
... DO LIKEWISE

BIBLE STUDY - The Good Samaritan - Luke 10:25-37

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.”

Getting Started

The parable of the Good Samaritan is well known, but often we forget the question that was asked that led to Jesus telling the parable. What is the question that was asked?

Jesus then asks the man to answer his own question and tells him that his response is correct. He says, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.” Is it possible for us to do this and inherit eternal life? To love the Lord with all our soul, strength and mind and to love our neighbours as ourselves?

Looking deeper

In what way do you think the man wanted to justify himself (v29)?

Read vs 30. The road between Jerusalem and Jericho was very steep and it was treacherous because of the many places for robbers to hide. Jesus’ listeners would have been able to imagine this scene quite easily.

Read vs 31. The Priests were very important in the community and deeply knowledgeable about the law. Perhaps the priest could have used the excuse that he didn’t want to touch the man because he might have been dead, and therefore if he had touched the man he would have been unclean and would not be able to serve God in the temple. Read Exodus 23:4-5. What’s the problem with the Priest’s excuse?

Read vs 32. The Levite was from the tribe that was responsible for the spiritual leadership of the people. If anyone knew the law, the Levite did. And yet, what did he do?

Read vs 33-35. Jesus now skips all the other layers of Jewish social structure and goes to the very edge of society... the Samaritan. List the actions of the Samaritan:

In verses 36 & 37 the question “Who is my neighbour?” is not answered. Another question is asked... “What does a loving neighbour look like?” What do you think?

Think about these statements:

- The Samaritan went to the injured man, he did not wait for him to ask for help.
- The Samaritan provided generous care, not just the minimum required.
- The Samaritan took time out from his own life to provide the care that was needed.
- The Samaritan did not assess whether the man deserved his care, nor condemn him for getting himself into difficulty.

Read the story again, but this time imagine what it would have been like if Jesus had told the story about a Samaritan who was beaten and a Jewish man who stopped to help him. How would that have changed the impact on the listeners?

Where to from here?

Don't forget that the Samaritans were despised by the Jewish people. Jesus answer to the man's question, "Who is my neighbour?" is an answer to the question, "So how far do I have to go out of my social comfort zone when I think of who my neighbour might be?"

In *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just*, Timothy Keller writes:

"Jesus was giving a radical answer to the question, *What does it mean to love your neighbour? What is the definition of "love"?* Jesus answered that by depicting a man meeting material, physical, and economic needs through deeds. Caring for people's material and economic needs is not an option for Jesus. He refused to allow the law expert to limit the implications of the command to love. He said it meant being sacrificially involved with the vulnerable, just as the Samaritan risked his life by stopping on the road. But Jesus refuses to let us limit not only how we love, but who we love. It is typical for us to think of our neighbours as people of the same social class and means (cf Luke 14:12). We instinctively tend to limit for whom we exert ourselves. We do it for people like us, and for people whom we like. Jesus will have none of that. By depicting a Samaritan helping a Jew, Jesus could not have found a more forceful way to say that anyone at all in need - regardless of race, politics, class, and religion - is your neighbour. Not everyone is your brother or sister in the faith, but everyone is your neighbour, and you must love your neighbour."

Jesus final response is "Go and do likewise." How can we obey this command?

What stories have you heard of Christians being like the Good Samaritan?

What is one way that you or your youth group could be more like the Good Samaritan?

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