



SHARING SCRIPTURE

Discover • Jesus • Together

Ministering Like Jesus

For use: August 16 - 22

Texts: Matthew 5:13, 14; Philippians 2:15; Mark 12:34; Ephesians 4:15; Matthew 4:23-25; Matthew 25:31-46

Furloughed British Airways pilot Helen Wilson found an opportunity to serve others since the COVID pandemic grounded her flights. She and other cabin crew members set up lounges in hospitals, offering tea and comfort to beleaguered staff. “People tend to come in before or after a shift to unwind,” she says. “Some want escapism and ask about the places we fly to. Others cry and break down.” Her story and others are told in a new children’s book, “Health Heroes: The People Who Took Care of the World.”

One such story is told by award-winning film director Hassan Akkad who moved to the UK as a refugee from Syria in 2012 and now disinfects wards at Whipps Cross hospital in east London. “London has been my home since leaving Syria, and the least I can do is make sure my neighbors and the amazing National Health Service staff are safe and sound,” he says.

Author Emily Sharratt explains: “The book conveys the diversity of our health heroes who do a much wider range of jobs than we might imagine. The NHS simply couldn’t operate without the immigrants who support it.... The idea behind the book is that children can find role models all around them.” [1]

This week’s lesson begins with this simple statement: “Jesus genuinely cared for people.” As we consider what it means to minister like Jesus—our ultimate role model—the foundation we build our ministries on must be to care for others. Ministry can never be fully effective if it’s motivated by selfish concerns or a need for recognition and compensation. True ministry is a calling, and those who minister like Jesus trust God to care for their needs while they care for the needs of others.

Health problems can be both a powerful motivator for people to seek help, and

an effective deterrent to hearing the gospel message. It's hard to focus on spiritual issues when you are wracked with pain.

Jesus often went into communities and immediately began healing peoples' illnesses, all the while following a simple formula for ministry: meet people and get to know them, show genuine concern and care for their needs, meet those needs, then extend the invitation to develop a saving relationship with Him. He removed physical and emotional pain so they could then hear His teaching about the kingdom and respond to the call to follow Him.

As important as it is to have a relevant prophetic message, it's equally important to develop personal relationships with our community of neighbors so they can willingly hear and respond to those messages. Jesus modeled a divinely inspired method of reaching people that we can effectively employ as long as we're motivated by a genuine care for others.

~Chuck Burkeen

[1] <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/childrens-book-pays-tribute-to-health-heroes-of-covid-19-pandemic/ar-BB17vJ24>

For Reflection

Connecting: If you could write a book honoring someone who reflected Jesus' love to you and demonstrated how Jesus ministers to people, who would you recognize? What aspect of his or her character especially stands out to you?

Sharing: Read Matthew 25:31-46. In which helping ministry do you feel especially called to participate?

1. Feeding the hungry
2. Clothing those in tatters
3. Housing the homeless
4. Caring for the sick
5. Visiting inmates
6. Other:

Applying: How well does your congregation follow Jesus' method of reaching people? Is there anything lacking in your process? What can you and your group do to help enhance your congregation's community outreach?

Valuing: Honestly evaluate your ministry motives. Do you have wounds from your past that hinder your ability to develop caring relationships? Find someone you can safely trust to share your thoughts with and pray for each other. Be prepared to convene virtually via Zoom, text, or phone call if necessary.

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