



Luke 10:25-37 New International Version (NIV)

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus.

“Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

²⁷ He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” ²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” ²⁹ But he

wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from

Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii^[c] 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.’ ³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” ³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

This parable is absolutely one of my most favorite parables in the Bible. Remember that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly message. Let's just launch right into the text and flesh it out to see not only what this means, but to discover how we can let it soak into our souls and into our lives.

The broad message of the parable is that as Christ-Followers we are **TO LOVE OTHERS AS WE LOVE OURSELVES**. The parable then gives clues as to what sorts of attitudes keep us from loving others, and it gives clues as to how much we are expected to do for others.



The parable starts with a lawyer (one of my favorite people in the Bible). The text says that he was "testing" Jesus but there is no indication that it was a hostile encounter. He was an expert in the Mosaic Law and I believe he truly was asking Jesus how to be saved. He asks, "Rabbi, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The wording of the text shows me a man who sincerely was asking how he could live his

life in a way that was pleasing to God. Jesus certainly could have addressed the belief necessary to be saved, but instead Jesus pointed the man to a story that exhibited the kind of supernatural love that a disciple is to show with ANYONE with whom they make contact.

The account reads like a law school class in which the professor uses the Socratic method to ask questions of the lawyer to assist the lawyer in finding the truth in the story. He lays the predicate asking the lawyer, "What is written in the law and how do you interpret it?" The lawyer then quotes the Shema Israel. The end of it reads as follows, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' (Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18) The lawyer, feeling the command was too broad, wanted to narrow it to qualify whom he needed to love and he wanted to quantify to what level that love needed to be extended. The term neighbor in Greek means "someone who is near". The Jewish concept of neighbor is "someone with whom you have an association". Instead of answering the question exactly, Jesus tells him this wonderful story. The story sets forth that true love is not a feeling, but an action to anyone God might put in your path.

The parable tells a story of a man traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho. On the way robbers take everything he has and they beat him up. One interesting point to me is the path he is taking is the route Jews took to get to the Galilee while avoiding Samaria, and there ends up being a Samaritan in the story anyway who ends up being the hero of the story.



The Priest - the Pastor or the Mature Believer (people that keep their distance) - "too holy to be helpful"

The first person to see the beat up traveler is a priest. The priest surely knew of the love that God required of those who serve Him. He showed no love or compassion, but just got over to the other side of the road as quickly as he could. His strategy was to "not get involved". A person in his position knew what God required. He was familiar with the prophet Micah's call to "love mercy". The priest had no

mercy in his heart. Unfortunately for him, God's call to love others did not include doing anything. It was all words and no action. An analogy here might be the pastor, parish priest, or Christian who just keeps their distance from what looks like hard work or a tough situation.

This person in the story didn't even want to know what the trouble was. He was just intent on looking on at a safe distance. We selfishly tell ourselves, "I don't want to get too involved in the Christian life because it's going to be costly to me." I have told you over and over that loving

people is costly. It will cost you your time, your talents, and your treasure. The person that won't get involved is too holy to be helpful. This person doesn't want to be touched by the problems in the church. They might be Biblically knowledgeable, but they are of no use to the Kingdom of God. If we can stay removed from others then it is easy to overlook their pain, suffering, and needs. If we remain removed and uninvolved we can avoid being inconvenienced, hurt, or having something cost us our time, talents and treasure.



The Levite - The "good Christian" who is "curious but uninvolved"

The Levite was a step down from the priest. He was a religious person who served in the temple. He knew all of the levitical laws and he knew all about the form of worship. His response was similar to that of the priest. He quickly moved to avoid the beat of traveler, but he went over to check out the problem first. He knew the law, but didn't do it. This is analogous to Christians who know the Bible well. Perhaps they have all of their Bible doctrine down precisely, but they've missed the whole part about love. Love isn't something you learn like knowledge. Love is something you do. I once was in a church that seemed to worship learning Bible doctrine, but I never heard a word about applying any of it to my life. A Christian that spends all their time learning, and none of their time doing is like a cabbage.....all head.

The "Levite" is the Christian who is "super interested" in knowing about the needs going on in the church or in the world around them, but they are uninvolved. They're curious, but they are uninvolved. Like the Levite, they may even be interested in what's in it for them in the church. The Levite had a job in the temple, but he wasn't interested in helping others. The "Levite" may be a Christian, but they are not there financially, physically, or in any way contributive to the pain and problems of others.

I believe the Levite might have been worse than the priest. The story says that the Levite went over and checked out the problem, but then he just crossed the street and avoided having to do anything. The Bible says he "*went over and looked at the man*" ([Luke 10:32b GNT](#)) before passing him by. Really his response is worse than the priest because the Levite made himself aware and then did nothing. In the Priest's attitude we "see" the problem from a distance and pretend it isn't there. In the Levite's response, we acknowledge the need through our curiosity, but we don't do anything to help. We are in essence saying, "Sorry, I can't be bothered. I've got more important things to do."



The Good Samaritan - The person who "gets close enough to care"

Jesus picks the unexpected person to do the good deed. He chose a Samaritan for a bit of a shock factor. Jesus is saying that mercy takes action when others take off. Mercy isn't afraid to get involved and to get its hands dirty. Jesus is calling every one of his followers to have the attitude of the Good Samaritan. It's interesting too to realize that the Good Samaritan just helped with what he had: wine to disinfect, oil to soothe the pain, and a little pocket change. He let God use the little he had.

The Samaritans were hated by the Jews as being not up to snuff spiritually. They were second class believers in the eyes of the Jews. This is Jesus destroying the paradigm of what the young lawyer considered to be a holy and righteous person. In all of His teachings, Jesus goes straight to the heart of the matter. He goes straight to motives. This shows how God looks into the heart to determine what is true holiness.

The Good Samaritan had all of the right motives and he put his faith into practice. He went above and beyond what was expected of a second-class Samaritan. He helped the injured man, and did so at his own expense. The Bible tells us, "*Our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action*" (1 John 3:18 GNT) Jesus deliberately chose a Samaritan to be the hero in this story, because the Jews hated the Samaritans and felt they weren't the "right kind of people". Mercy isn't just about helping people you like or helping people who are just like you. Mercy is about helping people no matter who they are, what they look like, or where they come from.

Jesus is reminding all who read this parable that God is not so interested in form as He is in substance. This thinking is echoed later in James, the brother of Jesus, teaching that "faith without works is dead". (James 2:14-26) The pastor who has no works has a dead faith. The Christian who has no works has a dead faith. True faith and belief produces works. Some will criticize this sermon and say that it sounds too much like a works based theology. They are the lawyer asking, "who is my neighbor?" Works do not save us, but if we are saved, God looks for works. Ephesians 2:8-9 clearly say that we are saved by grace, but Ephesians 2:10 gives the purpose for which we were saved. ¹⁰ *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.* (Ephesians 2:10 NKJV)

APPLICATION

Because the good man was a Samaritan, Jesus is making a strong contrast between those who know the Bible inside out and those who live the Bible inside out. Jesus now asks the lawyer if he can apply the lesson of this story to his own life. Again, He asks a simple question "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" (Luke 10:36) The lawyer's answer is worth looking at. He can't bring himself to say the words "The Good

Samaritan", so he only says "He who showed mercy". He hated Samaritans so much he couldn't even say the word. Jesus didn't get into a further argument about Samaritans, He just said, "go and do likewise." Jesus was saying, "Go out there and live out your faith!"

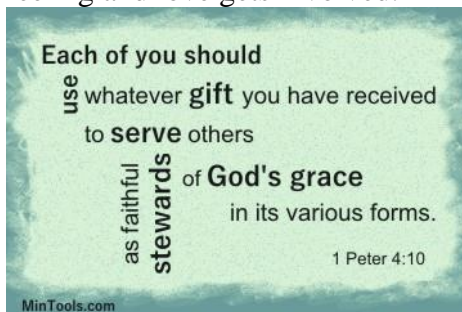
The lessons of the Parable of the Good Samaritan are three-fold: (1) we are to set aside our prejudices and show love and compassion for others. (2) Our neighbor is anyone we encounter; we are all creatures of the Creator and we are to love all of mankind as Jesus has taught. (3) Keeping the law in its entirety with the intent to save ourselves is an impossible task; we need a Savior, and this is Jesus.¹

Practical Steps for you to be a Good Samaritan:



“Never walk away from someone who deserves help; your hand is God’s hand for that person. Never tell your neighbors to wait until tomorrow if you can help them now” (Proverbs 3:27-28 The Message/GNT).

1) Love is something you do. Love doesn't just say, "I feel sorry for what happened to that guy. Isn't it a shame? Isn't that too bad?" Love goes beyond feeling and love gets involved.



2) Use what you have. The Good Samaritan dressed the man's wounds with wine and oil. Why? That's what he had on his donkey. Use the resources God put in your hands to minister to those in need. The parable tells us that he dressed the man with bandages. So where did the bandages come from? There wasn't a CVS nearby. The Good Samaritan obviously made the bandages from his own clothes.

The Good Samaritan did what he could with what he had at that particular moment.

The world around you is full of wounded people. There are people with hurts, habits, and hangups and they are in need of the grace of Jesus. They may not be wounded physically, but they are wounded emotionally and spiritually. Do what you can to alleviate the suffering.

Jesus tells us to love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind; and to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is not a suggestion. This is a commandment. Jesus says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." Like the Good Samaritan who showed mercy, go and do likewise.

Let us pray.

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/parable-Good-Samaritan.html>

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.