

## **Christmas Conspiracy Stranger Versus Neighbor**

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*“Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ...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.’ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:25b, 27-29)*

**The conspiracy: ignore the neighbors you consider strangers...**

*A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. (Luke 10:30-32)*

**The revolution: be a neighbor to the strangers close to you...**

*But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came to where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins 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.” “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” (Luke 10:33-36)*

**This Christmas, be a great neighbor as you...**

- **Love: open your heart** – “He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.” (Prov. 14:21)
- **Bless: open your mouth** – “Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman...” (Psalm 15:1-3)
- **Serve: open your home** – “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13:2)
- **Share: open your Bible** – “For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts 28:30-31)

*If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. (James 2:8)*