

Parable Of The Good Samaritan

Lesson 4.09

The parable of the good Samaritan blows up the sinful human perspective of God's command, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Get ready to repent after studying this lesson!

Please read [Luke 10:25-37 ESV](#) before beginning free Bible study lessons, #4.09

Previous Lesson: [Parable Of The Talents #4.08](#)

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:

1. Who is our neighbor?
2. How can we show love to our neighbor?
3. Is loving our neighbor essential for our eternal life?

Sometimes we think we have life figured out and don't really need to learn the lessons we learned as children. However, our sinful hearts over time corrupt our beliefs and activities. The parable of the good Samaritan can teach, re-teach, or remind even the wisest of souls. Prepare yourself to learn, repent, and get busy being a neighbor. Let's study God's word.

Parable Of The Good Samaritan Setting

Jesus taught the parable of the good Samaritan in response to a religious scribe who was badgering him, attempting to trap him. We'll talk about that more towards the end of the lesson. The key message is found in [Micah 6:8, NASB](#) "He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you? But to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

This main message isn't a hard principle, but the sinful nature we're endowed with freezes our hearts to our neighbors. A frozen heart, though, can be thawed by the Holy Spirit of fire ([Jeremiah 20:9 NASB](#)). **If we're serious about following Jesus as his disciple, then we really need to pay attention to this simple, but critical message.**

Parable Of The Good Samaritan Representation

The parable of the good Samaritan contains four main characters who represent all people. It makes you wonder immediately who you'll be represented by, right? That is one reason why Jesus was such a wonderful story teller, because he drew people into the story immediately and effectively.

The Jewish man who was beaten represents people who need help. The Priest and Levite who ignore the man represent hypocrites, and the Samaritan represents a model Christian.

Parable Of The Good Samaritan

The parable of the good Samaritan tells of a Jewish man who was walking along the road to Jericho from Jerusalem. It was all downhill, but a dangerous path to travel, especially alone. The road was notorious for its bandits and criminals who stalked their victims from bushes, caves, and other hideouts. Suddenly, he was ambushed by a group of bandits. He was stripped naked, mercilessly beaten, and left half dead alongside the road.

The Two Hypocrites

The parable of the good Samaritan shares that a Jewish priest walked by the bruised and bloody man. The priest glanced but immediately looked away, quickly veering to the other side of the road. The priest lacked any type of concern for the victim. He had his own personal matters swirling in his head, his own agenda in place, and didn't have time for helping a Jewish brother. He showed no compassion for the man, not even showing the heart to give him a sip of water.

Jesus then teaches in the parable of the good Samaritan that another man drew close to the scene of the beating. This Temple assistant (Levite) walked up to the victim, looked at him a moment, but then turned and walked to the other side of the road. This man showed a moment of pity, a hint of compassion, but then excused himself from the terrible scene because of more important matters. Neither of these two men wanted to get involved with such a mess, even to assist their own countryman.

Oh, there are many excuses. They could have been late for some aspect of work, maybe a meeting. They may have suspected that the bandits were nearby waiting to pounce on them, as well. Maybe they lacked materials to tend to the victim. God only knows what their lame excuses were. Hypocrites talk about religion, but real Christians help others in need. Grasp the difference.

The Good Samaritan

The parable of the good Samaritan then describes the scene when an otherwise despised Samaritan nears the victim. Jews and Samaritans disliked one another. They have a long, contentious history going way back before 1000 BC. These "relatives" of the Jews were a mixed race with the Assyrians, who the Jews considered lawless idolators.

A person of that time, listening to Jesus tell the parable of the good Samaritan, would have thought the Samaritan would add a couple kicks to the Jewish victim. That isn't how this story goes, however. The Samaritan sees the beaten Jew and stoops down beside him. He feels great compassion for the poor man, cleaning up his wounds. He then administered wine and oil to the wounds before dressing them with bandages. He surely gave him water, as well.

Not stopping there, the good Samaritan placed the man on his donkey and brought him to the nearest inn. The two stayed overnight, with the Samaritan nursing the man back to health. Later the next day, the Samaritan left the inn, but told the innkeeper to allow the man to stay as long as needed. The Samaritan told him if the two denarii weren't enough, he would stop and pay the remainder of the bill the next time he passed through.

Who Was The Real Neighbor?

The parable of the good Samaritan contains an important message for us. If you remember from our main passage, Jesus asked the religious expert what the Scriptures say about acquiring eternal life. The Scribe said, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind. And, love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus answered by affirming the message. **The religious expert then asked Jesus, "And, who is my neighbor?" Jesus didn't directly answer, and then shared the parable of the good Samaritan.**

After telling the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus asked, "Now which of the three men was a neighbor to the victim of the bandits?" The religious expert answered, "The one who showed mercy on the man." Jesus said, "Correct! Now, go and do the same."

Did you notice how Jesus turned the question upside down? This is critical in understanding Jesus' message. The man asked, "Then, who is my neighbor?" **Jesus shared the parable, and now rephrased the question, "Now which of the three men was a neighbor to the victim?"**

The religious leader's question was passive in nature, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus' turned it into an active question, "Who acted as a neighbor?" We, my friends, should not ask, "Who is my neighbor?" But, we should ask ourselves, "To whom can I become a neighbor?" That places us, you and me, in the active role, or, shall we say, on the offensive, not the defensive. **Real Christians become real neighbors.**

To Whom Should We Become Neighborly?

You see, this was quite a story to the Jews, and it should be for us, as well. Jesus broke all the barriers down with this story. He removed the barriers that we build to qualify, in our minds, who our neighbors are. **The typical sinful human always attempts to disqualify people from being their neighbor, releasing them from their obligation to help them in their need.** Jesus is telling us loud and clear, "Your neighbor is anyone in need."

That pretty much says it all, doesn't it? It doesn't matter the gender, the appearance, the race, the situation, or anything else. **Anyone needing help is our neighbor. If we want eternal life, then our lives have to provide evidence that God has forgiven us, and that we abide by his laws.** The most basic of all commands to us is that we love our neighbor as our self. Our neighbor is anyone who needs help, and if we help them we love them. I cannot add any more words to this simple teaching by Jesus Christ.

Grasp This!

The parable of the good Samaritan reveals how we are to live our Christian lives. We should focus first on God, and then on our neighbors. **We have to show them love by helping them when in need.** Not bragging, but, to illustrate the points I'll share some things I've done recently, with the parable of the good Samaritan in mind.

Awhile back on the way to work I came across an overturned car. A bruised and bleeding young lady was crawling out of her window. I carefully brought her a ways from the car in case it blew up. I then prayed with her until the fire trucks and medics arrived.

Another time, a little 2 year old boy ran away from his mother towards a busy street. I saw him from a distance and knew the oncoming cars wouldn't be able to see the little guy. I got out of my car and stopped the oncoming traffic and brought the boy back to his mom. The people who saw me were clapping and thanking me, but I pointed to the heavens.

Recently, I went up to buy some gasoline for my lawnmower, and returning home I came across a young man pushing his moped down the road. I stopped to ask "Are you out of gas?" I was able to fill his tank, refusing his offer to pay, telling him it was a gift from Jesus Christ. There is nothing better than serving and glorifying God. I've been helped when in need, too, and that inspires me to continue to help my neighbors.

God places us directly in the path of hurting people. Which of the travelers are you? Do you not want to be bothered? Do you refrain from becoming involved in something that may throw you off schedule? Are you too tight with your money to share with someone who is hungry, or in other financial distress? Are you scared you may get hurt if you help someone in a precarious situation? Maybe, like the priest in the parable of the Good Samaritan, you hardly give thought to the person. I hope not. I hope you're like the good Samaritan.

Here is what I do. I pray that God places me in the path to help someone, and I also pray that he allows me to notice the person in need. By praying like this, I'm acknowledging God as the providential ruler over our lives. God answers prayers such as these. Are you praying for this, too? Commit to start praying to help your neighbors today.

Next Lesson: Parable Of The Rich Fool #4.10

Bible Study Questions:

1. Write a list of the last five ways you have helped your neighbor.
2. What is the dysfunction if we help someone, but fail to give God all the glory?
3. What commandments are ultimately in view in this parable? State the reasons for your choices.
4. How does Christ turning the initial question, "Who is my neighbor?" upside down, in turn asking, "To whom can I be a neighbor?" change your thinking about this spiritual truth?

Inspirational Bible Verses:

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. [Ephesians 2:10 NIV](#)

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,' and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. [Romans 13:8-10](#)

Prayers Of Thanksgiving:

Dear God, The parable of the good Samaritan teaches us that our actions reveal our hearts. By your power and providence, please use the listeners of this parable to cross the path of those who need help. Show the listener what to do in order to help the person. Finally, lead the person to glorify you when the help is complete. God, thank you for our neighbors. May we love them, like you do. I pray that we all prove our Christianity by helping our neighbors and above all, loving you, Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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