

Today as I continue with the Parables of Jesus, we will look at the Parable of the good Samaritan. I will give you ten lessons to think about this week.

Luke 10:25-37

New Living Translation

²⁵ One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?" ²⁷ The man answered, "'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.'" ²⁸ "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!" ²⁹ The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

³⁰ Jesus replied with a story: "A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, (Jerusalem is higher in elevation than Jericho. Thus, Christ said, "A certain man **went down** from Jerusalem to Jericho").

The distance between Jerusalem and Jericho is about 17 miles. The road to Jericho, during Christ's time, has earned a reputation for being a dangerous path to take because it was riddled with many robbers. In fact, many dubbed the road the "**Way of Blood**" because of the countless blood often shed by the robbers. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is a winding and meandering road. So, it was a perfect place for robbers to set an ambush. Back to the parable:

and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. ³¹ "By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. ³² A Temple assistant or a Levite walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

³³ "Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. ³⁴ Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed the man's wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, (the equivalent of two days wages) telling

him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.' ³⁶ "Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. ³⁷ The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

Lesson no. 1: Love knows no boundary.

Perhaps, the most important lesson in the parable of the good Samaritan is that **you can't limit love.** You can't simply define your neighbors according to how close they live to you, or ethnic background, or cultural background, or any other excuse, in other words your neighbor is everyone you encounter.

In the parable, we read how Jesus taught the importance of loving one another. The lawyer asked the question of how to inherit eternal life. The answer given is a shocker to love God **and** to love your neighbor.

The parable of the good Samaritan deals with saving the dying man.

For the religious leaders in Christ's time, the common perception is that you only love those who are close to you and forget those people who are outside your circle.

But Christ, who looks at the heart, knew what the lawyer was thinking. So, Jesus gave the parable to explain the importance of not limiting one's love. Here, Christ redefined what 'neighbor' really means. This I believe is the key to evangelism.

In the parable, Christ showed the people that you need to love and help others no matter who they are. You don't need a reason to love because love itself is a reason for you to do good to others. **John 3:16**

Lesson no. 2: Love knows no end.

God's love for us is unending and that's the type of love that we all should strive for. The parable of the good Samaritan shows us that ***we can never love enough.***

We can't come to the point when we tell ourselves and others that we have fulfilled our obligation to love and so, we can now stop and quit.

In Leviticus 19:34, we read how being good to others have already been commanded in the time of Moses: **New International Version**

The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

The problem is that people have misunderstandings and even wrong ideas about what God has commanded us. The law of God is for our good. The problem lies in the people who don't follow His laws.

Lesson no. 3: Love should be in the context of God's commandment.

Now, when I say "love" I'm not supporting the wrong application of love.

Agape love, called unconditional love, the type of love that God has for us. We can't simply define what God's love is. What we must do is ***let God define what love is***. The problem with so many Christians and non-Christians is that they have their definition of God's love. That's the reason that most people have this wrong concept of love.

They think that if it feels good, then it must be love.

They let their emotions define what love is. They think that love is like an accident that they can "fall" into. No, that's not the love that is here.

Do you know what love is? Here's what the Bible says in 1 John 5:2-3

New Living Translation ²We know we love God's children if we love God and obey his commandments. ³Loving God means keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome.

True love is defined in God's commandments. If you want to know what love is, you simply need to look into the commandments of God. It will tell you how to love God and how to love your neighbor.

Go on, start with the Ten Commandments.

Do you want to know how to love God? Then, check out the first four commandments.

Ten Commandments

1. [You shall have no other gods before Me.](#)
2. [You shall make no idols.](#)
3. [You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.](#)
4. [Keep the Sabbath day holy.](#)

Do you want to know how to love others? Check out the last six commandments.

5. [Honor your father and your mother.](#)
6. [You shall not murder.](#)
7. [You shall not commit adultery.](#)
8. [You shall not steal.](#)
9. [You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.](#)
10. [You shall not covet.](#)

Aside from the Ten Commandments, what are the other ways for us to know what true love is?

Read I Corinthians 13:4-8:

New Living Translation ⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶ It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. ⁸ Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever!

The question is **not** "Who is my neighbor?" Instead, it should be, "How can I be a good neighbor to others?"

Lesson no. 4: Learning should have the right motivation.

Aside from the lessons in love we learn from the parable of the good Samaritan, we must also consider the important lesson we learn from the lawyer.

Let's read **Luke 10 verses 25 and 29:**

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ...29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

It's easy to read through this story and not get the real intent of the lawyer. Let's remember that the lawyer here was a person who knows the Torah very well. They were the experts. People looked up to them for guidance and teaching.

It's quite interesting how the lawyer "stood up." It was a sign of respect. He even called Jesus "teacher." Now, those were the things that people could see. They see how the lawyer respected Christ, but that was not exactly what was happening here.

The lawyer might be showing respect, but he wasn't respectful in his real intent and attitude. The lawyer had asked Jesus a trick question. He was asking Christ for a single answer to his one question.

By asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The lawyer was trying to get a SPECIFIC answer from Christ to debate with him and prove Christ was wrong with His answer!

Now, imagine if Christ gave a specific answer to this question, the lawyer could have an opportunity to tarnish the Savior's reputation. That's the reason that Christ answered the lawyer with another question.

Later in the story, you begin to see the main purpose of the lawyer when asking Christ. He wanted to justify himself. It means that the lawyer wanted to get validation from Jesus that he was doing okay and that he was already accepted in God's eyes.

You see, some people are like that and sometimes, we, too, can be guilty of the same problem. When we are studying God's word, we need to be careful that we haven't already decided the answer then we don't have a teachable heart, we are simply like the lawyer. We must have the right attitude and motivation when we study the Bible.

We study the Bible not because we want to be better than others. It is not because we want to be more knowledgeable so we can brag how awesome we are in quoting verses.

Some people, especially **unbelievers**, study the Bible **not** to understand the Bible, but to prove the Bible wrong.

Thus, when you study the word of God, ask yourself what motivates you. Ask yourself am I open to what God is truly saying. Do I read the bible for what it says or what I want it to say?

We must have the right attitude and mindset to facilitate better learning and understanding of God's word.

Lesson no. 5: Our love for God is reflected in our love for others.

In the discussion of our Savior with the lawyer, we have read this:

27 So he answered and said, ““You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and your neighbor as yourself.” (Luke 10:27)

To this, Christ responded:

“You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.” (Luke 10:28)

Notice how loving our neighbor is always related to loving God. It only shows that you can't love God **without** loving your neighbor.

This has been made clear by the Apostle John in I John 4:20-21: 20 If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a LIAR; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

Loving God and loving your neighbor go hand in hand.

Loving God calls us to love others as well. We love others because we love God. The motivation that we have must be our love for our Father.

Lesson no. 6: Self-love is not taught in the Bible.

It's quite interesting how so many people misinterpreted the Bible when it says: "[Love] your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

They assume that the phrase "as yourself" means that you should love yourself. The thinking for some people is that to truly love others, you must love yourself first. Nothing can be farther than the truth.

Self-love is not a concept you would read in the Bible especially in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Love, from God's perspective, is an **outgoing** concern for others. That's completely different from what self-love is. Now, there's nothing wrong with building up your confidence, taking care of yourself, and focusing on improving yourself. All those things are good and should be encouraged.

Here's where the problem comes in: if you seek to love yourself first before you can love others, it can only lead to one thing: **selfishness**.

Yes, that's right. If you continually focus on yourself, you are not following the commandments of God.

Now, it doesn't mean that you should go on with your life telling yourself, "I hate myself."

To truly love God means that you also take care of yourself because God has given you life and a body that you should not abuse. Not only that but how can you effectively love others if you are sickly?

In short, the love that you have for God will ultimately enable you to also take care of others. As a byproduct, you are also taking care of yourself in the process.

The ultimate way of loving yourself is loving God and others. Instead of spending time trying to find yourself, you should be spending time helping others find Jesus because of your love for God.

Lesson no. 7: Who you are is what you do.

Now, let's focus more on the parable of the good Samaritan this time. In the story given by Christ, we have read about three men who saw the dying man:

The priest, The Levite, The Samaritan

When you investigate this list, you would expect that the priest and Levite would readily help the victim. In the minds of the Jews, it is unimaginable for the Samaritan to be the hero of Christ's story.

Yet here we simply see how Christ radically went against the common attitudes of people in His day.

Instead of the priest and Levite, both holding religious positions, who should help the dying man, of all the least expected people, it was the Samaritan who did something extraordinary. What does this tell you?

It tells you that even if you are holding a religious position, it doesn't automatically make you righteous. Even if you are a minister, a pastor, priest, or a leader in your church, it doesn't mean anything until and unless you love other people.

In the parable, the three people saw the same dying man, but it was only the Samaritan who took action in doing the right thing.

In life, it is not who you are that defines you, ***it is what you do.***

You can be the president of your country, you can be the pastor in your church, you can be the leader in your group, but without true love, you are nothing.

Lesson no. 8: Remember the weightier matters of the law.

Perhaps, one of the reasons that the priest and Levite didn't help the man was because of the purity law. The priest and Levite didn't want to be defiled by a corpse if in case the injured man was dead already.

The priest and Levite didn't want the inconvenience that comes with purifying themselves after touching a corpse.

Nonetheless, they and we should remember the words of Christ when He said:

Matthew 23:23

New Living Translation

23 “What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.

Christ said that above the purity laws of the Jews are justice, mercy, and faith. It is just or right for the priest and Levite to help the dying man. It is merciful for them to extend a hand. It is faithful for them to stay true in God’s ultimate commandment of love rather than ignoring the man dying on the road.

In the same manner, there might be laws in our land that seem to be unfair or at least, good in intention, but may prevent us from loving others. When it comes down to these choices, always choose the one that will allow you to better love others.

Don’t let man-made laws or traditions get in the way of loving your neighbor.

Lesson no. 9: Ask the right question.

The lawyer asked two questions during this discussion with the Master:

- What shall I do to inherit eternal life?
- Who is my neighbor?

Do you know the core value of these two questions?

Both of these questions only ask the ***bare minimum***.

In other words, he was asking, “What is the least that I can do to receive eternal life? How many people should I help to finally fulfill the command to love others?”

Do you see how the lawyer was asking the wrong questions? The lawyer intends to simply know the minimum requirement. That’s not how it works.

Christ said that we must be profitable servants — *servants who always go the extra mile*.

So, instead of asking, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”, the question should be, “How can I live a life pleasing to God?”

Instead of asking, “Who is my neighbor?”, it should be, “How can I be a neighbor to others?” Notice the question Christ asked after giving the parable in Luke 10:36: **“Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?”** Did you catch that?

Christ wasn't addressing the question, “Who is my neighbor?”, but rather, He was trying to teach the lawyer that we become a neighbor when we have love, mercy, and compassion for others. This is such a great lesson we must all learn from the Parable of the Good Samaritan!

Let your life shine with God's love.

Lesson no. 10: We must love in action.

In the parable, it's quite interesting to note that loving God and your neighbors is not simple it needs action.

Loving God and others is an active role to play.

It's never a feel-good and fuzzy feeling that stays in your heart.

Notice **Luke 10:27-28**: So he answered and said, **“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and your neighbor as yourself.”** 28 And He said to him, **“You have answered rightly; DO this and you will live.”**

We must understand that we should love God with 100% of our being. That includes not just thinking and talking, but also in our actions.

That's why Christ didn't simply say, “Think of this or talk about this and you will live.” His statement is clear. He said, **“DO!”** Christ's closing statement also included instruction of doing in **Luke 10:37**:

Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

We read in 1 John 3:18

New Living Translation

18 Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.

Let your life be an example and definition of God's true love.

The parable of the good Samaritan is no doubt a great story that illustrates how we must love one another. We must not limit ourselves to loving only a certain group of people.

Remember that Jesus the Messiah **died for all** and not simply for a few. With this in mind, I hope you now have a deeper understanding of the best lessons we learn from the parable of the good Samaritan.