



## Sermon: “Interrupted by God”

**Meditation Moments for Monday, August 3** – Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan after a lawyer asked an important question: **“Who is my neighbor?”** Rather than offering a definition, Jesus painted a picture. A man was traveling the steep, winding road from Jerusalem to Jericho, a route well known for thieves and danger. He was attacked, beaten, robbed, and left half dead beside the road. Soon a priest came by. He saw the man but passed on the other side. Later, a Levite also saw him and kept walking. We aren't told why they didn't stop. Perhaps they feared an ambush. Perhaps they were hurrying to fulfill religious duties. Whatever the reason, their schedules—or their concerns—became more important than the person lying before them. Then Jesus introduced the unexpected hero: a Samaritan. To His listeners, this would have been shocking. Jews and Samaritans had a long history of hostility, and few would have expected a Samaritan to show compassion to a Jewish stranger.

Yet he stopped. His compassion interrupted his journey. He treated the man's wounds with oil and wine, placed him on his own animal, took him to an inn, cared for him through the night, and paid for his continued recovery. His kindness cost him time, money, comfort, and convenience.

🔥 Jesus ended the story with a simple command: **“Go and do likewise.”** It's easy to think of serving God as something we schedule—a mission trip, a volunteer shift, or a planned act of kindness. But often the opportunities God gives us arrive unexpectedly. They look like a neighbor who needs help carrying groceries, a coworker who needs someone to listen to, or a friend whose phone call comes at an inconvenient moment. The Samaritan didn't wake up planning to rescue someone that day. He simply allowed compassion to change his plans. I wonder how often I ask God to use me while secretly hoping it won't interrupt my schedule. Perhaps following Jesus isn't just about inviting Him into our plans. Perhaps it's about allowing Him to interrupt them.

🔥 **Living It Out.** As you go about your day, ask God to help you notice the people in front of you. Is there someone you've been too busy to see? Be willing to stop, even if it means changing your plans. When has an unexpected interruption become an opportunity to show Christ's love?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, thank You for showing me what compassion looks like. Forgive me for the times I've been too busy to notice the needs around me. Give me eyes to see, a heart that is moved with compassion, and the courage to stop when You place someone in my path. May I never become so focused on my plans that I miss Your purpose. Amen.

**Tuesday, August 4** – Read **Mark 10:46–52**. Jesus was leaving Jericho on His final journey to Jerusalem. The road ahead would lead Him to the cross, where He would fulfill God's plan of salvation for the world. If anyone had reason to stay focused on the mission before Him, it was

Jesus. As He walked, a large crowd surrounded Him. Everyone wanted His attention. The disciples were likely trying to keep people moving, while those in the crowd hoped to catch a glimpse of the famous teacher. Sitting beside the road was a blind beggar named Bartimaeus. In Jesus' day, blindness often meant poverty and dependence. Unable to earn a living, many blind people survived only through the generosity of passing travelers. Bartimaeus had probably spent countless days listening to footsteps go by, wondering if anyone would notice him. When he heard that Jesus was passing, he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many in the crowd rebuked him and told him to be quiet. They saw him as a distraction from more important things. But Bartimaeus refused to give up. He cried out even louder. Mark then records one of the most beautiful sentences in Scripture: **"Jesus stopped."**



The Creator of the universe, surrounded by a crowd and walking toward the greatest sacrifice in history, stopped for one man. Before healing Bartimaeus, Jesus asked, "What do you want Me to do for you?" Jesus already knew the answer, but the question did something deeper. It gave Bartimaeus dignity. It showed him that he wasn't invisible. He was seen, heard, and loved. How often do we miss the people God places beside us because we're distracted by the crowd around us? Our phones buzz, our calendars fill, our responsibilities pile up, and we hurry from one task to the next. Yet someone nearby may simply need us to stop long enough to listen.



Jesus reminds us that ministry often begins by paying attention to one person. Perhaps someone is quietly crying out today—not with loud words, but through loneliness, grief, fear, or discouragement. Will we be too busy to hear them? Or will we stop? Today, ask God to help you slow down enough to truly listen. Give your full attention to someone. You may discover that your greatest ministry isn't found in what you say, but in your willingness to stop and hear another person's heart. Who in my life has been quietly asking for help while I've been too busy to notice?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, thank You for never being too busy for people. Help me to hear the voices that others overlook. Slow my hurried heart and teach me to listen with compassion. May I be willing to stop, just as You stopped for Bartimaeus. Amen.

**Wednesday, August 5** – Read **Mark 10:13–16**. As Jesus traveled from town to town teaching and healing, people constantly sought His attention. Religious leaders questioned Him, crowds followed Him, and His disciples tried to manage the demands on His time. One day, parents began bringing their children to Jesus so He could bless them. To the disciples, this seemed like an interruption. Surely Jesus had more important work to do. In first-century Jewish culture, children were loved, but they held little social status. They couldn't contribute, lead, or advance anyone's agenda. The disciples probably believed they were protecting Jesus from unnecessary distractions. But Jesus saw the moment very differently. Mark tells us that Jesus was **indignant**—one of the strongest emotional responses recorded in the Gospels. He was deeply troubled that anyone would keep children from coming to Him. He gathered them into His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them. The interruption became the ministry.



Jesus wasn't interrupted by the children; He welcomed them. In doing so, He reminded His disciples that God's kingdom isn't built on status, influence, or productivity. It is built on love, humility, and open arms. It's easy for us to measure our days by what we accomplish. We hurry from one responsibility to another, convinced that efficiency equals faithfulness. Yet some of God's most important work happens when we pause long enough to make someone else feel seen and valued.



Children have a way of interrupting our schedules. So do aging parents, lonely neighbors, grieving friends, and those who simply need someone to be present. Perhaps these moments aren't distractions at all. Perhaps they're invitations to reflect the welcoming heart of Jesus. Today, make room for someone who can't offer you anything in return. Put away

your phone. Sit a little longer. Listen without rushing. Offer the gift of your presence. Who might God be inviting me to welcome instead of viewing as an interruption?

**Prayer:** *Father, thank You for welcoming me into Your family with grace and love. Help me to see people through Your eyes and to make room for those the world often overlooks. May my life reflect the open arms of Jesus. Amen.*

**Thursday, August 6** – Read **Mark 2:1–12**. Jesus had returned to Capernaum, and word spread quickly that He was home. Before long, the house was overflowing with people. Every doorway and window was crowded as neighbors gathered to hear Him teach. There was no room left—not even outside the door. Four men arrived carrying a paralyzed friend on a mat. They had one purpose: to bring him to Jesus. But when they reached the house, the crowd blocked their way. Most people would have turned around. After all, they had tried. The house was full, the way was impossible, and perhaps they could come back another day. Instead, these friends found another way. They climbed the outside staircase to the roof, dug through the layers of mud and thatch, and carefully lowered their friend into the room below. Imagine the surprise of those inside as dust began to fall from the ceiling! Their determination interrupted everyone's plans—including Jesus' teaching. Yet Jesus wasn't annoyed. He was moved by their faith.

 Mark tells us, "**When Jesus saw their faith...**" Notice that it wasn't only the faith of the paralyzed man that caught Jesus' attention. It was the faith of the friends who refused to let obstacles keep them from bringing someone they loved into His presence. Serving others isn't always convenient. Sometimes it means changing our plans, finding a creative solution, or making an extra effort when the easiest response would be to give up. Love rarely says, "I tried." Love says, "**Let's find another way.**" There will be moments when someone needs more than our good intentions. They will need our persistence. They may need us to pray again, visit again, encourage again, or simply refuse to walk away when circumstances become difficult.

 Those four friends never spoke a recorded word in Scripture. They preached their sermon with their actions. Sometimes the greatest gift we can give another person is our willingness to carry them when they cannot carry themselves. Think of someone who is struggling physically, emotionally, or spiritually. Ask God to show you one practical way you can help carry their burden this week. Your encouragement may be the very thing that helps them reach Jesus. Who has God placed in my life that needs someone to keep showing up for them?

**Prayer:** *Lord Jesus, thank You for the people who have carried me through difficult seasons. Give me that same kind of faithful love for others. When obstacles arise, help me not to give up, but to trust You and find another way. Use me to help carry someone closer to You today. Amen.*

**Friday, August 7** – Read **Ruth 2:1–16**. The book of Ruth takes place during the time of the Judges, a period marked by uncertainty and spiritual decline in Israel. Into that difficult season stepped Ruth—a young widow from Moab. After the death of her husband, she chose to leave her homeland and follow her mother-in-law, Naomi, to Bethlehem. They arrived with very little, and Ruth's only means of providing food was to glean leftover grain behind the harvesters. God had instructed landowners to leave the edges of their fields unharvested so the poor, widows, foreigners, and others in need could gather what remained. It was a beautiful provision, but gleaning was still hard work. Ruth would have spent long hours bending, gathering, and hoping there would be enough to feed herself and Naomi. When Boaz arrived at his fields, he could have focused only on the harvest. There were workers to oversee and business to manage. Instead, he noticed Ruth. He asked, "Who is that young woman?" That simple question changed everything.



Boaz learned of Ruth's faithfulness to Naomi and immediately took steps to protect her. He invited her to stay in his fields, instructed his workers to watch over her, shared his meal with her, and even told his harvesters to leave extra grain behind for her to gather. Boaz didn't simply fulfill the law. He lived with generosity. How many people pass through our days unnoticed because we're focused on our work, our responsibilities, or our own concerns?



Sometimes serving God begins with something as simple as paying attention. A smile. A conversation. A word of encouragement. A question that lets someone know they matter. We may never realize how much a small act of kindness means to someone who feels unseen. Like Boaz, we have the opportunity each day to notice what others overlook. Pay close attention today. Is there someone who seems new, lonely, or forgotten? Take the first step. Introduce yourself, ask their name, or simply let them know they are seen. **Who might be waiting for someone to notice them today?**

**Prayer:** Father, thank You for seeing me even when I feel overlooked. Open my eyes to the people around me. Help me notice those who may feel invisible and respond with kindness, generosity, and compassion. May others experience Your love because I chose to pay attention. Amen.

**Saturday, August 8 – Read 1 Kings 17:8–16.** Sometimes God's interruptions come when we are already overwhelmed. They don't arrive at convenient moments, when we have extra time, extra resources, or a clear plan. They come when we are tired, uncertain, and wondering how we will get through. The widow of Zarephath knew that kind of uncertainty. She lived during a devastating drought, a time when food was scarce and survival was a daily struggle. When the prophet Elijah came to her and asked for water and bread, she must have wondered why God would ask even more of her when she had so little to give. She told Elijah the truth: she had only a handful of flour and a little oil left. She was preparing one final meal for herself and her son, expecting that soon they would have nothing left. But then God interrupted her plans. Through Elijah, God invited her to trust—not in what she could see, but in the One who could provide. The widow had a choice: hold tightly to the little she had or open her hands and believe that God was faithful.



Her act of trust did not immediately change her circumstances. The drought did not instantly end. The empty cupboards did not suddenly overflow. But day after day, God provided exactly what she needed. The flour and oil lasted—not because she had enough, but because God was enough. Many of us understand the fear of not having enough. Not enough time. Not enough strength. Not enough answers. Not enough resources. We often want God to show us the whole plan before we take the next step. But faith rarely works that way. The widow's story reminds us that God often meets us in the middle of our uncertainty. He does not always remove the interruption, but He promises to be present within it. The thing that feels like an impossible demand may become the very place where we discover God's faithfulness.



Trust does not mean we understand everything God is doing. Trust means we believe that God is working even when we cannot yet see the outcome. Today, consider what you are holding tightly because you are afraid there will not be enough. What would it look like to place that concern into God's hands? God may not provide everything exactly as we expect, but He is faithful to provide what we need for each day. Where is God inviting me to trust Him instead of relying only on what I can see?

**Prayer:** Gracious God, when I am afraid of what lies ahead, remind me that You are already there. Help me release my need to control every outcome and teach me to trust Your provision. Give me the faith of the widow of Zarephath—to offer what I have, even when it feels small, believing that You are faithful. Meet me in my uncertainties and help me recognize Your presence in every interruption. Amen.