

Luke 10.25-37

Whose Neighbor am I?

One of BEST KNOWN & BEST LOVED stories of JESUS the Master TEACHER
GOOD SAMARITAN – IDEAL Man – All of us Should BE a GOOD Samaritan
PROBLEM > Story told because we CANNOT BE like this Good Samaritan

1. The Trap: *reasoning out his Self-Justification*

a. Protecting the Flock And behold, a certain lawyer stood up...Luke 10.25 ASV

NO SCENE Shift from Jesus' Words to RETURNING, Rejoicing MISSIONERS
UNNAMED Lawyer > MONITORING Jesus' Fidelity to LAW as he Sees It

Jesus: "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because *you have hidden these things from the wise and learned*, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure....Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what *you see*" Luke 10.21,23

OFFENDED by UNLETTERED Rabbi > Lowers God's Bar for Rag-Tag Galileans
NO PLACE in HEAVEN for WISE and LEARNED LAWYER like him?? Huh??

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy?.." Luke 5.21

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus
Luke 6.7

b. Posing as Faithful v. 25 "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Great KNOWLEDGE of God's LAW – But NO ASSURANCE of God's LOVE
VERSE is Key to Understanding Story > JUSTIFY Himself – IMPOSSIBLE!

NOT – Asking about a WAY OF LIFE but a WAY TO Life – What must I DO?

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil. Jeremiah 13.23

no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law Romans 3.20

DO for Eternal Life? WROOONG! Even THINKING You can Do It is Wrong

c. Parroting the Fathers EXPERT in God's Law > yet BLINDED!

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

Argumentum ad hominem 'argument to the man': LAWYER what does Law Say?

Jesus RECLAIMS the Agenda > Sends Bible Scholar BACK TO the Bible

Jesus did NOT have ONE PLAN or SET of ANSWERS for ALL SEEKERS

That Jesus wrote prescriptions rather than offer patent medicine should caution teachers and preachers about hasty generalizations and uncritical transfer of Jesus' words to new situations. Fred Craddock

v. 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.' "

PROFOUND Connection of KEY Vss of Hebrew Scriptures NOT Original IDEA

Great Answer! Right Answer! But NOT HIS Answer > Rabbi SO & SO SAID...

1st C JUDAISM > Salvation = Good Works + God's Blessing // USA TODAY

Great is Torah (*the Law of Moses*), for it gives to them that practice it, life in this world and in the world to come. Mishnah *Pirke Aboth* 6.7

d. Parading his Foolishness

Trap Set - Thought Jesus would say something against the Holy Law

v. 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

Jesus SPRINGS a REVERSE TRAP - Honor Law?! Then OBEY IT!

The love that God requires is perfect love – not just once, as the lawyer seemed to think, but all the time. To love God truly with heart, soul, mind, and strength is to love him with everything we are and have. To love our neighbors properly is to love them with the same intense interest and constant concern that we have for ourselves. But who has ever loved in such a wholehearted and supremely selfless way?

Philip Ryken

At THIS Point > Lawyer should have FALLEN on KNEES – Begged for MERCY

“Lord, how can a sinner like me ever think of keeping your holy and perfect law?!”

v. 29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Are we to treat outrageous sinners and vicious tyrants and blasphemous heretics as our neighbors and love them, along with all others, as ourselves? Or may we with good common sense take the commandment as meaning by ‘neighbor’ the people in our family, or street, or synagogue, or at a stretch our fellow-nationals, but no more?

David Gooding

LAWYER – Doing what we often do – TRYING to SAVE FACE!

ALL STARTED WHEN HE: v. 25stood up to test Jesus.

WHO is my Neighbor = WHO do I HAVE to Love? > SELECTIVITY

"EXPERT in LAW": ASK A QUESTION But ALREADY KNOW ANSWER

GOOD Lawyer – looking for LOOP HOLE in the Law – How to GET OUT of It!

2. The Twist: *rejoicing in the Savior's Justification*

Want justification by Law? Here is how EXTREME the Law's Demands Are:

v. 30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

Jerusalem 2500 feet ABOVE Sea Level / Jericho 800 feet BELOW Sea Level

Jerusalem to Jericho > 27 kms - 1000 mts Descent > “The Bloody Way”

STEEP ROAD - ROCKY, DESOLATE Many Caves for Robbers to Hide

ANONYMOUS Man > No Name, No Clothes, No ID > Just MAN in NEED

REALISTIC STORY - not called a Parable - COULD HAVE OCCURED

a. Too Busy to be Neighbors

vs. 31,32 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

OFTEN When story is TOLD today – Christian Listeners – BOO & HISS 2 GUYS!

Jesus LISTENERS would have CHEERED these HEROES – Religious Leaders!

BEHAVIOR was NOT SHOCKING – though NOT COMMENDABLE

WHO of US would Not HURRY PAST Such POTENTIALLY Dangerous Situation?

Road was known as DANGEROUS

Maybe fallen man was TRICK

What could they do in REMOTE AREA

Gone from home for one month EAGER TO GET HOME

When they saw the victim, theirs was a choice between a duty and a duty. Fred Craddock

SAME is TRUE for Us Very OFTEN > See such People on ROAD

We not on COUNTRY STROLL – Mindless Wandering – Going Somewhere Impt

AND we are ALREADY LATE! – Put Down our HEAD and PRESS ON BY!

PRINCETON Univ. – SOCIOLOGICAL Study – Used P. SEMINARY Students
 INVITED to TEACH Group from THIS Passage – Near Door of Mtg Room
 MAN lying in Pain on GROUND: Nearly ALL Seminarians did NOT Stop & Help
 THIS Fall Jason will be Student at P.S. > their STATISTICS will IMPROVE!

SPECULATION – WHY Religious Leaders did NOTHING for Wounded Man?
 Get themselves UNCLEAN? NOT LIKELY

1. Traveling FROM Jerusalem – any TEMPLE Duties would be OVER NOW
2. Perhaps BECAUSE they were Priests!

Heretics should be pushed into the ditch and not pulled out. Rabbinic Saying

NO SPECULATION or HINT Given about their MOTIVES > Matter of FACT

STARK Reality – They just DO NOTHING!

When am I a bad neighbor? When I avoid people in obvious need. When I come up
 with flimsy excuses for refusing to get involved with someone who has a legitimate
 claim on my love.
 Philip Ryken

b. Too 'Bad' to be a Neighbor MASTER STORY TELLER – Shock & Surprise

Likely EXPECT – Good Jewish Layman – More Righteous than Corrupt Priests

v. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw
 him, he took pity on him.

SAMARITAN!?! > can HEAR the GASP of Crowd > NEVER EXPECTED him!

SAMARITAN - LEGAL DEFINITION: "a sinner and an unrighteous person"

LAWYER - and any other Jewish Listener - EXPECTED WORST

Evil Samaritan would probably FINISH OFF the Wounded, Helpless Jew

a Samaritan village...did not welcome him (Jesus), because he was heading for Jerusalem
Luke 9.52,53

Ceremonially: UNCLEAN / Socially: OUTCAST / Religiously: HERETIC

Jews do not associate with Samaritans John 4.9

WORST INSULT - Jews called Jesus a “Samaritan”: The Jews answered him (*Jesus*), "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?"
John 8.48

2. OUT of PLACE > What is Samaritan doing on road FROM JERUSALEM?

3. No Religious TITLE > Just TRAVELING MERCHANT (Indonesia)

vs. 34,35 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins 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.'

CARE OFFERED > EXAGGERATION – Way BEYOND what Anyone Expects

A Tea-Party Republican fell among thieves, and a Homosexual Cross-Dresser came and helped him; a Conservative Evangelical fell among thieves and an Islamic Terrorist came and rescued him, go and do likewise!

- Puts self at GREAT RISK for a STRANGER in a very DANGEROUS Area
- Gives EXCESSIVE Amounts of TIME and MONEY – Not FAMILY or FRIEND
- Makes NO PLANS to be REPAYED – does not Leave any CONTACT Info
- Enters INN – Place of Potential DANGER in those Days
- OPENS an UNMONITORED Expense Account with UNKNOWN Innkeeper

Lawyer - Priest & Levite ALL KNEW LAW AND ITS DEMANDS

Samaritan - Little or No knowledge of True God - FULLFILLED LAW

Why?

Social Custom? - BETTER FOR HIM TO KILL THE JEW

Wanted to Look Good? - WHO WOULD NOTICE

Sense of Guilt or Duty? - CANNOT EVOKE TRUE MERCY

v. 33 "he took pity on him" HEART OF JESUS

c. To be a Neighbor

v. 36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

QUESTION Now > Who ACTED as a Neighbor? – NOT who IS my Neighbor

NOW who PROVED to BE a NEIGHBOR?

Neighbor > Something we ARE – Not Something we HAVE > WAY OF LIFE!

One cannot define one's neighbor; one can only be a neighbor. Heinrich Greeven

Be a neighbor, and the moment you are neighborly, you will find your neighbor in the man who needs your help
G. Campbell Morgan

v. 37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

LAWYER Now ANSWERS his OWN Question > What to DO for Eternal Life?

A LOT – A LOT MORE than any Selfish, Busy, Prejudiced Human could Ever DO!

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6.8

MERCY IN ACTION / COMPASSION

Mother Theresa & Sisters of Charity - Mercy to despised outcasts of Calcutta
 NOT BASED ON their Worthiness // GOAL - MAKE them WORTHY

Be merciful just as your Father is merciful!

Luke 6.36

Mercy is SPONTANEOUS

Not planned or calculated - INSTINCT, REFLEX natural response to need

Mercy is LIFE GIVING

Mercy of Samaritan - SAVED LIFE OF WOUNDED MAN

Giver himself gains life - KNOWING LAW / NO ETERNAL LIFE

Mercy is FOR EVERYONE

Tend to think some DESERVE MISERY - Foolish waste of Money

EVEN ENEMIES DESERVE OUR MERCY - Samaritan helps Jew

Mercy is MOTIVATION FOR MINISTRY

Do not do these things to gain eternal life, but because when you were beaten,
 bloodied, and left for dead, Jesus came and showed mercy to you. Philip Ryken

d. Too Big to be Just a Neighbor

	Part 1	Part 2
Lawyer's Motive Exposed	v. 25	v. 29
Lawyer's Question	v. 25	v. 29
Jesus Answer and Counter-question	v. 26	vs. 30-36
Lawyer's 'Right' Answer	v. 27	v. 37a
Jesus Final	v. 28	v. 37b

What is wrong with this conversation? We have two good questions, two good answers, and two men who agree. What else could one ask? All kinds of things are wrong. Asking questions for the purpose of gaining advantage over another is not a kingdom exercise. Neither is asking questions with no intention of implementing the answers...Rather, Jesus said, "Go and do." Fred Craddock

VARIOUS ATTITUDES

To the expert in the law, the wounded man was a subject to discuss

To the robbers, the wounded man was someone to use and exploit

To the religious men, the wounded man was someone to be avoided

To the innkeeper, the wounded man was a customer to serve for a fee

To the Samaritan, the wounded man was a human being worth caring for

To Jesus, all of them - and all of us - are worth dying for

Jesus – the GOOD SAMARITAN?? – this Gives him TOO LITTLE PRAISE!

MERCY is Greater > We were not DYING – We were DEAD in Sin

DISTANCE is Greater > NOT Crossing ROAD > Highest Heaven to Earth

COST is Greater > Not a Day’s Travel & Few Coins > Very LIFE upon CROSS

Eternal life is something inherited. And to receive an inheritance, you need to be an heir...It is only when by God’s grace we have become the right sort of people – his people, by the new birth – that we begin to do the right sort of things. Michael Wilcock

In Jesus we EXPERIENCE MERCY

By Jesus we are TRANSFORMED by Mercy

With Jesus we are called to GIVE MERCY

ETERNAL LIFE - CANNOT BE BOUGHT - COSTS US EVERYTHING

African man goes into shop - sees something very wonderful - must have

Owner “you can’t buy it, too expensive” / Man “I must have it”

Owner - How much in pocket? Bicycle? House? Things? Family? Self?

ETERNAL LIFE - CANNOT BE BOUGHT - COSTS US EVERYTHING

Luke 10

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 fell into the hands of 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, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35. The next day he took out two silver coins 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."