

## Good Samaritan

### Introduction

But many who follow Him don't really surrender to Him. Jesus got to a point in His ministry where people were just following Him for what He could provide for them. They really weren't interested in doing what He commanded. He was asking them to turn their world upside down. To leave behind false teachings of the world and be transformed by the way He wanted His followers to live.

But He had to separate those who really wanted to follow Him from those who just wanted to look like they were following Him. So Jesus said that He would only teach in parables from that point forward. .

A parable is a short story with a huge message. Those who want to dig down to find the deeper things of God will succeed in doing so. Those that aren't really interested in changing will stay on the surface level and miss Jesus- because they really weren't following Him anyway.

Jesus used Parable to sort out the crowd...and it worked. When He made this statement there were so many people pushing in to try to get their miracle that He had to teach from a boat in a cove- probably over 1000 people in just that town. In the upper room the night after His crucifixion, His followers gathered. There were about 50 of them.

It is in the parable that we find the separator. Parables are relatively simple stories. They have powerful deeper meaning and their meaning if applied to our lives takes enormous courage and faith in God. You and I can't naturally do what Jesus commands us to do in the parables. We have to have faith to allow Jesus to work through us to do what we would have thought we could or would never do.

Parables force each of us to decide if we are all in. They make us break through our fears and decide if we really trust God to do what He promises.

Matthew 13:10–17 (ESV) 10 Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” 11 And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12 For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: “ ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.’ ” 15 For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.’ 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. 17 For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

Jesus seemed to distribute deeper truths to those who understood His prior teachings. Those who accept the truth that Jesus teaches will be given more truth...If they accept that they will receive even more truth. Jesus keeps giving His disciples...His Talmidim...doses of truth that forces them to get to the root of any issues in their lives.

Each dose of truth that we receive forces us to shed something in us. Jesus uses His truth and the parables to cut away anything in our hearts that does not please Him. As He goes deeper and deeper into our motives, thoughts and true beliefs...He exposes us so we can see who we really are.

The truth that Jesus reveals in the parables expose our true heart. You see it is with our heart that followers of Jesus really see....it is with our heart..that followers of Jesus really hear....and it is with our heart that followers of Jesus really understand.

Those who are following Jesus with all of their heart....get the parables and apply them. Those who are following with their head...reject the deeper teachings of the parables. They are the great revealing of our true self. They force us to deal with who we really are. Most will walk away because they love themselves more than Jesus. But those whose hearts are truly His...surrender and trust Jesus to change our hearts.

Today we are going to allow Jesus to reveal more of ourselves by looking at one of the most famous parables in the Bible. The Good Samaritan.

Luke 10:25 (ESV) 25 And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

This short introduction tells us a lot about this story. A lawyer...don't think of Perry Mason or Jack McCoy. This was an expert in Jewish Religious Law. Note that he stood up....a power position... Why? to put Jesus to the test

He addresses Jesus as "teacher" Not Rabbi...Not Master....Certainly not Lawyer. He uses the very common term "teacher" He is an expert in religious law...but his word choice here implies that he thinks Jesus is no where near his level of experience

On the surface his question seems to be a personal one...not threatening.... What shall I do to inherit eternal life? His question is based on Jewish Law

You see those who lived prior to Jesus the Messiah we saved based on their faith that one day the Messiah would come. From the crucifixion forward, salvation is based upon the faith that Jesus is that Messiah and He died and rose again for our sins. Everyone is saved based on their faith in Jesus. Some looking forward....we looking in the past. A Lawyer would have known these prophecies

Psalms 37:27–29 (ESV) 27 Turn away from evil and do good; so shall you dwell forever. 28 For the LORD loves justice; he will not forsake his saints. They are preserved forever, but the children of the wicked shall be cut off. 29 The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell upon it forever.

He knew that God promised that God's Saints, the righteous will live forever

Daniel 12:2 (ESV) 2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

As a Professor of Jewish Law his questions were reasonable. He is essentially asking Jesus...What must he do to share in the resurrection of the righteous? When the future blessing comes, how can he know he will receive it?

Jesus is a Rabbi. A Rabbi with the ability to speak with authority. He is a great teacher and He teaches in the typical rabbinical style.

Great teachers don't just tell you the answers...They lead you on a journey of discovery. They often answer your question with a question..Sometimes to see where you are and how badly you want to know..More often because when truth is personally embraced and discovered..it becomes real. I know from teaching medical students, residents and nurses...I can tell them the answer...But the wonder of discovery is what makes truth stick. They don't take my word for it...they have experienced it. So Jesus doesn't answer the question...He asks a clarifying and then a probing question..

Luke 10:26 (ESV) 26 He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?"

The clarifying question "What is written in the Law?" This is a softball...for an expert in the Law. What the law says is pretty clear...we can go look it up if we need to. This is how all Bible study starts...what does God say in His word?

But then Jesus asks a probing question...a deeper question...a question that moves beyond just the information in the text....a question that moves toward the heart of the matter.

But then the probing question...."How do you read it?" This question drives to not only knowledge....knowing what the law says... But to understanding ....and application. This is what we are learning in our online Bible Study each day. How do you read it....and then eventually How does it read you.

Have you ever met someone who is an expert in something...They know everything about a topic....They can tell everyone else what to do...But they can't seem to apply it in their own lives? Like a cancer doctor who chain smokes Our pride and arrogance can lead us to think that we are better than others, more knowledgeable than others, and yet others have applied the lesson and they have not. Jesus is clarifying where this Law expert stands. He is about to learn what is in his heart.

Luke 10:27–28 (ESV) 27 And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." 28 And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

Excellent. Here is your answer to eternal life. Love the Lord God with all of your heart and love your neighbor as yourself.

When Rabbi's teach they always do so with a series of questions. They lead you to discover the truth that you are seeking. Each question is followed by another. The disciples of a Rabbi know the teaching is over when no more questions are asked by the Rabbi. It ends when a question is not asked. Jesus has nothing more to say. He has given the answer. That answer is just as true today.

Their salvation is based on the same thing ours is...Faith in Jesus and faith in Jesus alone. Any of us who love the Lord with all of heart, soul, strength and mind...And love our neighbor as ourselves...Will surrender to and cherish the words of truth from God. Abraham, Issac, Jacob, Daniel, David, Moses...all of them believed the promise from God of a Messiah to come. We are all saved only through our faith and trust in Jesus as our Messiah. For them it was faith in the Christ who had not yet come. For us, faith in the same Christ...Jesus...who has come. No one has ever been or ever will be saved apart from believing in Messiah Jesus Christ for eternal life

The Lawyer knew the law...Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength. You know what to do....but have you done it? Religious people know what they should do...but they really struggle actually doing it. Unfruitful fig trees if you will. Remember that Jesus will use a parable to sift out those who are not doing what He says.

Now here is what Jesus knew that the Lawyer did not. Please don't miss this...If you truly love the Lord....If He is truly YOUR God... If you have a relationship with Him that consumes all of your...what is first? Heart, then all of your soul, mind and strength.If that has actually been your experience...the evidence of that transformation will show in how you treat other people...You will begin to see the world from your heart...You..in your sin state...cannot love others as yourself...without a radical experience with a very real God. No one on earth inherently wants to truly love their neighbor as themselves. It is part of our sin nature. The only way you can do it is if God does it through you and you have enough faith to let Him.

That is why Jesus says....do those things...and you will live. Your compassion and love for others is the evidence that a deep love for God is in you. If you want to know where someone stands with God...watch how they treat their neighbor.

Ok...great lesson...but the Lawyer is not yet done...he moves to Cross examination...pun intended

Luke 10:29 (ESV) 29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Note the motive...."desiring to justify himself" In other words...I know I love some other people but how broadly does that go? I love my family...my closest friends..some of my Jewish brothers..what exactly is the scope of this command? Who is my neighbor?

So when the Lawyer asks Jesus...Who is my neighbor?The underlying question was sort of like... I know I am to love my neighbor as myself...I love my family that way....I love some of my friends that way...maybe I could love all the Jewish people that way....but some people are dispicable...some are unworthy of my attention much less my love....there are pagans, Gentiles, Samaritans, the diseased, my enemies...those judged by God....Those who hate God....The world is full of people I don't like...much less love.... Jesus...who is my neighbor?

And to answer that question....Jesus moves us into the parable.

Luke 10:30 (ESV) 30 Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead.

Common Scenario....Jews who went to the temple and back from the North or East travelled this road between Jericho and Jerusalem. Every person listening had taken that journey before...kind of like I 75 for us. But this was no ordinary road...It was treacherous...and dangerous...Jericho to Jerusalem is only 15 miles. But Jericho is at sea level and Jerusalem is at 3400 feet. It is a winding trail through the mountains...with deep crevices...sharp turns...

This road was not a safe road...It was a road known for robbers and thieves. There were a lot of caves along the road where thieves could hide out. Travelers coming to and from Jerusalem had money....Money to buy sacrificial animals, money for their stay, and money for their tithing

To make it worse...there were sections of this road that are dark...Even in the brightest of sunshine...dark shadows...Some fell to their death in shadows of this trail. Many believe that when King David was fleeing Jerusalem ...Running for his life from his son who wanted to kill him. That he penned the 23rd Psalm because of this road...Yea though I walk through the valleys of the shadows of death....

So as Jesus begins this story...they are probably all thinking...Been there...seen that. Jesus immediately draws them into the familiar

You might be wondering....15 miles...straight up...crevices...robbers...death...Isn't there some other way to get from Galilee and the North...and Jerusalem? . If you were in Galilee and you wanted to get to Jerusalem, the Jewish people would follow the Jordan River down through the valley. They would eventually get to Jericho. Then begin the steep ascent up our trail to Jerusalem. The total trip was 120 miles...The last 15 miles from Jericho to Jerusalem took 8 hours to climb

You may have noticed a more direct route... Map ...It only took 90 miles and you could avoid the dangerous road and the climb. Looks like a no-brainer right? One Problem....Samaria...the Half-Breeds. Jewish People would do anything to keep from setting foot on Samaritan soil. The Samaritans were Jewish people who intermarried. The Jews hated them...despised them...One thing was clear to the Lawyer....Whatever definition Neighbor had...it could not include those sinners...those half-breeds the Samaritans. Or could it?

Luke 10:31–32 (ESV) 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

Very common scenario...Priests and Levites were always going up and down this road. Jericho was cooler...and oasis...Called the City of Palms. Kind of like the suburbs...A lot people lived there and then went to Jerusalem when it was their turn to go serve at the temple. The Priest was going down the road...He was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was headed home....Note that he saw the

man but he passed by on the other side of the road. Why did the Chicken cross the road? To keep from caring for the Samaritan. Its right there in the Bible

Two Jewish leaders....A Priest and a Levite...what is the difference? All Priests are Levites...but not all Levites are Priests. The Tribe of Levi were those who served in the temple... Many were priests but not all. Some didn't have Priestly duties but rather served in and around the temple. In any event...these were 2 Religious Jewish Leaders who undoubtedly knew the law...and would know that they were to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, strength and mind. Yet when it came to living that out...Manifesting what they knew...into action. these 2 Chickens crossed the road

This would have been shocking to those listening...Jewish leaders...Jewish Temple Leaders..without compassion for a near dying man? How could they do that? Then the music begins to build in the background...

Luke 10:33 (ESV) 33 But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him...

And the Jewish people were probably thinking...The Samaritan...probably going to steal whatever is left...And then kill him. The Samaritan is probably the one who robbed him and beat him in the first place. That is what those people do...they are disgusting... Why is a Samaritan even traveling on OUR road?

Luke 10:32–35 (ESV) 33 But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.'

Jesus made the Samaritan the hero...That immediately would have alarmed the Jewish audience. This is not a Jewish man helping a Samaritan...but a Samaritan helping a Jewish man who had been ignored by his fellow Jews

Note that compassion moved him to action. Oil and Wine were expensive...but were helpful as antiseptics and wound suave. He used his animal as an ambulance... He took him to the inn...He stayed with him and cared for him...2 Denarii...2 days pay...would probably buy 2 weeks at the hotel. He tells the innkeeper take care of him...Whatever you spend...I will repay..I am coming back.

The Samaritan loved those who hated him... Risked his own life...spent his own money....Used up at least a full day and as far as we can tell was never rewarded.

His actions aren't really logical...No one on earth logically wants to help their enemies. Of all the possibilities you can come up with when it comes to doing something to your enemies....mercy and compassion are never the conclusion of fallen humans.

No one born with a sin nature naturally concludes that they should care for or love their enemies. There is nothing on earth than can make you do that. It makes no sense and you cannot wrap your mind around it. If you don't want to love your enemies- welcome to this world.

Luke 10:36–37 (ESV) 36 Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" 37 He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

Note that the Jewish Lawyer can't even get himself...To say "The Samaritan" Instead he says..."the one who showed him mercy"

If you ask most people what the story of the Good Samaritan is about...they will tell you that it is about taking care of people...even strangers....that you see who need help. And on the surface that is a good thing and it is true.

But remember that Jesus uses the parables to show things to His disciples that are deeper spiritual truths. The question asked to Jesus that started this parable was "Who is my neighbor" More specifically who am I supposed to love as myself....The simple yet profound message of the Parable of the Good Samaritan is that you are to love as yourself the most despisable person that you can think of.

I think all of us would respond...I don't have that kind of love in me...I struggle loving the people I know I am supposed to love...Jesus wants me to love everyone? And not only love them...but love them as I love myself... I don't have that kind of love in me....

Yet notice the command of Jesus....Go and do likewise....knowing this is not enough...encouraging others to do it is not enough....YOU GO AND DO LIKEWISE

And thus begins the separation. Those who are truly following Jesus will answer this question very differently than those who are just hanging around for what God can do for them. Those who are following with their heads say "There is nothing about this that I like. It goes against every fiber of my being. It makes no sense. You guys are crazy. I am out"

Those who truly love the Lord with all of the heart and who are surrendered to obeying Jesus would say, "There is nothing about this that I like. It goes against every fiber of my being. It makes no sense to me. But Jesus if you have commanded it. I will do it. I don't have it in me to love my enemies...I can't make myself love them....But God I will allow your love to flow through me to them.

Because God if you command it...you will accomplish it...if I surrender to your will and desires rather than my own. " It is through our surrender that we can accomplish what only God himself can do in us. Paul understood this when he said "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." It doesn't take God's strength to do what we want to do. His strength is to get us to do what we would never want to do.

You and I will never muster up that kind of love on our own. Bingo...that is the whole point of the parable. Please don't miss this key point. That kind of love it take to truly love your enemies as yourself doesn't originate anywhere on earth. That kind of love is supernatural. We have a groovy kind of love.

The only way you can love others to that degree....Is to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, To the point that it has to overflow to your neighbors. It is not your love...it is God's

love pouring out through you....Compassion for everyone that drives one to action... is the tangible evidence of a life transformed by God.

Jesus knew...that there was only one way that we could truly love our neighbor...love our enemies as ourselves...The only way that could happen is if our heart...had been changed and transformed by God.

Loving others as we love ourselves is not something we do to earn God's favor...It is something we do because we have received God's favor. The evidence...the fruit of a transformed life is not that we know what we should do....but that we are actually doing it.

What the Priest and Levite saw....moved their feet. Our parable says that when they saw the man they crossed to the other side. What the Samaritan saw....moved his heart. The parable says that when he saw the man..He was filled with compassion... com·pas·sion a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering. The word compassion includes....Awareness of the problem...**With a strong desire to fix it.**

Jesus once took his disciples to an orgy in Caesarea Philippi at the temple of a fake God. He essentially told them.....I didn't bring you here to learn that this is wrong....I want you to act. To His disciples at Caesarea Philippi. I want you to do something about THIS!

True Disciples of Jesus allow God's compassion for everyone to flow through us. Let me share with you 5 things about Compassion.

1) Compassion is based on need...not worth. The victim was just some man....No more details than that...The Samaritan reached out to him not because of who he was but because of his great need for someone to help him.

2. Compassion feels something. We call this story The Good Samaritan. That phrase would never have been used by the First Century Jew. To them, there was no such thing as a Good Samaritan.

When the Samaritan man saw the victim, he was moved from deep inside his soul. His heart churned inside him to the point that he could not pass by without doing something to help. Compassion always feels something.... It stirs us...troubles us...it will not let us rest...until we DO something.

3. Compassion does something. You must move toward people to express compassion. It is not convenient and it takes concentrated effort. Compassion for others doesn't just happen.

4. Compassion costs something. It cost him time, inconvenience and perhaps personal risk...A Samaritan carrying an injured body...could lead to the assumption that he is the one who injured him. He left money...and offered to cover all expenses without limitations. He did everything he could do to show compassion for this man

5. Compassion reflects our relationship with God. The degree to which we love the Lord our God is reflected in our compassion for others. If we truly love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. God's compassion for those He is compassionate about will be overflowing from us...And we will not be able to sit still.



6. Compassion always move us to action.

If we just talk about it....but don't really love God. We may know how we are supposed to feel...but we don't really feel it. We may have some compassion...for those we like....But we don't have compassion for those God says we should Love. God's compassion, when flowing through us, always drives us to action.

We know John 3:16 but let me read to you 1 John 3:16 (ESV) 16 By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

James 2:15–17 (ESV) 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

But if you are follower of Jesus and are poorly clothed or lacking in daily food, you don't get a pass either. You are to love others as you love yourself. In the Cafe, just like in my workplace, there is a lack of God's love for each other. Jesus is calling all of us the let His love flow out of us.

Yesterday in the Cafe we had a memorial for 9 people. Talk about that.

So the Big Idea of this small story. Is that those who have eternal life...those who truly love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. Those who are fully surrendered to His plan, His agenda, and His mission....Can't help but love others as they love themselves.

God's love pours out through us and we can't stop it. We see the world with God's compassion for others. People truly surrendered to Jesus...are moved to action. God puts in them a love for others that cannot be ignored.

Jesus says...if you really love others as much as you love yourself. Then you have been changed by the Father and you will have eternal life. Your love and compassion for others...is the fruit of that relationship. It is impossible for you to be Jesus' Talmidim and not develop His love for all people. You want to be just like your Savior, surrender and allow His love to flow through you.

If you struggle loving others, not liking them...I love everyone but I don't like everyone....If deep in you heart you struggle loving every person Jesus died for....and you are a Spirit filled believer....there is a sin in your life that is suppressing the expression of God's love for others that is to flow through you.

So....do you see them? The people...beat up...bruised...beaten down...The people lying on the side of your path each day....Interruptions on your way to something more important...People who desperately need to see Jesus' love in you? Maybe people you don't like...not Samaritans...but perhaps homeless, poor, addicted...smelly...Maybe for you it is the rich...fancy cars... impressive addresses...Who has God placed in your path? I know you see them...But...do you see them...with your heart?

Does your heart break for them? Can you see them the way God sees them?  
Wounded....discouraged...refugees from a spiritual battle? Can you trade places with  
them? Can you allow God to let you love them....like you love yourself?

Are you going to act on it? It will cost you something....Or are you just going to cross the  
road again. Do you want to know how close you are with Jesus? Jesus told the  
Lawyer...look at how you love those you think are unlovable.

People here in Sarasota...Hurting and wounded who needed our help. Jesus said some will not get  
it...they will see them...but not love them..

15 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes  
they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with  
their heart and turn, and I would heal them.' 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your  
ears, for they hear.

If you see someone truly loving their neighbor...their enemies...people they don't know...truly  
loving them as they love themselves...they are born again followers of Jesus...The first fruit of  
the Spirit is love....there is no other source of love like that on earth. If you can't find it in your  
heart to love those Jesus loves....ask God to show you what is wrong. Then I challenge you once  
you have confessed that sin, to ask God to put in you His love for the people you don't naturally  
love. God will love everyone through you if you allow it.

The eyes of Remnant see and our ears hear...Those God has placed in our path are not  
labels..they are not groups of problems...they are real people...with real faces...lots of  
them...they didn't plan to end up this way- Satan took them there. Rescuing and caring for them  
is not easy...not always safe...not logical...not pretty...not convenient...not fun...not cheap...not  
clean...not appreciated...not rewarded...and not natural. Many initially don't want our  
help....they hate us for trying to help. They are your next door neighbor...your co-worker...your  
family....your children ...your ex...your friends....the loaner student at school....yes some are  
homeless...some have homes but are heartless...some are addicted to drugs...some are addicted  
to the drug that is themselves...some are filthy on the outside...some on the inside...some are  
afraid of being judged...others are too busy judging...Our sign out front says we are a group of  
messed up people and it is true.

But here is the thing....Jesus died for you and me and He died for each and every one of  
them...He loves you and me...and He loves them just as much...He has them in His  
heart..and we have His heart in us. Thus, we must notice them because He notices them.  
We must run to them because He runs to them.

We have compassion for them because He has compassion for them. We must love  
them because He loves them. We must love them because we were just like them-  
Imprisoned by sin but now freed by Christ. We must surrendered to become just like  
Him....It is what true disciples do. Let's pray.