

# Volunteers as Good Samaritans

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By Roscoe Barnes III, Ph.D.



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**Text:** Luke 10: 25-37 (*New Living Translation*)

## **#GoodSamaritan**

We all know of people who were called Good Samaritans because of the good deeds they have done. You read about them every day in the news or on social media. For some, the title is undoubtedly deserving. But for others, there's a big question mark.

Today I want to talk about a few people here at Wilkinson County Correctional Facility (WCCF) who actually deserve to be called Good Samaritans. I'm speaking, of course, of our volunteers. And whether you know this or not, they have quite a few things in common with the man in our parable. Specifically, there are three important points that I want to address.

### **First, the Samaritan saw a need that was being ignored by others.**

When he saw this man in trouble, he acted with a sense of urgency. Moved with compassion, he went to the man – and not away from him. When he got up close and personal, he could see his pain. Sometimes, that's what it takes: We have to get up close and personal in order to make a difference. **SOME THINGS CANNOT BE DONE AT A DISTANCE.**

That is quite similar to what you have done. Thousands of people drive past this facility each year, but only a few have stopped to try and make a difference. Like the Samaritan, you saw a need that was being ignored by others. You knew that behind these walls were men in trouble.

You knew that somebody had fallen. Somebody was in need and somebody was standing in need of prayer.

**Second, the Samaritan provided help with no interest in being paid for his efforts.**

For him, it wasn't about the money; it was about the healing. It wasn't about prestige; it was about helping someone who needed it the most.

When an inmate was asked what he thought about volunteers, he had some interesting things to say. He said, "The staff may mean well, but they're paid to be here. The chaplain may do a good job, but he also picks up a pay check. But the volunteers, they come on their own and expect nothing in return. Now that says something."

I have to agree.

Over the last few years, you have made sacrifices, traveled long distances, and spent money out of your own pockets to help the offenders and staff here at WCCF. We can't thank you enough.

You have been tolerant of the moody and unpredictable behavior of the offenders; you have been patient with our lockdown status and our last-minute changes in schedules. You have donated food, literature, Bibles, CDs, and other resources without charging us a dime. You've used your own money to buy gas and stay in hotels just so you can minister to our offenders.

Just like the Samaritan, you have provided help with no interest in being paid for your efforts. And for that we are grateful.

**Third, the Samaritan made provisions for the man's future.**

He took the man to an inn -- a good place where he could recover and return to his home. He made it possible for the man to "re-enter," if you would, his society. He made it possible for him to return healthy and strong.

You, our volunteers, have done the same through your services. Through book club meetings and religious programs, you have cared for our offenders and made it possible for them to grow and re-enter society. You have made it possible for them to go home in better shape than they were when they left their respective communities.

And so today, we honor you. We acknowledge your hard work and your contributions as our Good Samaritans. We recognize you for your diligence and your vision. We commend you for your commitment and for your patience.

We thank you for being who you are and for doing what you do. God bless you.

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