

Love Community Baptist Church



Wednesday Night Virtual Bible Study

Dr. Michael O. Oyedokun II, Senior Pastor/Founder
pastor@lovecommunitybc.org
Wednesday, October 16, 2024

THE PARABLE SERIES

“The Good Samaritan” – Luke 10:29-37

[Luk 10:29-37 KJV] 29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? 30 And Jesus answering said, A certain [man] went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded [him], and departed, leaving [him] half dead. 31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked [on him], and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion [on him], 34 And went to [him], and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave [them] to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. 36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? 37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan is precipitated by and in answer to a question posed to Jesus by a lawyer. In this case the lawyer would have been an expert in the Mosaic Law and not a court lawyer of today. The lawyer's question was, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25). This question provided Jesus with an opportunity to define what His disciples' relationship should be to their neighbors. The text says that the scribe (lawyer) had put the question to Jesus as a test, but the text does not indicate that there was hostility in the question. He could have simply been seeking information. The wording of the question does, however, give us some insight into where the scribe's heart was spiritually. He was making the assumption that man must do something to obtain eternal life. Although this could have been an opportunity for Jesus to discuss salvation issues, He chose a different course and focuses on our relationships and what it means to love.

But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" The lawyer measured himself against both commands. He figured that he obeyed the first command well enough, but his keeping of the second commandment depended on how one defined "neighbor."

In verse 28, Jesus affirms that the lawyer's answer is correct. Jesus' reply tells the scribe that he has given an orthodox (scripturally proper) answer, but then goes on in verse 28 to tell him that this kind of love requires more than an emotional feeling; it would also include orthodox practice; he would need to "practice what he preached." The scribe was an educated man and realized that he could not possibly keep that law, nor would he have necessarily wanted to. There would always be people in his life that he could not love. Thus, he tries to limit the law's command by limiting its parameters and asked the question "who is my neighbor?" The word "neighbor" in the Greek means "someone who is near," and in the Hebrew it means "someone that you have an association with." This interprets the word in a limited sense, referring to a fellow Jew and would have excluded Samaritans, Romans, and other foreigners. Jesus then gives the parable of the Good Samaritan to correct the false understanding that the scribe had of who his neighbor is, and what his duty is to his neighbor.

- His first and perhaps greatest mistake was in assuming that he had fulfilled the first commandment. When we really consider what the words mean, then who among us has loved God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind? It is easy for us to be distracted in any one of these areas even when we worship God; even more so in our daily living.
- His second mistake was in thinking that he could fulfill the commandment to love God with all he had and still possibly not fulfill the command to love his neighbor. If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. (1 John 4:20-21)
- His third mistake was in the way that he wanted to narrowly define neighbor. If only our friends and those who are easy to love are our neighbors, then perhaps this man fulfilled it in an imperfect way. It all depends on how broad the definition is. The Jews in Jesus' day did believe that you had to love your neighbor; but it was also taught among them that it was a duty before God to hate your enemy. It all depends on who your neighbor is and who your enemy is.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves: The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was infamous for crime and robbery. It wasn't surprising to Jesus' listeners that He set the story on this particular road.

- "That road was famous for its lurking dangers, especially robbers.
- "He was an obviously reckless and foolhardy character. People seldom attempted the Jerusalem to Jericho road alone if they were carrying goods or valuables. Seeking safety in numbers, they travelled in convoys or caravans. This man had no one but himself to blame for the plight in which he found himself." (Barclay)

Now by chance a certain priest came down that road: The priest and the Levite (both categories of religious officials) saw their Jewish brother lying in his terrible condition – but neither of them did anything. They both passed by on the other side.

- "Priest and Levite are mentioned here, partly because they were the most frequent travellers on this road, and partly to show that these were the persons who, from the nature of their office, were most obliged to perform works of mercy; and from whom a person in distress had a right to expect immediate succour and comfort; and their inhuman conduct here was a flat breach of the law." (Clarke)
- Think of all the excuses that they could have used:
 - "This road is too dangerous for me to stop and help the man."
 - "He might be a decoy for an ambush."
 - "I've got to get to the temple and perform my service for the Lord."
 - "I've got to get home and see my family."
 - "Someone really should help that man."
 - "If I'm going to serve at the temple I can't get my clothes bloody."
 - "I don't know first aid."
 - "It's a hopeless case."
 - "I'm only one person; the job is too big."
 - "I can pray for him."
 - "He brought it on himself, he should have never been alone on such a dangerous road."
 - "He never asked for help"

But all of these are simply excuses. "I never knew a man refuse to help the poor who failed to give at least one admirable excuse." (Spurgeon)

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion: When Jesus' listeners heard about the priest and the Levite, they probably expected Jesus to say next that a common Jewish man came and helped. Then this story would be another way Jesus showed the corruption of the religious leaders were in his day. But Jesus shocked them by saying that the man who helped was a Samaritan.

A certain Samaritan: Generally speaking, Jews and Samaritans despised each other both racially and religiously. The culture gave the Samaritan plenty of reasons to hate this Jewish man and pass him by.

- Some rabbis taught that a Jew was forbidden to help a Gentile woman who was in distress giving birth; because if they succeeded, all they did was to help one more Gentile come into the world. They often thought that Samaritans were worse than other Gentiles were.
- He had compassion. He dresses the man's wounds with wine (to disinfect) and oil (to sooth the pain). He puts the man on his animal and takes him to an inn for a time of healing and pays the innkeeper with his own money. He then goes beyond common decency and tells the innkeeper to take good care of the man, and he would pay for any extra expenses on his return trip. The Samaritan saw his neighbor as anyone who was in need. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him: Instead of passing by, the Samaritan loved him sacrificially. He didn't wait to be asked; to see the need right in front of him was enough to make him do something. He also gave freely of both his time and his resources.
- The wine, containing alcohol, had an antiseptic effect on the man's wounds. The oil helped to soothe the wounds, easing the pain. To set him on his own animal meant that the Samaritan himself walked.
- He took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper: It seems that two denarii would provide for the man's needs in the inn for at least two or three weeks.

There are many ways that the Samaritan was like Jesus.

- The Samaritan was an outsider, despised by many.
- The Samaritan came after others failed to meet the need.
- The Samaritan came before it was too late.
- The Samaritan came with everything necessary.
- The Samaritan came right to the afflicted man.
- The Samaritan gave tender care.
- The Samaritan provided for future needs.

Because the good man was a Samaritan, Jesus is drawing a strong contrast between those who knew the law and those who actually followed the law in their lifestyle and conduct.

"So, which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Which of these three do you think was neighbor: According to the thinking of the day, the priest and the Levite were neighbor to the man who had been beaten and robbed. But they didn't act like neighbors at all.

- “We are arrested by the fact that He completely shifted the ground of the question, and by this reply said, in effect, that the question as to who is a neighbor was not so important as the question to whom he was a neighbor.” (Morgan)
- He who showed mercy on him: The lawyer knew who the true neighbor was; yet he could not bring himself to say the name “Samaritan.” We might have expected him to be an enemy, but he was instead a neighbor who showed mercy on him.

Obviously, the lawyer knew that he could no longer justify himself. He did not have this kind of love, a love that went beyond what he wanted to think of as “neighbor.”

Go and do likewise: Jesus allowed the parable to answer the lawyer’s question and guide the application. I am to love my neighbor, and my neighbor is the one who others might consider my enemy. My neighbor is the one with a need right in front of me.

Spurgeon wrote that “When we see innocent persons suffering as the result of the sin of others our pity should be excited.” He then gave examples of situations that should provoke pity in the believer:

- Children sick and starving because of a drunken father
- Wives overworked and burdened because of lazy and cruel husbands
- Workers oppressed in wages and working conditions, just to survive
- Those afflicted from accidents and disease.

This doesn’t mean running after every need that might present itself. After all, the Samaritan didn’t establish a hospital for unfortunate travelers. But it does mean a concern for the ones plain before us, in both social and spiritual needs. “The world would be a changed place if every Christian attended to the sorrows that are plain before him.” (Maclaren)

Many – even most – people don’t have this kind of love for God or others. How then will they receive eternal life?

- First, by refusing to inherit eternal life by doing. Instead, believe on Jesus; trust God that Jesus paid the penalty you deserve for every time you have fallen short of loving God or loving others the way you should.
- Then, having received eternal life – God’s kind of life in you – God will give you the resources to love Him and other people in a much better way. You can’t do it apart from having His life in you.

“Let it never be forgotten that what the law demands of us the gospel really produces in us.” (Spurgeon)