

“Go and Do Likewise”?
**The Parable of the Good Samaritan and
the Challenge of Public Ethics**

Introduction

A “Prophetic” Mode of Social Analysis

- *Interconnectedness of social life*
- *Listening to the poor, the weak, the victims*
- *An appeal to religious and spiritual resources*

A Potent Parable

- *Far-reaching cultural impact*
- *Influence on evolution of western law*

Law, Morality and Religion

- *Relationship between law and morality*
- *Morality and law in the Bible*
- *A dialectical relationship*

What About bad Samaritans?

- *Why did the priest and Levite ignore the victim?*
- *No general duty to rescue in Anglo-American law*
- *Political and popular clamour*

Resistance to Samaritan laws

- *Civil-law jurisdictions*
- *Procedural or pragmatic objections*
- *Philosophical objections*
 - *Proper function of penal law*
 - *Personal freedom of supreme importance*
 - *Positive duties of beneficence*

In Support of Samaritan Laws

- *Fears exaggerated*
- *Causing harm vs permitting harm?*
- *Upholding human rights*

Conclusion

- *An illustration of dialogical method*
- *Biblical law*
- *Legislating morality?*
- *Symbolic role of Samaritan legislation*