you it might try, it might be trying to make a meal. Okay, so something with basic, like ramen, or Kraft mac and cheese. All right, I'm not saying it's the healthiest, but it's a start, it's a stepping stone, make a salad. Alright, for those of you who are more or health conscious, I probably should have led with salad instead of Kraft mac and cheese. But Kraft mac and cheese tastes way better than a solid. You know it's true. meet somebody new this week, some of you it may be hard just to be able to get to know somebody new. Or if you trust somebody, here's something very scary. Be vulnerable with somebody that can be challenging. Whatever it may be, I want you to face a new fear this week, get uncomfortable, and allow God to work in your life to make a difference in your life. And and if you can, that whatever fear it is may also be related to you if you can, to help and serve a neighbor in your neighborhood. May God bless you. Let's have prayer.

Father, thank you. For all that you've done in our lives. Lord life can be very uncomfortable. But we know that through you all things are possible. So help us to overcome our uncomfortableness. Give us wisdom. Give us a need on our heart to accomplish a burden or maybe not a burden, but just something, a task that you place on our hearts, to let us let go of fear and work through us to overcome that it might be another stepping stone and a new opportunity to serve you in other areas. Be with all of our friends and our family here. May we be the ambassador as you would call this to be keep us safe until next week. In Jesus name. Everybody said Amen.

Grace and peace