

NEXT DOOR

Who is My Neighbor?

Luke 10:25-37

Who is My Neighbor?

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? [26] He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? [27] And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. [28] And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. [29] But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

- A lawyer comes to Jesus with a question, but it's a question with an ulterior motive
- He says to Jesus, ***Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?***
- Jesus sensing the trap says, ***“What does the Word of God say”***
 - Jesus does something unique, He answers the question with a question
 - What Jesus is doing is *teaching through inquiry*
- The lawyer responds to Jesus by saying we are to love God with all heart, soul, and mind and to love our neighbor as ourselves
 - ***Love the Lord thy God*** – Love God as your very own God, establish a personal relationship with God yourself
 - ***Love God with all thy heart, soul, strength and mind*** – Love God with all that you are, every part of you
 - ***Love thy neighbor as thyself*** – Our love for God must be *demonstrated* to other people.
- Jesus tells the lawyer he spoke well, and if he obeys this and he will have eternal life
- The lawyer still trying to justify himself, asks another question, ***“who is my neighbor”?***
- Many people including Christians know they are to love their neighbor, but they want to “decide” *who* their neighbor is 1st and *how* they will love them

Jesus Defines what a Neighbor Is

[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.

- Jesus wants to define the concept of *neighbor* by telling the lawyer a parable
- A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves
- The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was known to be dangerous road
- It was a rocky road, descending downward a distance of 21 miles and 3,300 feet
- The road ran through narrow passageways, that had cave-like enclosures that made for easy hiding places for robbers and thieves
- The man was stripped of his clothing and valuables, savagely beaten, and left for dead on the side of the road

The Priest and the Levite

The Priest

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- By chance, a priest happens upon the injured man
- He is a man of God; he teaches and preaches care for your fellow man
- The priest *without explanation* or reason simply passes by on the other side
- Maybe he was following ceremonial rules of his day that said
- The priest may have placed his “religious work” above welfare for the injured man

The Levite

- The Levite came by after the priest, but he was not much better
- A Levite is a servant in the Temple, a minister of worship
- The Levite appears to have placed “*safety*” before *compassion*
- The priest and the Levite were involved in God’s service, were probably “good people”, but neither seemed to realize that *servicing God* is often done through *servicing people*
- What reasons could the priest and Levite have for not taking *the time* to help the dying man?
- The possible reasons for not helping the injured man sound a lot like things we might say for *not taking the time* to help others

The Samaritan Had Compassion

[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.

- The next person to happen by the dying man is not a Jew, but a Samaritan
- During this time, there was a deep-seated hatred between Jesus and Samaritans
- This Samaritan would be the *least likely* person to render aid
- But this *least likely* Samaritan was the *only* person who helped the dying man, because he possessed the *true love of God*
- The Samaritan didn’t ask himself ***what will happen to “me” if I help the injured man, but what will happen to the man if I don’t help him?***
- This *hated* Samaritan threw any racial, ethnic, class and religious issues out the window and began to help the dying man
- This Samaritan did not merely see the severely wounded Jew, he was moved with *compassion*, but what he did next was clearly a *demonstration* of love and justice in action
- Everything the Samaritan did was significant:
- ***He Stopped*** – He personally reached out help
 - the wounded man’s condition demanded the Samaritan *take the time* and do whatever he could to help the man
- ***Bound up the wounds of the man*** – He eased his pain
 - The 1st thing the Samaritan man did was bind up his wounds because *time was of the essence*
- ***Poured in oil and wine.*** He gave of his own goods

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- He had the presence of mind to create an “antiseptic” from the wine cleanse wounds and he used the oil to soak the bandages so they wouldn’t stick to the man’s skin.
- **Set the wounded man on his beast** – He sacrificed his own comfort
- **Brought him to an inn** - He personally took care of him.
- **Stayed overnight with the wounded man** – He personally looked after the wounded man
- **Invested personally and generously in the wounded Jewish man’s ongoing care** - He left additional money for the wounded man’s lodging and food
- **Made arrangements to pay for any additional charges** - He promised to pay *more* when he returned
- This Samaritan took *the time* care for an injured man who *should be* his enemy
- Why did the Samaritan take the time to help the injured man?
- I see two reasons:
 1. *His love for humanity,*
 2. *He was a Samaritan*
- Isn’t that what Jesus did for us?
 - His compassion for us wouldn’t let Him leave us where we were
 - Jesus stopped for us to help and whatever was necessary to back on our feet
 - Jesus did it because He cares for us
- Where would we be without Jesus taking the time to help us?

Go and Do Likewise

[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.

- Jesus then asks the lawyer a question, “which of these three was a neighbor to the man who fell among thieves?”
- The lawyer answers Jesus and says, “the one who showed him mercy”
- The lawyer knew who the *true neighbor* was, but he was “so prejudiced” he couldn’t bring himself to say the name *Samaritan*
- Jesus told the lawyer and is telling us, “*Go and do likewise*”
- Does that mean the Samaritan must help everyone he sees?
- No, it doesn’t mean we run after every need that presents itself
- But what it does mean to take time to help those God allows to cross your path
- It may cost you some time, it may be a sacrifice, in some cases you may even spend some money, but it will be worth it
- Jesus tells the lawyer go and do likewise.
- Love is not to be discussed; it is to be *demonstrated*
- We are to show mercy for those in need regardless of their race, religion, region, gender, etc.
- Your neighbor is the one with a need right in front of you