

Saving Life

Life Verses Small Group Devotional — Week 7

“The next day he took out two denarii 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.’” — Luke 10:35, NIV

Read Luke 10:25–37.

Our compassion for victims is often limited by two factors: how vulnerable and innocent we think they are and whether we see them as a threat.

The first factor places responsibility on the victim. If we are unable to see them as vulnerable or innocent, we may blame them — at least in part — for their victimization. We may think that somehow their actions or inaction led to their pain. We may acknowledge that what occurred was bad but lack the desire to aid the victim or to take action to prevent such things from happening again.

The second factor leads us to believe that bad things should happen to the victim. We may not even be willing to see them as a victim. In this mindset, we applaud and celebrate the perpetrator while framing the victim as the villain. At its extreme, our compassion is completely replaced by the condoning of harmful actions, including murder and war crimes.

Where we would expect to find empathy, there is apathy.

Where we would hope to see compassion, we find cruelty.

Where then will we find empathy and compassion?



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Use these questions to discuss and explore the Scripture and devotional reading.

How has someone's vulnerability shaped the amount of sympathy you have for them?

Are we better or worse off believing that pain and suffering should come to our enemies? How so?

Why do you think it can be so easy for us to blame the poor for being poor, the sick for being sick, and the disabled for being disabled?

What are some ways we can increase our empathy and move ourselves to action on behalf of others?