

Once the teacher was interrupted in the grocery store by a crowd of curiosity seekers. They had heard he was near after seeing the live TV footage, by reporters who seemed to follow him every where he went.

The teacher was patient but he knew this crowd wasn't hungry for truth. they simply wanted a celebrity moment.

A man stepped forward with mischievous eyes.

"You said we are to love our neighbor as if they were a brother or sister. Jesus only said 'love your neighbor as yourself'. Ok...who is my brother or sister?"

The teacher sighed and thought "oh great, this stuff again" but he said "I think you're asking the wrong question". When the man looked puzzled he went on:

"There was a Christian woman who got mugged after leaving church early one Sunday afternoon.

The thieves took everything, and just to be mean they even stripped her of every stitch of clothing leaving her on her back, naked and exposed.

So she wouldn't cry out, they beat her unconscious and took off running just as people started leaving the church to enjoy the rest of the afternoon.

The first couple shook the Pastors hand and said

“Wonderful sermon, Jim, That was one of my favorite passages of scripture.” and they walked down the street only to be met by the terrible sight of a bleeding bruised body lying in front of them on the side walk.

“Oh how awful!” they said to one another. “I’m sure someone has already called the police. Well, we should not stand around and gawk. Besides we might lose our lunch reservations at the *Feeding Trough*.

They felt awful leaving her but there was of course nothing they could do.

The third person out the church door turned and of course, saw the same distressing sight, but also recognized her as the one who left Church early. “How terrible,” he thought, “But then scripture says ‘God is a ‘consuming fire’ and perhaps its a lesson to me to be watchful or something like this could happen to me!” He took a lingering look at her naked body a moment, felt a strange arousal so he turned his head and quickly almost ran around the corner before anyone would see him leaving the scene.

Another couple came next and stopped in their tracks, This was a difficult predicament. “Shouldn’t we do something honey?” the man asked his wife. She shot him a barbed glance and shook her head. “Prostitutes are always getting what they deserve around here. We must not get messed up in this at all. I can see it in on TV now, and we don’t need this in our lives right now.

Best leave it to professionals. Besides she might be dead, think of the trouble you could get into if you touched it.” The man felt torn, but knew better than to argue. “Yes dear,” he said, feeling relieved to have a excuse to leave. More people from the church came and walked by, each with a very noble or important excuse.

Across the street, a Native American family had just left a convenient store and saw the sight. “Look mommy, said a little girl about 5 or 6, “that lady is hurt!” The father handed his bag of groceries to his wife and said to his wife, “I’m going over there; can you bring the car around?” She nodded holding her hand over her mouth, then turned to her little ones “kids get in the car...*now!*” The man crossed the street taking off his shirt and draped it over the woman and felt her pulse. “She needs help now.” He thought and dialed 911 on his cell phone as his wife pulled up in the car. “Is she alive?” she held her breath. “Yeah, but she’s really hurt bad” The woman took a dance shawl that was hanging on a hanger by the back seat and opening it wide she laid it over the women with the tenderness of a mother tucking her child into bed. She took a small travel pillow from the car and gently lifted the woman’s head to place it beneath her.

The shirt and shawl were soon stained in blood and sidewalk filth. The father sang a prayer over the woman asking for creators protection and healing in his own way using the prayers and language of his ancestors.

People on the streets came and went but the family stayed guard until an ambulance came put her on a stretcher and took her to the emergency room. They followed at distance in the car, and stayed in the waiting room until the woman's family came and they were assured she would be taken care of.

As they all climbed into their car, the little girl asked her dad. "Is that mommy going to be alright?"  
"Yes sweetie" he smiled "She is going to be fine."

The wife turned to her husband smiling with proud eyes:  
"Well you never looked good in that shirt anyway."  
"Yeah and I never liked that yellow dance shawl on you either." They looked with joy at each other and laughed squeezing hands as they drove home peacefully together.

When the teacher finished the story it was quiet he looked around at them with smiling eyes,  
"So... do I need to say more? But for you slow learners, Whoever is in need is your brother or sister, auntie or uncle or your mom or dad."  
But instead of asking 'Who is my brother or sister?',

Do as this godly “non-Christian” Native American family did, *Be the brother or sister to the one who needs you!* “Now, excuse me please”, and parting the crowd he said “I still have some grocery shopping to do.”

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As the teacher selected fruit and put it in a paper bag, a crowd slowly constricted around him. Some were visibly upset and others just had smiles and typical stars in their eyes to be near a “TV Celebrity”.

Finally one man blurted out..

”You are kinda hard on Christians aren’t you?”

the teacher turned and looked at him, “Christians?

Why do you say that?” He looked frustrated;

Well you made the heroes of the story a pagan family and the Christians in your story were all selfish jerks!”

The teacher smiled...”Who said they were Christians?”

I only mentioned the woman who was abused as being a

Christian...none of the others. Did you assume because

they were leaving a church service that they were

followers of Christ?” The teacher went on, “English

language is kinda dangerous the way it uses labels.

What does Christian mean?”

A theology student watching the event muttered

it originally meant “little Christ”,he looked up,”but it

wasn’t a compliment in the period of the early Church.

it was kind of a slur given Christ’s followers by the

Romans: 'Christianos'. Tacitus wrote in the first century saying "The vulgar call them Christians."

See there was a guy named Christus in the region of Tiberius who was executed by Pontius Pilate and so they mocked Jesus's followers by calling them the same...."

The Teacher laughed,"Whooh! you are good, real good, but you're losing alot of us! Ha! so anyway my question is to you all: Were they "Christians?",Were those church attendees acting as "little Christs?" when they walked on by? Who acted Christ-like?"

Remember what Christ taught about knowing a tree by its fruit? he said "By their fruit you'll recognize them" you aren't gunna find these grapes growin on thornbushes or these figs here, growin on thistles!"

Why would you defend a persons title they don't live up to? Just as that detested Samaritan became the unlikely hero in Christs story, so also in this story the *godly one* is the "non-Christian" in quotes of course! Why should that surprise you?

People look at outward appearances and titles but the Creator looks straight into the heart.

By the way, why aren't we offended by words like "the good samaritan?" Isn't that a little like saying "the good Indian?" or the "good Jew?"

I wonder how it would make samaritans feel today?"