

THE GOOD SAMARITAN (Luke 10:25-37)

THE PURPOSE

Luke 10:25 The lawyer's question seems a simple one. A question that doesn't provoke, intimidate, or challenge Jesus in a negative way as do the questions from the Scribes or Pharisees. The lawyer was a master interpreter of the Law and his business was to interpret the Law and guide the Jews on how to relate their lives to the Law. His question "what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Luke 10:26 Jesus answered him with a question of His own. Jesus then directs the lawyer to an authority that both would accept as truth and in doing so avoids an argument and puts Himself in the position of evaluating the lawyer instead of the other way around.

Luke 10:27-28 The lawyer answers correctly and Jesus says "this do and thou shalt live."

Luke 10:29 Not satisfied with Jesus' answer, and needing to 'justify' himself the lawyer asks another question, "who is my neighbor?" The word 'neighbor' in Hebrew means "someone with whom you have an association" so he knew traditionally this meant his neighbors were basically only Jews. In his own mind lurked a nagging question that rejecting Gentiles because they were not Jews was not right. He was trying to put this difficult responsibility of handling this issue onto Jesus.

THE PERSONALITIES

Luke 10:30 "A certain man" was traveling down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jerusalem meaning "the vision of peace", was of course the city where God had chosen to place His name, a center of religion and worship. Jericho, the accursed city (**Joshua 6:26**) had become a priestly city where thousands of Priests and Levites from the Temple lived when not involved with their duties in Jerusalem. It was on this road that the 'certain man' met up with the robbers who beat him half to death and robbed him.

Luke 10:31 Jesus tells us by chance there came down a "certain Priest.." This Priest was probably headed home after performing his duties in the Temple. He of all men surely will show mercy and compassion on the 'certain man'. Consecrated to God and a spiritual leader of God's people he will certainly exhibit the love of God to the needy. But alas, the Priest has left his spirituality at the Temple.

Luke 10: 32 All hope is not lost. If the 'certain man' was semi-conscious he may have heard the foot steps of this "Levite" coming by on his way home. This godly servant and minister of religious worship at the Temple and interpreter of the Law was certain to 'practice what he preached to others' and help this poor beaten 'certain man'. But he did not take time to help him.

Luke 10:33-37 Jesus introduces the 'hero' by saying, "BUT A CERTAIN SAMARITAN". This had to get the lawyer's attention because the Samaritans were hated by the Jews and would never expect help from any of them nor would the Jews help any Samaritan in need of help. Jesus tells him that a Samaritan was the only one on that dangerous, lonely Jericho road willing not only to help a needy Jew but to befriend him, get his hands dirty cleaning his wounds and spend time and money helping him.

THE LESSONS

We can look at this Parable and apply it like this: "The certain man" represents fallen man kind. "The robbers" represent Satan and the world system trying to destroy any hope of a relationship with God. "The Priest" represents the apostate fallen religions of the world. "The Levite" represents legalism, hardness of heart, and prejudices of believers. "The Samaritan" represents Jesus and the mature Christian providing the right way to spiritual health and eternal life. In putting the Priest and Levite in such bad light Jesus was rebuking the Jewish heartless, non-compassionate, formal, organized religion.

