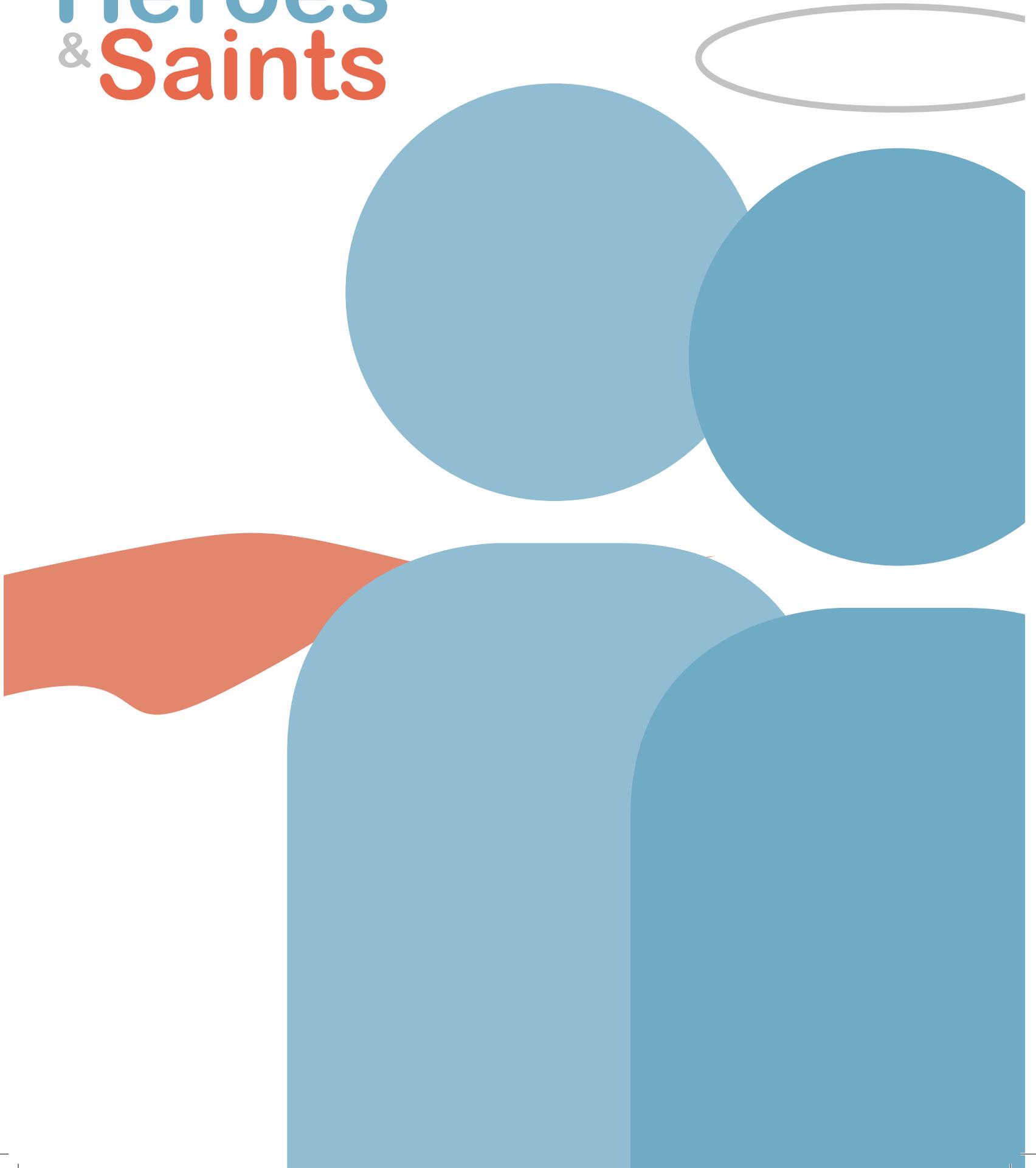


Northland, A Church Distributed Curriculum

# Heroes & Saints





# Heroes & Saints

While real life heroes might be hard to find today, they are still a focus of literature and media. Superheroes are the subject of movies and TV series alike. The main point of this study is that while it is wonderful to be a hero, it is better to be a saint. The Good Samaritan was a hero when he stopped to help an injured man along a dangerous, deserted road. But it was the saint in him who not only bound up the man's wounds, but followed through to make sure he was cared for until he was well. The Samaritan's kindness did not end with one random act on the Jericho road. It accompanied him everywhere he went. It was a part of his character. That is the mark of a saint.

It is easy to be a hero and get lots of acclaim. But to be a saint requires more of us. For starters, it can't be about us. Saints spend more time in the trenches than in the spotlight. They clothe themselves in humility, not flashy costumes. Saints look to God as their superpower, not their own abilities.

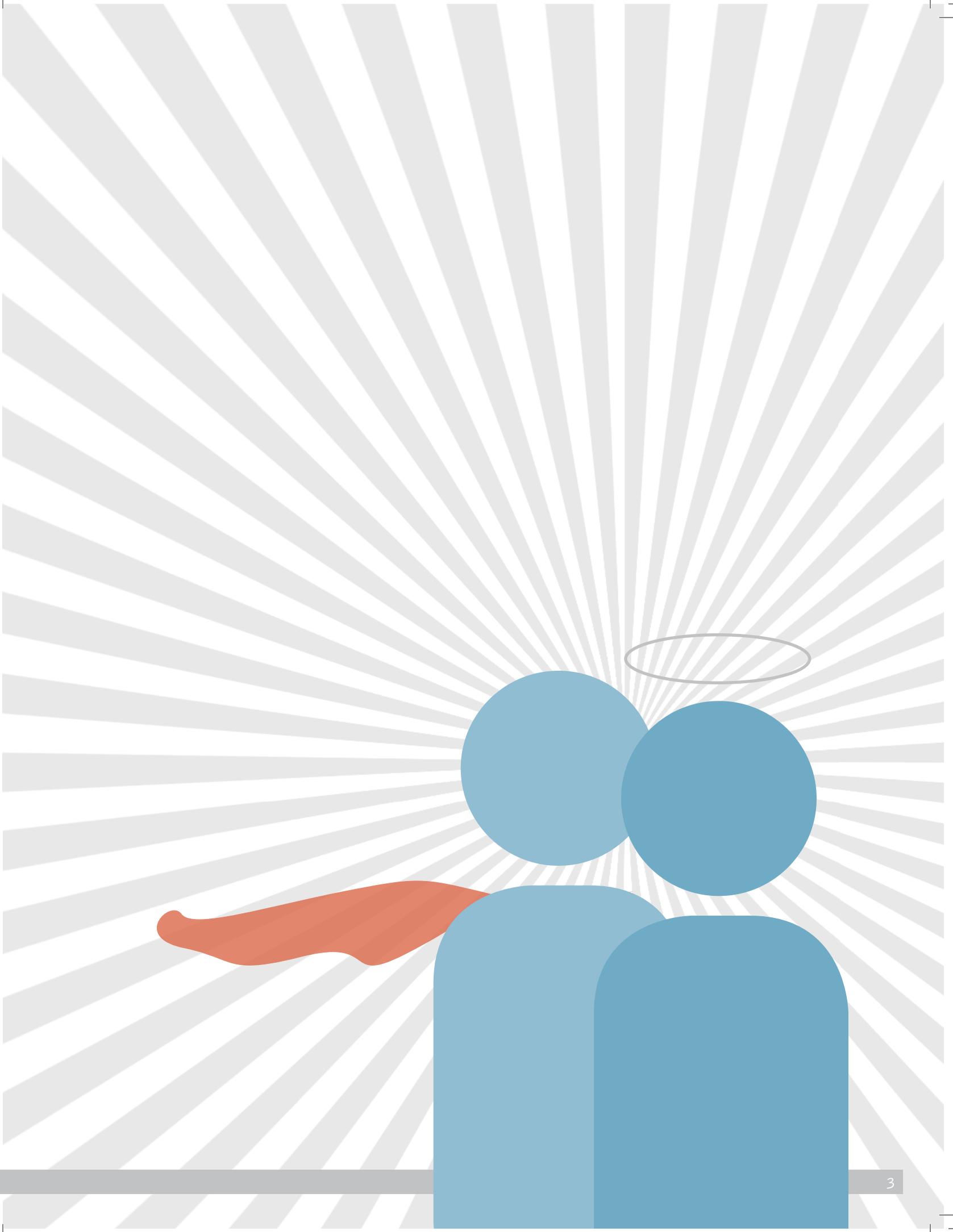
And at the end of the day, isn't that what's truly heroic?

read on

Oswald Chambers said,

“If a person is  
born from above,  
he does not have  
to try to be a  
saint...

...he  
cannot  
help but  
be one.”



# The Story of a Hero

Everyone loves a good story — the “once upon a time” that gets our imagination going, the bad guy we all love to hate that gets our blood pumping, the happily-ever-after ending that is so satisfying. But there is nothing better than a story about a hero or a saint to inspire us.

For the next few weeks, we will be focusing on a story that Jesus told. In fact, this was a story that Jesus used to answer a very difficult question.

## Day 1

Have you ever been fooled by a trick question? Try these:

- What 11-letter word does every straight-A student spell incorrectly?
- If Mr. Smith’s peacock lays an egg in Mr. Jones’s yard, who owns the egg?
- If there are six apples, and you take away four, how many do you have?
- If you had only one match, and you entered a dark room containing an oil lamp, some newspaper and some kindling wood, which would you light first?

1. Jesus was always being asked difficult questions. Read **Luke 10:25-37** to see the tricky question He was asked. Who approached Jesus?
  - A Samaritan
  - An innkeeper
  - A disciple
  - A lawyer
2. What tricky question did he ask?
  - Do I really have to keep all Ten Commandments?
  - How can I have eternal life?
  - Are you really the Son of God?
  - How can I avoid hell?
3. Why do you think he asked it?
  - He really wanted to know the answer.
  - He was curious about Jesus.
  - He was hoping to find a loophole in the law.
  - He wanted to catch Jesus saying something wrong so he could use it against Him.
4. Since Jesus knew this man’s heart, He knew how to handle him. He even got the man to answer his own question in verse 27. What was his answer?
  - Love God and others with all you’ve got.
  - Keep up a good front.
  - Live a perfect life.
  - Memorize the law inside and out.

\* Answers to the trick questions:

1. Incorrectly. 2. Peacocks don't lay eggs. Peahens do. 3. Four. 4. The match. \*Courtesy of <http://eluzions.com/Puzzles/Trick/>

5. What do you think it looks like to love God with all your heart?
6. Based on this answer, do you think that Jesus is looking for heroes or saints?
7. What is the difference?

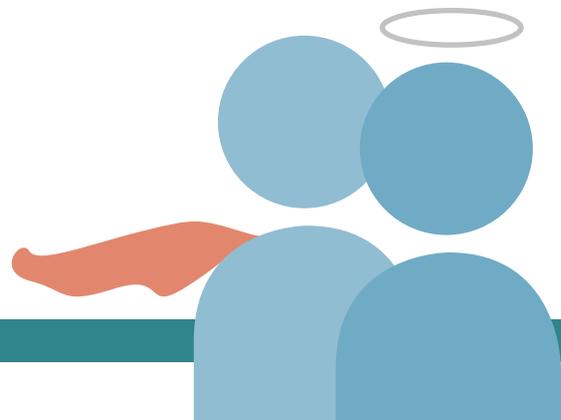
## Day 2

1. Still, the man wouldn't give up. He prompted Jesus further. What did he ask next?
  - How can I love God with all my heart?
  - How can I be your disciple?
  - Who's my neighbor?
  - Are you impressed with me?
2. Why did he ask that question, according to verse 29?
3. Have you ever wanted to find an easy way around God's commands, rather than really know what He wants from you?
4. Together, these two commandments sum up all of God's commands. Look back at the original 10 in **Exodus 20:1-17**. In the blanks below, write a "G" for the commandments that fall under "loving God," and an "N" for those that fall under "loving your Neighbor."
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not have any other gods but me.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not steal.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not tell lies about your neighbor.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not worship idols.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Keep the Sabbath day holy as a day of rest.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Honor your father and mother.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not murder.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not commit adultery.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Do not set your heart on your neighbor's belongings.

## Making It Personal

Jesus was more concerned about the young man's heart than his perfect behavior. None of us can ever obey all of God's commandments and live perfect lives. But if we want to get by more than we want to know and please Him, He knows that. We need to be honest with Him. God doesn't want to play games with us.

So don't bother with the tricky questions!



## The Story of a Hero

### Aim:

To examine our motives—do we really want to please God?

### Opener:

Break the ice with a few trick questions, such as the ones below.

1. What is full of holes but still holds water? (Answer: a sponge)
2. There are five apples in a basket and five people in a room. How can you give an apple to each person in the room and yet leave one apple in the basket? (Answer: You give one of them an apple in the basket!)
3. What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks, has a head but never weeps, and has a bed but never sleeps? (Answer: a river)
4. What is light as a feather, but even the strongest man cannot hold it more than a minute? (Answer: His breath!)
5. Why is it against the law for a man living in North Carolina to be buried in South Carolina? (Answer: Because he is still living!)

### Interactive Learning:

- One-Sentence Story: Give the students time (three to five minutes) to individually review the passage (**Luke 10:25-37**). Then go around the room and have them retell the story, with each student adding just one sentence. (You may add extra rules to make it more challenging, such as, “The first word of each added sentence has to be the same as the last word of the previous person’s sentence.”)
- Then move into the week’s lesson by asking, “What was really behind the young man’s question to Jesus?” (Focus on the fact that the lawyer wasn’t being real with Jesus; he was just looking for an easy way out.) Go over the ABS questions you think will further your discussion.
- Now introduce this series and Heroes and Saints. Ask the students which they would rather be. Then talk about the difference. (The crux of this is that a hero, by today’s definition, can spend one shining moment doing something that gains himself/herself attention, but a saint has to have strength to hang in there for the long haul. Jesus is looking for saints, not heroes.

### Personal Challenge:

Challenge the students to begin thinking about their own attitude toward Jesus. Do they want to know Him, to please Him? Or do they just want to know how to get around His commands?

Jesus is calling us to be saints—and anyone who spends his/her life wanting to please God is a saint. It isn’t about perfection. It is about following for the long haul.

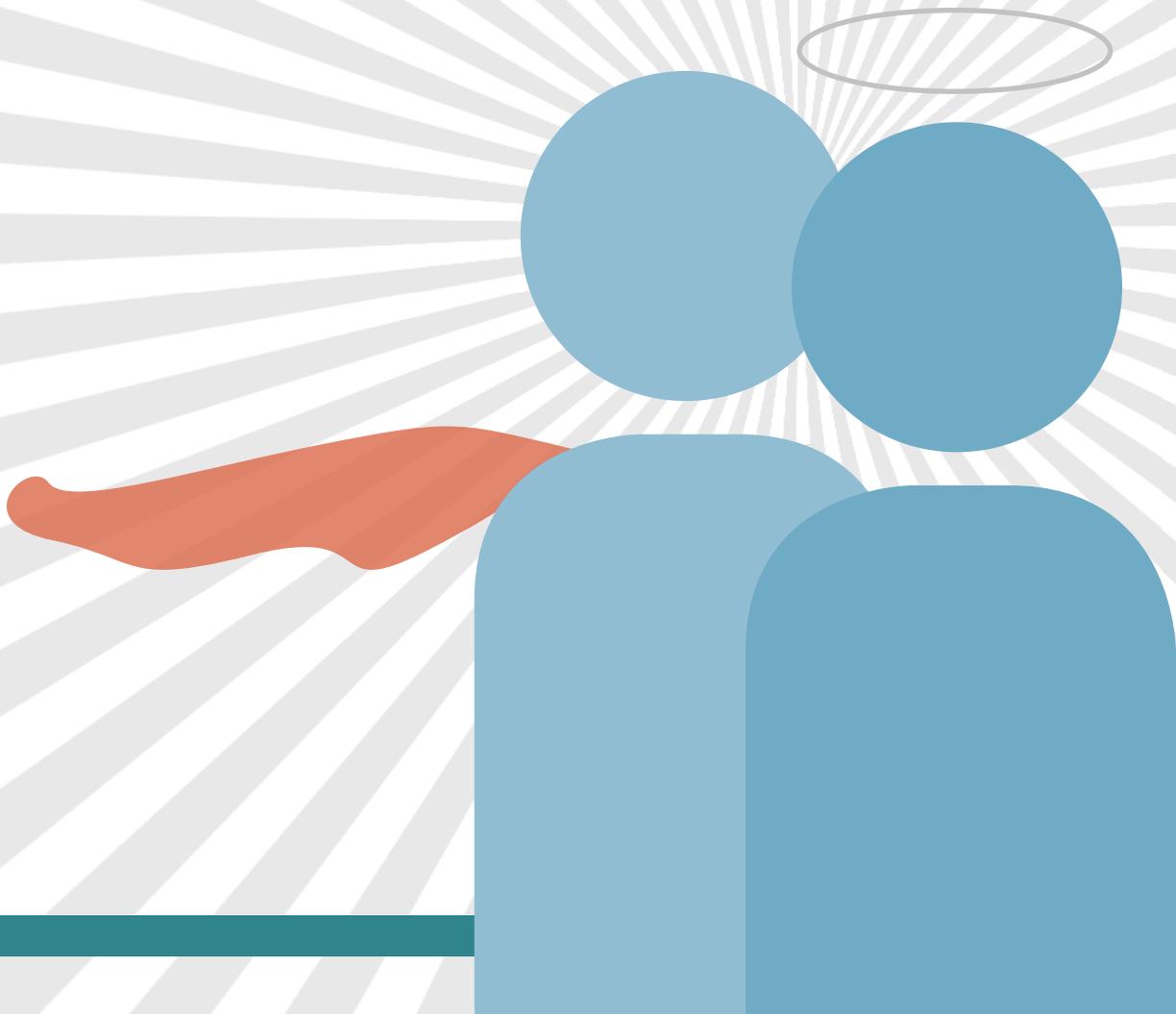
### Group Project:

Explain to your group that this series is about being aware of the ways we can serve in our community. Begin to brainstorm a project that you want to do together before the series is over.

### Prayer:

Pray together that God would help each of you to be honest with Him, not play games, and would give each of you a desire to know and please Him.

# NOTES



# An Unlikely Hero

>> "A Samaritan traveling the road came on him [the injured man].  
When he saw the man's condition, his heart went out to him."  
— Luke 10:33 (The Message)

Have you ever helped a stranger in distress? Someone that you had never even met before? While that can be dangerous in the world we live in, it was also dangerous in Jesus' day.

## Day 1

1. In this story, what happened to the man traveling down the road to Jericho?
  - He fell into a deep pit.
  - He got lost.
  - He had a heart attack.
  - He was robbed, stripped, and beaten.
  
2. If there was ever a need for a hero to come save the day, this was it. What three people came across the injured man that day?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Of those three people, who did you think would be most likely to help out? Why?
  
4. What made the Samaritan an unlikely hero? (Check all that apply.)
  - Jews hated Samaritans and considered them their enemies.
  - It was risky for a Samaritan to travel this road.
  - The Samaritan should have demanded a reward, but didn't.
  - No one would expect a Samaritan to be kinder than a priest.
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What did the Samaritan do when he saw the injured man?
  - He waited with him until someone with medical training arrived.
  - He cleaned him up and left him to walk home alone.
  - He bandaged his wounds and took him where he could be well-cared for.
  - He gave him the name of a good lawyer.
  
6. Think about what you would have done if you had passed by that day. What are you willing to risk to help someone else? Would you risk being made fun of? Would you risk going hungry? Would you risk not being appreciated?

## Day 2

1. Jesus told this story to the expert lawyer to answer his earlier question. What was it?  
 How do I get to Heaven?  
 Who's my neighbor?  
 What makes Samaritans so special?  
 What is the greatest commandment?
2. What message do you think Jesus was trying to get across? (Check all that apply.)  
 Each of us is able to love our neighbor, even if that neighbor is supposed to be our enemy.  
 Priests and Levites make lousy neighbors.  
 Your neighbor is anyone God puts in your path.  
 Sometimes loving your neighbor costs you.  
 If you're traveling to Jericho, bring a bodyguard.  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
3. What made the Samaritan a good role model as a neighbor?
4. What are some reasons why he might have decided to pass by, like the priest and Levite?
5. Name one of the heroes in your life. What makes that person a hero?
6. Has this lesson changed the way you think of heroes?  
 yes  no

## Making It Personal

In the column on the left, list three people in your life that you wouldn't ordinarily think of as your neighbors. Then, in the column on the right, list one way that you could "love that person as yourself."

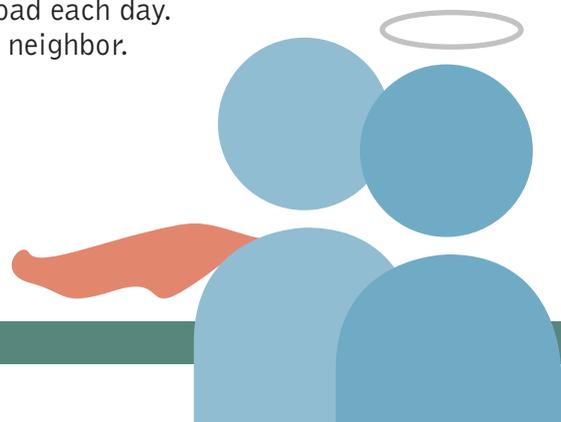
### My Neighbors

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

### Loving My Neighbor

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

These are just a few of the people you pass by on your road each day. Ask God to show you other ways that you can be a good neighbor. Ask Him for the courage to follow through. It's heroic.



# An Unlikely Hero

### Aim:

To encourage students to see the value of taking risks to help others.

### Opener:

Since this week's lesson focuses on the story of a hero, have fun with the "hero" theme. Divide the students into groups of three, and give each group a slip of paper with a crisis situation written on it, such as "tied to train tracks," "lost in the wilderness" or "lunch money stolen." Each group must act out a short skit around that situation, with one of them playing the hero, one the villain, and the other playing the person in distress. Encourage them to be creative!

### Interactive Learning:

Once the skits are completed, have the students stay in their groups of three. You will ask them a series of questions and have them respond to each other out loud, rather than respond to you. Some questions are:

What do you think makes a person a hero?

Who are your heroes, and why?

Compare the Good Samaritan with the villain in your skit. How are they alike?

How are they different?

Regroup and discuss some of the answers. Go over any ABS questions that you feel will further your discussion. Ask students when they have taken a risk to help someone.

### Group Project:

Continue planning the group service project that you started brainstorming last week. If you're stumped for ideas, consider these:

- Collecting food for the food bank
- Doing yard work or a similar cleanup project for an elderly or needy family
- Visiting a nursing home
- Making cards to send to soldiers, or to their families
- Preparing a meal together to take to someone who is going through a difficult time

Decide on a project, and set a date. You may want to conduct the project on a regular ABS night so that all of the students can be there. Assign each student a task that will help bring the project to completion.

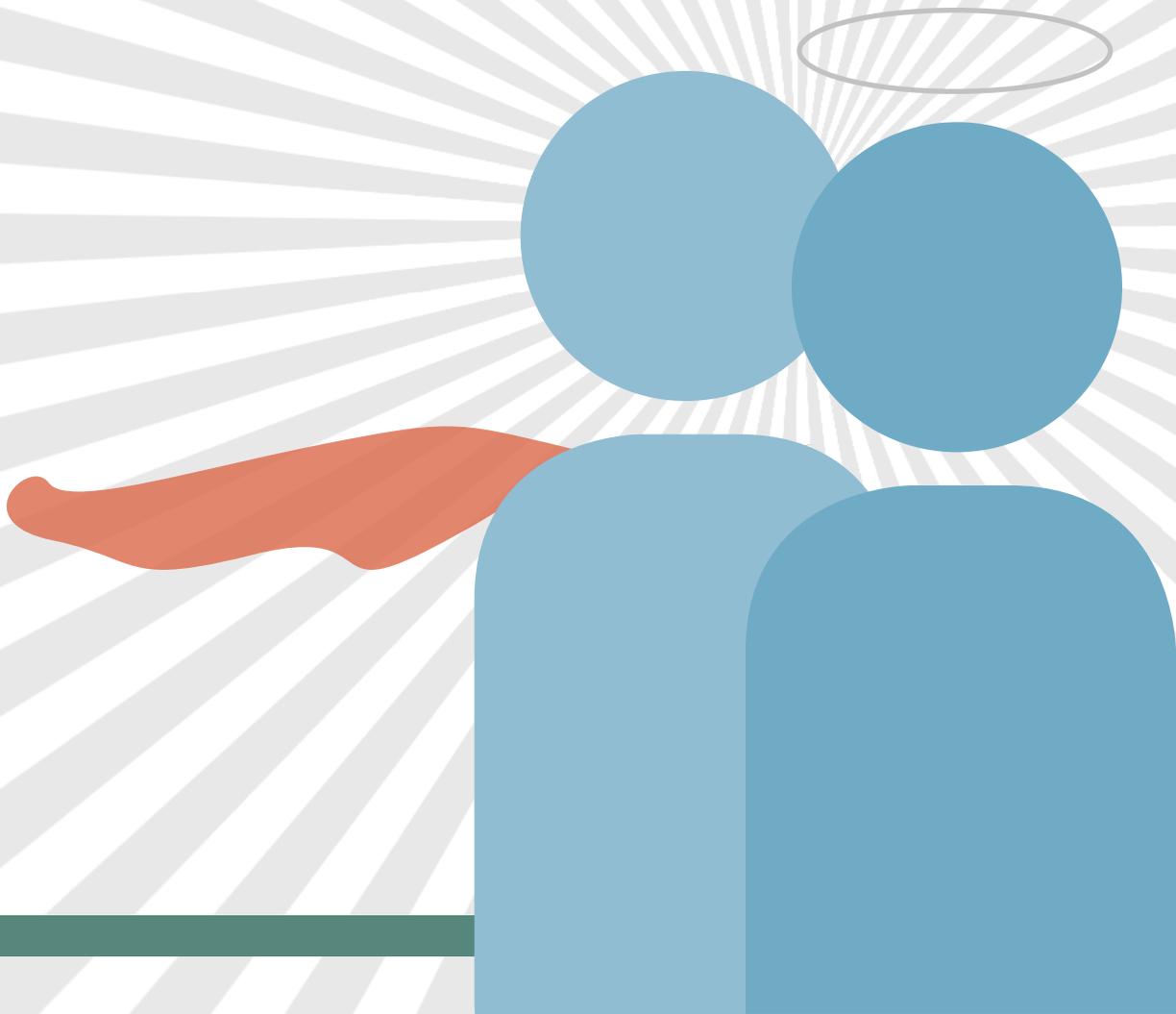
### Personal Challenge:

Give the students their mission for the week. Instruct them to watch for opportunities to help people they don't even know.

### Prayer:

Pray together that God would open your eyes to the opportunities around you to love your neighbors, and would give you the courage to help.

NOTES



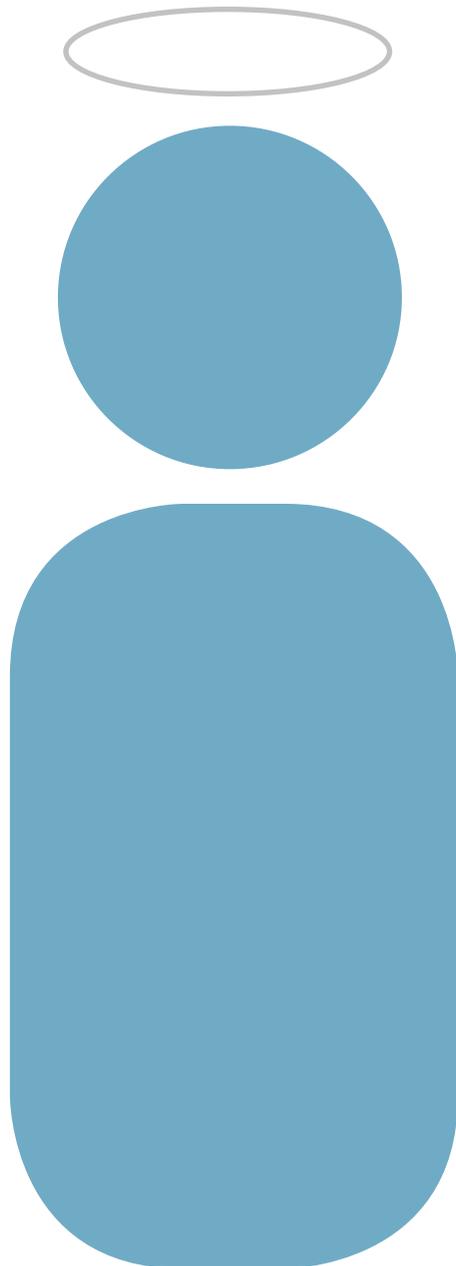
## Love Is a Verb

What good would it do you to have an amazing car, but keep it in your driveway? Or what if you were to keep it full of gas, but never start it? Or what if you had a cell phone that you carried with you all the time but never answered?

In the same way, as God's children, we have an amazing privilege and purpose. We have experienced God's love and have access to it. The natural result of that should be love in action. Just as in the story of the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:30-35**), actions speak louder than words. Reread these verses to answer the following questions.

### Day 1

- What does it mean to love your neighbor?
  - To have warm feelings toward someone all the time
  - To want to marry him/her
  - To treat someone the way you'd like to be treated
  - To always be saying, "I love you"
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- List below as many action verbs as you can find in **Luke 10:30-35**. Then circle the verbs that are examples of love in action.
- In the blanks below, mark whether the sentence best describes the lawyer ("L"), the Good Samaritan ("S"), or the priest ("P") in this story. (There may be more than one right answer!)
  - \_\_\_ He cared more about his own needs than the needs of others.
  - \_\_\_ He never would have thought of a Samaritan as his neighbor.
  - \_\_\_ He put another person's needs first.
  - \_\_\_ He was more comfortable talking about love than living it out.
  - \_\_\_ He loved the injured man through his actions.
- What lesson(s) did the lawyer need to learn about love? (Check all that apply.)
  - Love is for everyone, not just your friends.
  - Love is the greatest commandment.
  - Loving your neighbor is easy.
  - Love isn't just words; it's action.
- What do you learn from this story about love?
- Where could you apply that lesson to your life today? Do it, and then record the result.



## Day 2

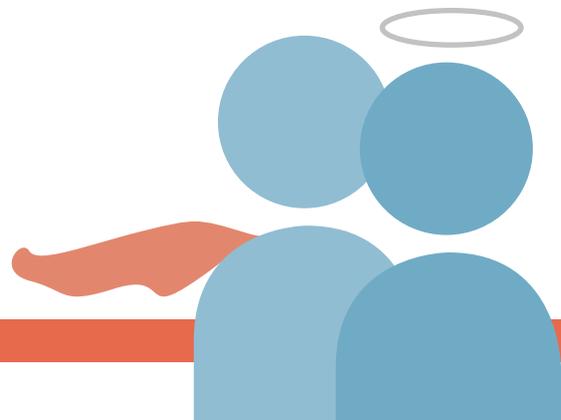
The road to Jericho was very dangerous. Robbers often would pretend to be wounded so that travelers would leave the road and come to help. This shows how risky it was for the Samaritan to stop and help a stranger.

1. What fears might have kept the Samaritan from taking action and serving the injured man?
2. What fears keep you from helping others in need? (Check all that apply.)
  - Fear of not knowing what to do
  - Fear of failure
  - Fear of rejection
  - Fear of hidden dangers
  - Fear of getting too involved
  - Other(s): \_\_\_\_\_
3. What advice do we find in **Psalm 56:3-4** about facing our fears?
  - Run! Hide! Now!
  - Put your trust in God, since He is the One in control.
  - If you pretend you're not afraid, you won't be.
  - Fear is normal.
4. The Good Samaritan didn't let fear hold him back, and he didn't offer excuses. **1 John 3:18** (NIV) tells us that love should not just be \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_.
5. What do you learn from this verse?
  - Don't ever tell someone you love him/her.
  - It's better to tell someone you love him/her than to show it.
  - You should only love dear little children.
  - If you love someone, it will show.
6. Name one way that God showed His love for you through His actions.

Loving your neighbor through your actions isn't easy. Sometimes, like the Samaritan, you may have a chance to step off the beaten path while everyone else keeps walking. Remember: Jesus is walking right alongside you. Take time to show His love to someone else.

## Making It Personal

God has provided you with the tools you need to actively serve others. Make a list of the particular abilities He has given you that you can use to help others. Ask Him to help you put those tools to good use as you go about your daily life.



# Love Is a Verb

### Aim:

To remind students that love requires action, not just words, and to encourage them to get busy so that they can actively serve others.

### Opener:

Since the focus of this week's lesson is action, consider starting with a relay activity. For supplies, you will need Band-Aids, two rolls of toilet paper, paper cups and a pitcher of water. (\*Note: This activity may be performed best outside. Modify the relay according to your environment, respecting the rules of your host's home.) Divide the group into two teams and have them stand in two lines at a designated starting line. Choose one person from each team to sit at a distance, where they will be "rescued." At the word "Go!" the first team member must run to his teammate, wrap his head in toilet paper, stick him with two Band-Aids, and give him a drink of water before helping him back to the starting line. That person (the "rescuer") must then take his turn as the "victim," and so on and so forth, until everyone has been rescued. The team to finish first wins!

### Interactive Learning:

Make the transition from the opener to the lesson by telling the students that the focus of this week's study is love in action. Ask them to share stories of times when they rescued or were rescued by another person. Ask:

How did you feel when you were rescued?  
What things could have held your rescuers back?  
What was the final outcome?

Read together **Matthew 25:31-40**. If your group is larger than five students, divide into smaller groups of three and give each member of each group a specific role:

**Reader**—reads the passage out loud.  
**Recorder**—makes notes of key thoughts expressed by the group.  
**Reporter**—reports the group's answers to the larger group.  
**Answerer**—suggests the best answer to the question, etc.

Key questions:  
What examples of love in action does Jesus give in this story?  
What does verse 40 mean?  
How important would you say it is to Jesus that we reach out to people in need?  
What do you learn from this passage?

Reassemble the group and have the reporters share their answers with the larger group.

### Personal Challenge:

Follow up on last week's challenge by asking what opportunities students had to help others. Point out that this can be as simple as giving a cup of water or paying a visit.

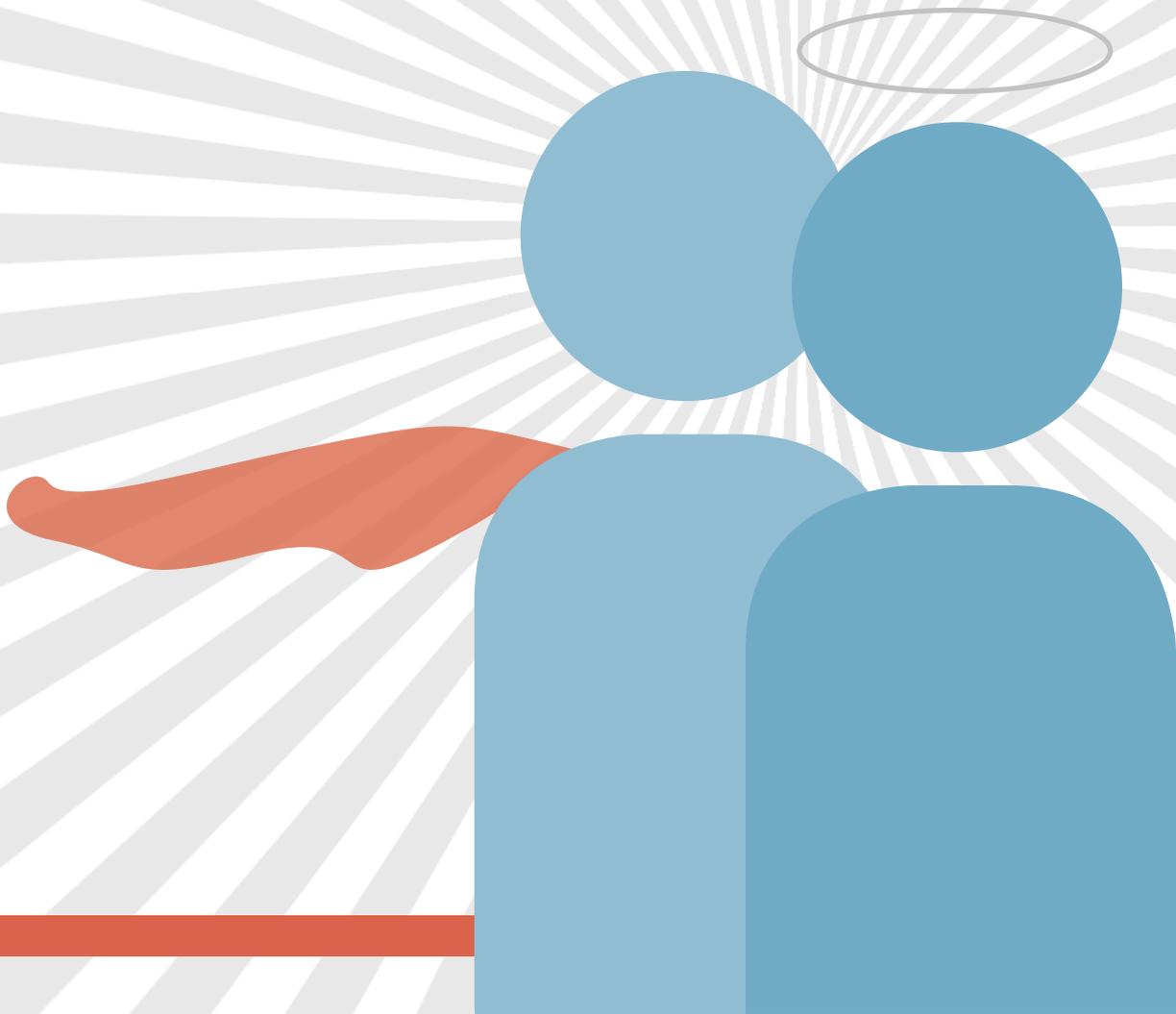
### Group Project:

Since this is week three of a four-week study, it is time to complete your service project if you have not already done so, or to make your final preparations.

**Prayer:**

Pray together that God would help you step out and actively show His love to others in very practical ways. Pray for the people you will be serving (or have served).

**NOTES**



## Saints Stick Around

>> "The next day he took out two silver coins 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

No one likes missing the end of a movie. How would you ever know how the story turned out? When we don't follow up with the people we've helped, it's like leaving the theater halfway through the show. Stick around, and you just might see something awesome God is doing and how you can continue to be a part of it!

### Day 1

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate yourself on your ability to follow through, or to complete tasks once you start them?  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I never follow through.			I sometimes follow through.				I always follow through.		
- When it comes to loving and helping others, what does it mean to follow through or finish strong? (Check all that apply.)
  - Keep in touch with the people you've had an opportunity to help.
  - Forget about your neighbor and move on to the next project.
  - Continue to encourage and pray for people.
  - Ask people to pay you back for the way you served them.
- How important do you think follow-through is when helping others? Why?  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not important at all			Sometimes important				Very important		
- Turn back to **Luke 10:30-35**. What did the Samaritan tell the innkeeper before he left?
  - Nice knowing you.
  - I've done all I can; it's your turn now.
  - Does your inn have a pool?
  - Look after my friend, and I'll pay you back.
- What did it cost the Samaritan to follow up with the injured man? (Check all that apply.)
  - Nothing
  - Two silver coins
  - A return trip on a dangerous road
  - His time
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Helping others doesn't end on the Jericho road. When we follow up with the people God has brought into our lives, we see Jesus at work. It changes us.

## Day 2

1. Name three distractions that can keep us from following through with our neighbors.

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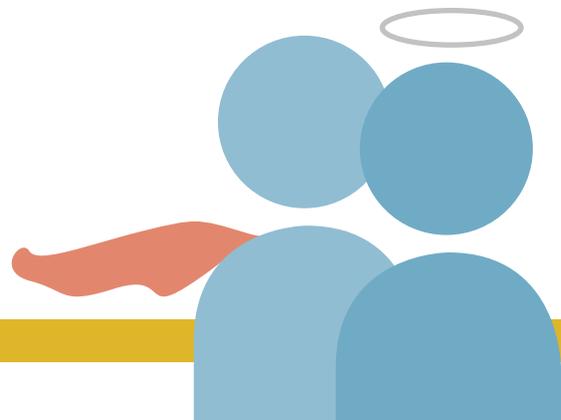
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2. While it isn't possible to follow through with everyone we help every time, what is a healthy attitude about following through with others?  
 I'd better follow through with all of my neighbors, or God won't be pleased with me.  
 I want to be ready to bless others where I can with the resources God has given me.  
 Following through is a pain, but I'll do it if I have to.  
 Who said anything about follow-through?
3. Jesus gave the expert lawyer a lot to think about through this story. He even helped him answer his own question in **Luke 10:37**. So who was a neighbor to the injured man after all?  
 The one who passed him by.  
 The one who cared more about his own safety.  
 The one who showed him kindness.  
 The one who robbed him.
4. Who do you relate to the most in this story?  
 The lawyer — It is easier for me to talk about love than to demonstrate it.  
 The priest or Levite — When I see someone in need, I am tempted to pass him by.  
 The Samaritan — My heart goes out to people in need; I like to take action right away.  
 The wounded man — I am hurting and wish someone would see my needs and help me.
5. Where would you most like to grow in serving others?  
 Seeing the needs around you  
 Doing what you can to help  
 Finding partners to help you serve  
 Following up with the people you've helped

## Making It Personal

Follow-through is often the best way we can demonstrate our care and concern for other people. While saints can be heroes, the difference is that saints are not in it for themselves, but they are in it for the long haul. A saint is anyone who faithfully loves and serves God. Ask God to help you to be faithful to Him and to the people He puts in your path.



## Saints Stick Around

### Aim:

To teach students the importance of following through in their relationships.

### Opener:

“Pick Up Sticks” Game (Need oven mitts, containers and two boxes of toothpicks)

Place two piles of toothpicks (one box for each pile, so they have an equal number of toothpicks) on a table or kitchen counter, along with a container into which the toothpicks must be placed, such as a bowl or tall glass.

Two at a time, in relay fashion, have the students race to pick up as many toothpicks as they can grab in one handful using the oven mitts and drop them into the bowl. Teams must “stick around” until all of the toothpicks have been collected.

### Interactive Learning:

Make the transition from the opener to the lesson by saying that sometimes helping others isn’t about just showing up once, and we need partners (teammates) to help us help others. We need to keep going back and follow through until the work is complete.

### Discussion questions:

Can you think of someone who did something great for you, but then just disappeared?

What did that say to you?

Why is follow-through so important when we represent Jesus?

Go around and ask the students to name the No. 1 thing they’ve learned from this series on the Good Samaritan.

### Personal Challenge:

Challenge the students to name one way they want to follow through and serve another person this year. Record their answers. Tell them that you will be reading their responses back to them at the close of the school year to see how they’re doing. Encourage them to seek ways to bless others however they can, right where they are, with the resources God has given them. Brainstorm together what this might look like.

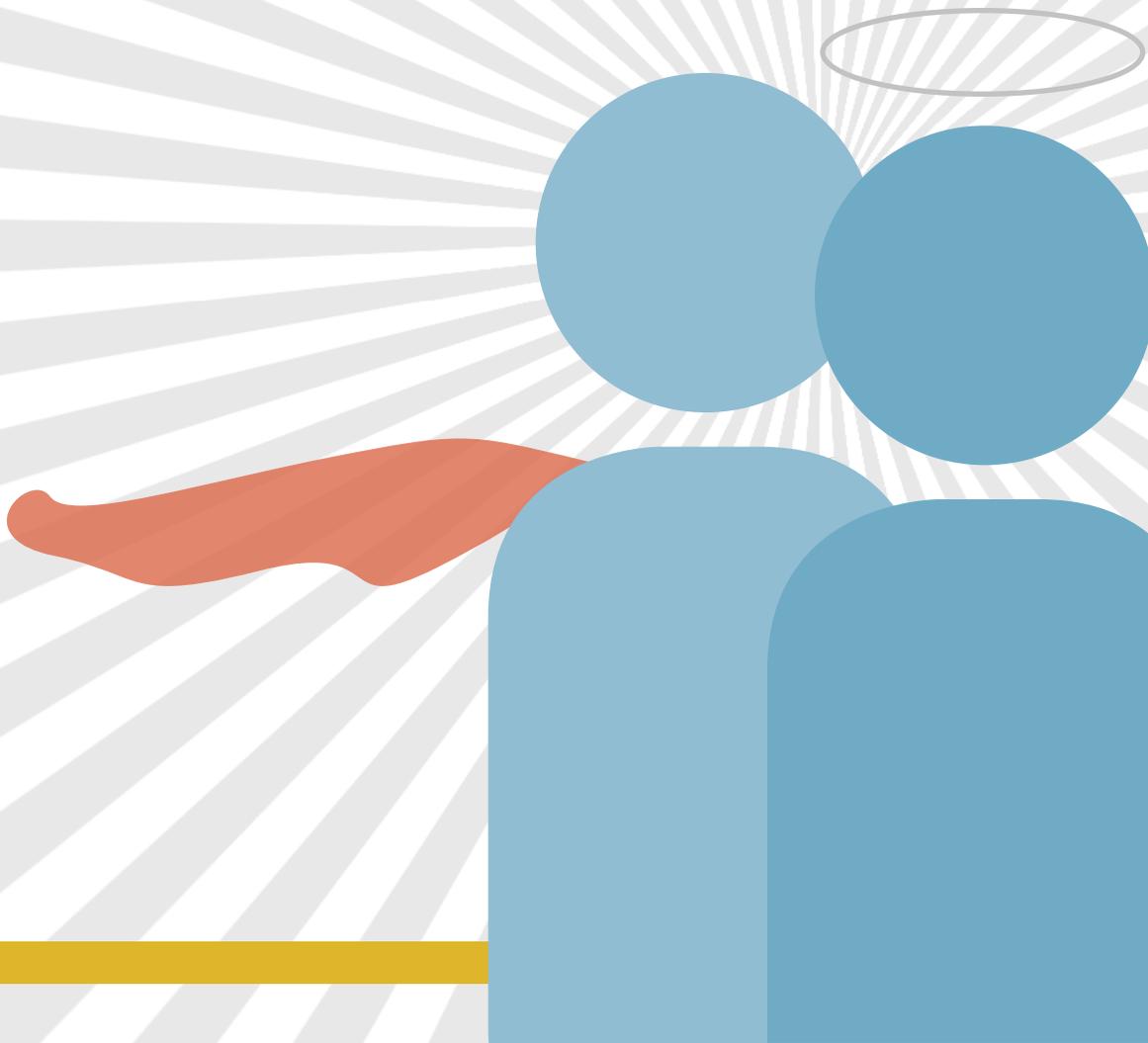
### Group Project:

Spend time tonight discussing the service project and how that experience affected your students.

### Prayer:

Have a time of “popcorn prayer,” where students have an opportunity to say a one-sentence prayer aloud as they feel comfortable. You may want to give them some direction, such as “Let’s spend some time praising God for the ways He has followed through with us,” or, “Let’s pray that God will use what we’ve learned through this series to help us love others better.” As the leader, offer the closing prayer after the students have finished.

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# NOTES

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Northland, A Church Distributed  
530 Dog Track Road  
Longwood, FL 32750

Phone 407-949-4000

[northlandchurch.net](http://northlandchurch.net)