



Intentional Neighboring
Session 6: July 12, 2026

Compassion for the Lost—Part 2

Matthew 7:12 | Matthew 9:35-38 | 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Ephesians 2:11-13 | Romans 15:2-4, 13

OUR MISSION

*We exist to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ
who obey the Great Commandments and fulfill the Great Commission.*

Continuing Samantha's Story

For the past two years, you have intentionally built a friendship with your neighbor, Samantha. You've talked over the fence, helped each other with projects, shared meals, and become trusted friends. Samantha knows you are a Christian and knows that prayer is an important part of your life. While you have never pressured her about spiritual matters, she knows you are a person of faith.

Samantha is not hostile toward God. She simply lives as though God is not part of everyday life. She does not attend church, does not read the Bible, and spiritual conversations have never been a significant part of your friendship.

One afternoon Samantha knocks on your door. She has just returned from an appointment with her doctor.

"The doctor found cancer."

She begins to cry.

"The good news is they caught it early. The doctor says it's very treatable and expects a good outcome. But my mom died of cancer when I was a teenager. Ever since then, I've been terrified of hearing that word."

After a few moments she looks at you and says,

"I know you're a praying person. Would you pray for me?"

Small Group Discussion

Look up each passage listed below and read it together before answering the questions that follow it.

The Knock at the Door - Ephesians 2:11-13 & Matthew 7:12

- 1.** Before you think about Samantha, remember Ephesians 2:11-13 – what did it feel like to be far off from God? What was underneath that distance for you?
- 2.** What is Samantha looking for from you right now? Is it information, comfort, presence, or something she couldn't quite name if you asked her?
- 3.** Over two years of ordinary friendship, what has Samantha seen in you that made you safe enough to knock on your door tonight?
- 4.** Matthew 7:12 says to do for others what you'd want done for you. Someone was patient with you while you were far off – what does that patience look like for Samantha?

Neighboring is Costly, Hope is Priceless – Romans 15:2-4

- 5.** Verse 2 says we should please our neighbor for their good, to build them up. What does it mean that this word "neighbor" is the same word Jesus uses when He commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves?
- 6.** Verse 3 says Christ did not please Himself. How does that shape what it costs to actually neighbor someone well?
- 7.** Verse 4 says Scripture exists so that we might have hope. What connection do you see between neighboring someone well and that neighbor ending up with hope?

Compassion and the Crowd - Matthew 9:36

- 8.** The crowd wasn't looking for a shepherd – they wanted healing, food, relief from Rome. Their felt desires were pointed somewhere else entirely. How is Samantha's situation similar? What is she consciously asking for, versus what's actually true about her condition?
- 9.** Jesus' compassion wasn't contingent on the crowd wanting Him specifically. What does that tell you about how you should extend compassion to Samantha, even in the moments she isn't consciously seeking Christ?
- 10.** "Harassed and helpless... like sheep without a shepherd" – where do you see that condition underneath Samantha's fear, beyond just the diagnosis itself?
- 11.** If cancer is the door that opened tonight, what do you think is actually on the other side of that door for Samantha – what is she really without?

What's Love Got to Do With It? - 1 Corinthians 13:13

12. If you pray with Samantha tonight and her fear genuinely eases, would that be evidence of love, or could it just be a comforting moment that doesn't cost you anything past tonight?

13. What would it look like for your love for Samantha to "always protect, always trust, always hope, always persevere" specifically regarding her cancer journey and the fear behind it – not just this one moment?

14. Underneath Samantha's request for prayer, is what she's actually missing best described as comfort, or as hope? What's the difference, in your own words?

15. If love is the proof, what would prove your compassion for Samantha is real rather than a one-time response to a crisis?

Stick the Landing – Romans 15:13

16. Samantha asked you to pray. If you prayed this verse over her – not just "help her cancer" but "let her know the God of hope" – how might that change the substance of what you're praying?

17. You cannot manufacture hope for Samantha. You can only be the neighbor who points her to its actual source. What does that take off your shoulders, and what does it still leave you responsible for?

18. "Overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" – not by willpower, not by positive thinking. How does that reshape what you're hoping happens in Samantha's life, beyond just a good prognosis?

19. If Samantha's treatment goes well and her fear fades without her ever meeting the God of hope, what has actually happened – and what hasn't?

Scripture References

Mark 12:28-31

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

²⁹ "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.'^[a] ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'^[b] ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'^[c] There is no commandment greater than these."

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Ephesians 2:11-13

¹¹Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—¹²remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Matthew 7:12

¹²So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Romans 15:2-4

²Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. ³For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.”^[a] ⁴For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

Matthew 9:35-38

³⁵Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,^[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. ¹²For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Romans 15:13

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.