

"He Had Compassion"

Luke 10:25-37

- A lawyer comes to Jesus with a question in our passage of the day
- He doesn't ask the question honestly
- He isn't looking for the real answer
- He does so to test Jesus
- The Savior answers with a question, and eventually a parable
- That parable will be our focus today, as we read about a Samaritan man
- And what the scripture says about him - "he had compassion"

- This passage contains a well-known parable
- Many call it "the good Samaritan"
- It has made enough of an impact through the years, that we refer to people as "good Samaritans," when they stop to help someone or provide a stranger assistance
- Most people could recite the general outline
- But the context, as is often the case, is really helpful in providing a better understanding
- We pick it up in...

Luke 10:25-28

25 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.

- These four verses read like the beginning and ending of a story
- A question is asked, clarified, and then answered
- But the account doesn't end here, in fact, many of the key details come later

- The question is, what can I do to inherit eternal life?
- And Jesus wants to know how this teacher of Mosaic law reads it himself
- How does he understand it?

- The lawyer quotes Deuteronomy 6:5, which says...

"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. "

- Adding a little portion from Leviticus 19:18b...

"but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"

- These are attitudes and actions that come forth of a trust and commitment to God
- Love for the Lord and love for your neighbor are a result of faith

- And Jesus says, yes, live with this kind of commitment
- This expert in the law was not satisfied
- In fact, he sought to justify himself
- And he responds with another question...

Luke 10:29

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

- The parable that answers this question will get to the heart of this lawyer's problem
- It was an answer for him, but for us as well
- The lawyer had an advantage - in that he understood cultural significance we can miss if we're not careful
- It's important that we learn (or at least remind ourselves) who Samaritans are
- There is a pretty good summary on the Blue Letter Bible website, it says...

"The Samaritans were a group of people who lived in Samaria - an area north of Jerusalem. They were half-Jews and half-Gentiles. When Assyria captured the northern kingdom of Israel in 721 B.C. some were taken in captivity while others left behind. The ones left behind intermarried with the Assyrians. Thus these people were neither fully Hebrews nor fully Gentiles. The Samaritans had their own unique copy of the first five books of Scripture as well as their own unique system of worship. At the time of Jesus the Jews and the Samaritans did not deal with one another. Jesus, however, ministered to the people of Samaria preaching the good news to them."

- We need to make mental note of this before we go on...

Luke 10:30

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.

- This is clearly a serious situation
- A man has been left for dead along the road by thieves
- He clearly needs help
- In our day, we may be on our phones immediately calling an ambulance, informing law enforcement, complaints may be issued to the village mayor or governor about the disgraceful public safety situation
- All of this would be merited
- It's a serious thing...
- But this is what happened here...

Luke 10:31-35

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.

- It's hard to imagine a better outcome for the man left "half dead"
- A true helper, a genuinely compassionate stranger, someone with integrity
- One who takes responsibility and does what is required

- Remember the answer to our question about the inheritance of eternal life?
- And the answer Jesus agreed with?
- The one that said we should show genuine evidence of faith in God, by loving Him and loving those he created - our neighbors?
- This parable gets to the heart of it

- The test of our neighborliness is not in proximity or in country of origin or in shared culture or experience
- It is a test of our compassion
- That must certainly come forth of commitment to the God of compassion

Luke 10:36-37

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.

- Compassion, as this lawyer admitted, is something concrete
- It is not just a feeling
- It means action, not just words
- Compassion doesn't say "this is a job for someone else"
- It does not say "someone" ought to do "something"
- It means getting our own hands dirty
- It means work and personal expense
- It is a heart attitude that is evidenced through action
- Go and do likewise

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2020