

THE GOOD SAMARITAN: LUKE 10:25-37

VOCAB WORDS:

1. **Lawyer:** This is someone who is skilled in the Law of Moses. A lawyer reads, copies, studies, and teaches the Law of Moses as a profession. They are also known as scribes. They are not the same type of lawyer that we have in our society.
2. **Priest:** A priest is a Jew who works in God's Temple. Priests offer sacrifices to God, and serve as a mediator between people and God.
3. **Levite:** A Levite is a Jew from the tribe of Levi. The Levites were the Jews that were chosen to maintain the Law of Moses for all the Jews. Only Levites could be priests, work on the temple, and minister to many other aspects of worshipping God according to the Law of Moses.
4. **Samaritan:** A person from Samaria. Samaritans are half Jewish. Jews in Jesus' day were prejudiced against the Samaritans because they were half Jewish. Jews despised and had no relations with Samaritans.

THE CONTEXT: LK 10:25-29

Who are the two people are talking?

A lawyer asks Jesus a question. A lawyer is someone who studies and copies the Law of Moses as a career. The Law of Moses is the commandments from God to the Jews. We would assume that someone who studies God's word professionally would be very spiritually minded. This is just like assuming a Bible teacher must be very spiritual. However, this is not necessarily true. There is a big difference between knowing all the facts and rules in the Bible, and being able to apply them to our lives. We will see that this "expert" of the Law is not so spiritually minded.

Why was the lawyer questioning Jesus? What question did the lawyer ask? What was Jesus' response?

The lawyer was questioning Jesus to test Him. The lawyer was challenging Jesus. He was not asking questions out of interest or desire to learn. He wanted to challenge Jesus' knowledge of the scriptures. The lawyer asked, "What do I do to get eternal life?" Jesus, knowing that the lawyer was familiar with the scriptures, said to him, "It is written in the scriptures. What do they tell you?" Jesus bases all His teaching on God's word. Since Jesus knew that the lawyer was familiar with the scriptures, He told the lawyer to answer His own question.

What was the answer to the lawyer's question? What was the lawyer's next question? Why did the lawyer ask this?

The answer is: love God, and love your neighbor. The lawyer then asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" The text says that the lawyer asked this question because he wanted to justify himself. What does it mean to justify yourself? If you get an "F" on a test, you will want to justify that grade by making excuses. The teacher is bad, there were unfair questions, or I was up too late studying etc. These are all things that would help us feel better about receiving a bad grade. Evidently the lawyer felt bad about God's command to "love your neighbor as yourself", because he wanted to justify himself. When he asked, "who is my neighbor?" he simply wanted to know the limited amount of people he needed to love. A more spiritually minded person would be anxious to love everyone around him, but this lawyer wanted to know the minimum of people he needed to love, so he could inherit eternal life.

What can we expect this parable to be about?

This parable will teach us who our neighbor is, and what we need to do to be their neighbor. This lesson is about showing love to people around us.

THE PARABLE: LK 10:30-36

Who is the main character in this parable? What is he doing? What happens to him?

The main character is a man that goes on a journey. It doesn't tell us who or what he is. On his journey, he gets mugged by a gang of robbers. He is left for dead, and unable to help himself.

Who are the other main characters in this parable?

There is a priest. A priest is a Jew that attends to God's temple. A priest should be a Godly person. There is also a Levite. A Levite is a Jew that is supposed to attend to many of the religious duties for the whole nation. Levites would be presumed to be Godly people as well. The last character is a Samaritan. Samaritans were half Jewish. Jews were prejudiced against Samaritans.

What is the pattern in this parable? What are the variables in the pattern?

The pattern is each character seeing the attacked victim, and responding. The variable is how the character responds.

How did the priest respond? Why? How did the Levite respond?

When the priest sees the victim, he passes on the other side. Why did the priest do this? We don't know. The priest could feel that he was too busy, or the priest could be afraid that the gang was still close by. We don't know the reason, but what reason would justify leaving this man for dead? Is the reason relevant? This gives us an image of a man who was very familiar with God's word, laws, and rules, but does not obey the most important command of loving each other. The Levite responds the same as the priest. Again we do not know the reason, but this shows us that a Jew who should be knowledgeable of God's commands, ignores his responsibility to help those in need.

How did the Samaritan respond?

The Samaritan went out of his way to help the poor victim. He gave up time, money, and even his ride to this unlucky stranger. We need to remember that the Jews would see the Samaritan as being inferior, but Jesus uses him as the righteous example.

THE MORAL: "GO AND DO LIKEWISE"

The moral is verses 36-37. The lawyer was asking who his neighbor was. Jesus instead told him how to be a neighbor. We need to go out and act like neighbors to others.

THE EXPLANATION:

Jesus does not take the time to explain this parable, but the message is so clear that an explanation isn't needed.

THE APPLICATION:

Instead of trying to limit the people we are obligated to help, let us focus on seeking those in need, and do all we can to help them. We should be willing to invest time, effort, and money to help those in need. Instead of worrying about who our "neighbor" is, let's go out and be neighbors to others.

The Jews wouldn't consider Samaritans to be their neighbor, but it is clear that Jesus teaches this lawyer that he is obligated to help other ethnicities. Who might we feel unwilling to help?