



Compassionate Care

The man who approached Jesus with a tough question already knew the right answer, but the truth in his head wasn't penetrating his heart. "Love God and love others" was easy to affirm, but hard to live out, especially for Jews and Samaritans who hated each other. So Jesus told a story of someone who opened his heart, moved outside of his comfort zone, and gave compassionate care to a critically ill person at great personal cost. Explore this model to learn more about how you can provide excellent care in your nursing practice.

Read Luke 10:25-37:

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

²⁷ 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.'"

²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: "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. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ 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.'

³⁶ "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

For discussion and reflection:

1. What stands out to you about the Samaritan man's response to a medical crisis? How do his actions reflect excellence in nursing care?
2. Who are the people that you find are the hardest to care for? How do you overcome this obstacle? Where does mercy fit into our modern day practice?
3. What are other obstacles to providing excellent care? Do they affect your ability to be compassionate?
4. Describe how it might look to provide excellent care for those who are falling through the cracks of the healthcare system.