

ALLEY Rundown – February 24 - 25, 2025

Today's Bible Story: Don't Let Me Down (Good Samaritan) • *Luke 10:25-37*

Today's Key Question: How can you care for people who are different from you?

Today's Bottom Line: Be kind to people who are different from you.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if there were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIRV)

SLIDE: Theme

Welcome, everybody! It's a great day to be in the Alley! I'm so excited everybody was able to be here today. I'm not always the most observant person, but I'm noticing lots of great things as I look around the room. Bunch of good-looking kids, for sure. In fact, turn to the person next to you and tell them, 'Wow, you look great today!'

I wonder if you are as observant. Let's play a quick game to find out! It's called 'Stand Up If.' It's pretty simple to play. I'll ask you if you've seen something before, and you stand up if you have. Easy, right? Let's try the first one.

After each question, have the group sit back down before asking the next one.

STAND UP IF you've ever seen a stray dog or kitten before. *(Pause for response)*

STAND UP IF you've seen a friend get hurt, maybe at school or on the playground, and they needed help. *(Pause for response)* Never a fun sight. Ugh.

STAND UP IF you have seen garbage on the ground, maybe in your neighborhood or at a park. *(Pause for response)* It's gotten better, but sometimes after the snow melts, it's totally trashed!

STAND UP IF you have seen someone on the side of the road, at an intersection maybe, holding a cardboard sign asking for help. *(Pause for response)* I have too.

STAND UP IF you have seen an elderly person, maybe a neighbor, who needs help shoveling snow in their driveway. *(Pause for response)*

Each of us have noticed places and people and even animals who have needs. We see needs all the time at school, at home, around town, and in the neighborhood. But how often do we stop to help and address the needs?

Do you pick up the trash? Help those who are hurt? Grab a shovel and help a neighbor?

For some reason, it's much easier to ignore the needs and go on with our lives instead of pausing to help. This is especially true when the person is different than us or it's someone we don't know so well.

They may dress differently, live somewhere differently, talk differently, or even look different. Why do we often pass up opportunities to help? Why is it easier for us to care about our own things instead of looking to help others?

Great questions. Worthy of discussion, for sure. Now, I realize there are plenty of times it is difficult to assist someone in need. Sometimes we can't stop to help because it may be too dangerous. It's not like you're going to walk out on the highway to help someone change a flat tire. But we often don't have an excuse, and we're going to explore this topic today.

Long ago, Jesus talked about helping others, all the time, especially even when it is difficult. This story can still impact our lives today—and it comes to us from the book of Luke. Take a look...

VIDEO: *The So and So Show* (15:29)

This is an *amazing* parable. Although the intent of the religious leader was to test or trap Jesus, Jesus took the opportunity to flip it around and teach a lesson on kindness. To the religious leader, the person least likely to assist in this story would have been the Samaritan.

Kindness for many during this time had limits. It was extended to those who had the same beliefs or were from the same culture. Samaritans weren't supposed to show kindness to the Jewish community, and the Jewish community certainly was not going to help Samaritans. However, Jesus made it clear: your neighbor is anyone who needs your help and kindness.

If you look around, there are needs all around this community—in our schools, in our homes, around town, and in our neighborhoods. Jesus' message to us is the same message told to the religious leader. We are to help those around us in need even if the person is different than you. And one of the most powerful forms of kindness is showing love to people who are different from you.

If there is someone new on your bus who speaks a different language than you, you can try to strike up a friendship despite the language barrier. With your parent's permission, you can make hygiene bags for those asking for help on the side of the road. If you live near an elderly couple who struggles to walk, you can offer to help around the yard.

Kindness is easiest to share with those we love. But kindness can be shown to everyone even if there is nothing in it for us!"

Think about all the people in your life who are different than you. Maybe they dance or play sports or participate in theater or have curly hair or ride the bus or eat the hot lunch at school or have different skin than you. It could be people you know or people you've only seen. I want you to think about all those people as I ask the next question.

SLIDE: Key Question

How can you care for people who are different from you?

What words can you say or actions can you take to extend the same kindness Jesus was talking about? Going out of your way to show kindness to someone different? If you're having trouble answering this question, don't stress.

You will have the chance to talk it over with your Small Groups in just a moment. Let's pray and ask God for help extending kindness to everyone we encounter.

SLIDE: Theme Background

Lead the group in a prayer related to what they just heard.

OFFERING

What mission are we supporting this year? Yes, Morning Star Mission! Morning Star helps people who are financially struggling to support their families. I know we just celebrated Christmas in December but take a look at this video about one of Missions of Hope's programs called Stars of Hope. If you have your offering, bring it up as we watch this...

VIDEO: Stars of Hope

So Merry Christmas...WAY early. But Missions of Hope prepares all year to have gifts for kids in families that need help. When we think of all the blessings we have every day, let's try to come up with ways to raise money for kids in need in our area!

SLIDE: SuperStart!

Wait! There's one more thing I have to tell you about, it's called Super Start! It's coming up in March and you won't want to miss this yearly event. It's an overnight event just for you - where you'll get to play games, eat, make new friends, and hear an awesome message about how much Jesus loves you. Check out this video...

VIDEO: SuperStart!

You'll receive a card with all the details on your way out today. Sign up today!