

# Tell Me the Story of Jesus

## A Lawyer Asks, "Who is my neighbor?"

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. We've been taking a look at some of the stories of the Gospels, the inspired records of Jesus' life on earth
- B. Today we'll be looking at a story from **Luke 10:25-37** in which a lawyer asks, "Who is my neighbor?"

### II. WHAT'S THE STORY? (LUKE 10:25-37)

- A. **Background...**
  - 1. Jesus and his disciples were on their way to Jerusalem.
    - a) As they traveled they went through Samaria, and wanted to stay in one of the Samaritan villages,
    - b) however when they found out the Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, they rejected him.
    - c) James and John wanted to call down fire from heaven on them
      - (1) But Jesus rebuked them
      - (2) "the Son of man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them"
    - d) Jesus and his disciples continued on to another village.
  - 2. **On his way to Jerusalem Jesus appointed 70 disciples** to go ahead of him and lay the groundwork for his preaching in those towns.
    - a) **When they returned they were filled with joy**, because of the signs and wonders that they were able to perform.
    - b) Jesus also rejoiced with them, however, he told them to rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.
- B. **In the midst of all this**, a lawyer stood up and asked him a question to put him to the test.
  - 1. He said "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
  - 2. **Jesus responded "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"**
  - 3. The lawyer answered with Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."
  - 4. **Jesus told the lawyer that he was correct — "Do this and live"**
  - 5. But this was not enough for the lawyer,
    - a) because he wished to justify himself in the *practice* of these commands.
    - b) **He asked Jesus "and who is my neighbor? "**
      - (1) The lawyer had asked essentially, who must I show mercy to? Who must I love?
      - (2) **Most Jews would say Jews**

- (3) Many of the religious Jews would eliminate the taxgatherers and sinners
- c) Scripture says that the lawyer said, "And who is my neighbor?" to justify himself
  - (1) Loophole-ism
  - (2) Pharisees : honoring parents, swearing, etc.
  - (3) Jesus had loophole-ism at least partially in mind in Matt. 7:21-23
- C. At this point, Jesus tells him what we call today the story of the good Samaritan.
  - 1. Read parable
  - 2. Retelling
    - a) A man travels from Jerusalem to Jericho
      - (1) On the way he is robbed
      - (2) and beaten by robbers and left for dead
    - b) A priest comes but passes by on the other side of the road
    - c) A Levite comes by, but also passes by on the other side of the road
    - d) Samaritan comes by
      - (1) when he saw him, the Samaritan felt compassion
      - (2) went to him
      - (3) bandaged wounds
      - (4) poured oil on his wounds
      - (5) put the Jewish traveler on his own beast
      - (6) brought him to an inn along the way, and took care of him
      - (7) leaving money with the innkeeper for taking care of him and a promise for more, if needed
    - e) Then Jesus asked, "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?"
    - f) The lawyer answers, the man who showed mercy — he couldn't bring himself to say Samaritan, I guess
      - (1) But Jesus answers his question by turning the question upside down
      - (2) asking, "Who would you want to love you, show mercy to you?"
    - g) Jesus, "Go and do the same."

### III. WHAT IMPORTANT THINGS CAN WE LEARN?

- A. We must be careful not to play the lawyer's game
  - 1. try to "loophole" God's law, to justify ourselves
  - 2. People never tire of justifying their sins.
    - a) It is a matter of trying to soothe a troubled conscience.
      - (1) "My situation is different"
      - (2) "I'm sure the Lord would understand"
      - (3) "The Bible doesn't specifically forbid this, or demand that I do that"
      - (4) Or like the lawyer here, parse words, "Who is my neighbor?"
    - b) Paying attention to the details of Scripture is important,
      - (1) but not if we're trying to use **some** details to justify ourselves.
      - (2) ...rather than the **SUM** of what the Bible has to say
  - 3. If the Scripture tells us to avoid this or do that...

- a) ...let's just obey
  - b) Remember what Jesus said, Matt. 7:21-23 — “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’”
- B. **Anyone that you'd like to help you, when you are in trouble, is your neighbor**
- 1. The priest and Levite were the most likely “neighbors”, but they passed by
  - 2. The least likely “neighbor” was the Samaritan
    - a) Did the wounded man refuse the help?
    - b) Of course not, and the point is that all men are our neighbors
  - 3. We're not just talking about the dubious beggars on street corners, but...
    - a) the sick
    - b) widows
    - c) next door neighbors
    - d) woman with the flat tire
    - e) the injured
    - f) and the LOST
  - 4. Remembering WHO we are
- C. **True compassion always carries deeds with it**
- 1. The word compassion is used 11 times in the NT
    - a) all in the Gospels,
    - b) and almost always in reference to Jesus — except parables
    - c) references being moved in the inner parts
    - d) and every time is accompanied with *something that was done for the object of the compassion*
  - 2. In this parable, Jesus tells the lawyer to do like the Samaritan — feel compassion for those in need — and do something

#### IV. CONCLUSION

- A. A last thing to note in this story is Jesus' call to change — **“Go and do the same.”**
- 1. **implies that the lawyer had been like the priest and Levite**
    - a) too busy to get involved
    - b) too risky to get involved
    - c) assuming someone else will help
    - d) too often the “standard operating procedure” for the world
    - e) Jesus calls on **him** to be more like the Samaritan — repent instead of attempt to justify himself
  - 2. **Jesus calls on us to be more like the Samaritan**
    - a) whom ignored the world's “standard operating procedure”

- b) in which feeling sorry for the wounded man is enough, and rather adopt real compassion
- c) Be repentant rather than indulge in deceptive self-justification
  - (1) And not just regarding compassion — as important as that is
  - (2) In every area of our lives
    - (a) to embrace goodness and kindness
    - (b) to embrace real courage and strength
    - (c) to embrace real truth and God's way of salvation — because self-justification will never work, ONLY JESUS-JUSTIFICATION
    - (d) "Go and do the same — as Jesus did"

## B. COME