

Luke 10:29-37

²⁵ One day an expert in the law stood up to test Him. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” Jesus replied. “How do you read it?” ²⁷ He answered, “‘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 ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” ²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus said. “Do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ³⁰ Jesus took up this question and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down the same road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, when a Levite came to that spot and saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³³ But when a Samaritan on a journey came upon him, he looked at him and had compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Take care of him,’ he said, ‘and on my return I will repay you for any additional expense.’” ³⁶ Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” ³⁷ “The one who showed him mercy,” replied the expert in the law. Then Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Berean Study Bible

1

I can't help you. Luke 10:29-37

I have a spiritual reason for not helping. ³¹ “a priest”
I am moving closer towards God.
I am moving away from worldliness.
But, “in, yet not of, this world”

I have an emotional reason for not helping. ³² “a Levite”
I am afraid of what might happen if I engage.
I feel inadequate to deal with what happened.
But, “I am with you”

I have a social reason for not helping. ³³ “a Samaritan”
We have a long history of enmity.
You have the wrong religion.
But, “do good to those who hate you”

2

I need mercy. Luke 10:29-37

I need mercy in my spirit. 31 “a priest”

I need salvation from my sin.

I need eternal life.

I need mercy in my soul. 32 “a Levite”

I need salvation from my sins.

I need abundant life.

I need mercy in my body. 33 “a Samaritan”

I need salvation from my past.

I need salvation for my future.

3

Times when I need a neighbour. Luke 10:29-37

People leaving God need a neighbour. 30

Jerusalem, place of sacrifice and worship. “going down from Jerusalem”

Jericho, place of comfort and pleasure. “going down... to Jericho”

People in trouble need a neighbour. 30

He did nothing wrong. “he fell into”

Others did evil to him. “the hands of robbers”

People causing trouble need a neighbour. 30

Some people hold evil in their hearts. “robbers”

Some people do evil with their hands. “stripped... beat... leaving him half dead”

People needing to be seen need a neighbour. 31-33

All people need to be seen. “saw him... saw him...”

All people need to be more than seen. “looked at him”

People who work need a neighbour. 35

Workers need to work. “Take care of him”

Workers need to be paid. “I will repay you”

People who need a neighbour. 37

Neighbours are those who know mercy. “Which of these...”

Neighbours are those who show mercy. “Go and do likewise”

4

What neighbours do. Luke 10:29-37

‘I’ll pray for you’ – What priests do. 31

‘I’ll organise for you’ – What Levites do. 32

‘I’ll help you’ – What good Samaritans do. 33-35

5

Key questions. Luke 10:29-37

The question he asked: Who is my neighbour?

The unasked question: Who is my God?

6

What Good Samaritans do. Luke 10:29-37

Good Samaritans have open hearts.

33. "he looked at him and had compassion"

Good Samaritans have open resources.

34a "He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine"

Good Samaritans have open timeframes.

34b "He put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him"

Good Samaritans have open wallets.

35 "Take care of him, 'and on my return I will repay you for any additional expense."

7

Walk like a Samaritan. Luke 10:29-37

Doing the right thing

Doing the right thing at the right time

Doing the right thing in the right way

8

You and me. Yours and mine. Luke 10:29-37

What's yours is mine. I'll take it: Thieves and robbers.

What's mine is mine. I'll keep it: Priest and Levite.

What is mine is yours. I'll share it: Good person.

9

Walk across the road. Luke 10:29-37

Who is my neighbour? 29b "Who is my neighbour?"

How neighbours act. 37a "The one who showed him mercy,"

Be a neighbour. 37b "Go and do likewise."

10

I can help the world. Luke 10:29-37

This world is no help.

The world will take from you. 30 "robbers... stripped him"

The world will walk from you. 30 "went away, leaving him"

There is no help in this world.

There is no help from religion. 31 "priest... passed by on the other side"

There is no help from service. 32 "Levite... passed by on the other side"

'Out of this world' help.

Help is from the heart. 33 "had compassion"

Help is with the hands. 34a "went to him and bandaged..."

Help is like at home. 34b "on his own... brought him to... took care of..."

Help in this world.

We have resources. 35 "two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper"

We have each other. 35 "to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,'"

We have expectations. 35 "on my return I will repay you"

11

That is wrong on so many levels! Luke 10:29-37

That is the wrong way to treat Jesus. 25-29 "to test Him"

That is the wrong way to treat a stranger. 30 "stripped... beat... leaving him"

That is the wrong way to treat a victim. 31-32 "passed by... passed by"

That is the wrong way to treat a foreigner. 33-35 "compassion"

That is the right way to learn anything. 36-37 "Go and do"

12

Nice people can go to Hell. Luke 10:29-37

You can have the wrong faith and the wrong action and you will be unsaved.

I am not saved by the size or sincerity of faith my faith. Luke 17:6

I am not saved by the size or sincerity of faith my works. Luke 23:43

You can have the right faith and the wrong actions and still be unsaved.

I am saved by faith without works. Ephesians 2:8-9

If I am saved my faith will have works. James 2:17, 26

You can have the wrong faith and the right actions and still be unsaved.

I am not saved by being a nice person. Romans 3:20, Ephesians 2:9

I am not saved by the wrong religion. John 4:22

Other possible titles

Neighbour is spelled with a 'm'. v37 "The one who showed him mercy,"

From 'who is my neighbour' to 'be a neighbour'

Pay it forward.

Random acts of kindness.

Detour ahead.

Don't just go to church- be the church!

Stop being a doormat.

Be a Good Samaritan and not a good doormat.

The not-so-good non-Samaritan.

Two bad men. Two good men. (Priest and Levite; Good Samaritan and Good Shepherd)

A minus, A plus (A minus: Ancestry [Levi / Samaria]. A plus: Action, Accountability)

You know the answer, you know the action. (v37)

The neighbours from Hell.

Position vacant: Samaritan. Must be good.

The identity of an inheritor.

False friends and loving enemies.

Trick question. Tricky answer.

Will you pass the test, or just pass by?

What good has your religion done for you, or others?

Why do good people do bad things? Why do bad people do good things?

Hip, hip, hypocrite; or hip, hip, hooray!

Serving God by serving people.

Reframing the question.

Go and do likewise.

Cost of Christianity.

There are those who say grace, and there are those who do grace.

I'm not as bad as him!

Have you been naughty, or nice?

Breaking down the barriers.

Become a risk-taker.

It's time to practice what is preached.

Music and songs

Songs about this text

My hands are the Lord's hands (Rich Gibbons et al)
On the Jericho road (Bill & Gloria Gaither)
Reach out to your neighbour. FE 17

Songs about helping others

A new commandment. 232 / SiS 12
Be the one.
Blest be the tie that binds. H 499
Brother, sister, let me serve you. SiS 256
Friends (Michael W Smith)
Friends, all in the family of God (Petra)
I love to tell the story. H 653
Live with abandon, Ot 36
Make me a channel of blessing. 647
Lord show me what it means, 413
Never walk alone.
People need the Lord.
People to people. 88
That's how you change the world. (Newsboys)
They will know we are Christians. Ot 25
We've a story to tell to our neighbours. H 353

Songs about receiving help

A pilgrim was I... Surely goodness and mercy. H 10
Breathe on me breath of God. H 266
I can't imagine. 964
I need Thee every hour. H 655
My Jesus, I love Thee. H 443
Reach out to Jesus. CWH 2
Years I spent in vanity and pride... At Calvary.
You rescued me. Ot 45

Songs about recognising help

God is our strength and refuge.
Great is Your faithfulness. H 73
Ho, my comrades... If God be for us. H733
I stand amazed... My Saviour's love. C 378
Jesus is the answer, Ot 82
Just at the right time (S W Brown)
Moment by moment. H 684
O God our help in ages past. H 82
This is our God, the Servant King. 674
When upon life's billows... Count your blessings. H 723 / C 434

Thought starters for personal reflection or group discussion

1. What makes us say someone is a 'nice', or 'not nice', person?
 2. List those who benefit from nice people. Why does the circle of niceness enlarge?
 3. What does it cost to be a 'nice' person?
 4. List some theological reasons for being nice.
 5. What hinders people from becoming nice, and how can those barriers be reduced?
 6. Why is Heaven not a reward for being nice?
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Illustrations and examples

The Paradoxical Commandments by Kent Keith

People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centred.

Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.

Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies.

Succeed anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.

Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds.

Think big anyway.

People favour underdogs but follow only top dogs.

Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.

Build anyway.

People really need help but may attack you if you do help them.

Help people anyway.

Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway.

No one would have remembered the Good Samaritan if he'd only had good intentions. He had money as well. Dame Margaret Thatcher

The Homeless Woman's Poem

I was hungry, and you formed a humanities group to discuss my hunger.

I was imprisoned, and you crept off quietly to my chapel and prayed for my release.

I was naked, and in your mind you debated the morality of my appearance.

I was sick, and you knelt and thanked God for your health.

I was homeless, and you preached to me the spiritual shelter of the love of God.

I was lonely, and you left me alone to pray for me.

You seem so holy, so close to God but I am still very hungry – and lonely – and cold.”
Author unknown

What most people need to learn in life is how to love people and use things instead of using people and loving things.

Immature love says: 'I love you because I need you.' Mature love says: 'I need you because I love you. Erich Fromm

Saint Peter was at the gates of Heaven interviewing a man. He said, “You haven’t done anything bad, but you haven’t anything good either. If you tell me just one good thing that you’ve done, I’ll let you in.”

“Well, the man replied, “I was traveling on the road when I saw a group of thugs robbing a woman. So I went up to them and shouted for them to stop. Unfortunately, things got a little out of hand and I ended up punching out their leader. Then I challenged everyone else in the group to fight me.”

“Wow,” Saint Peter said. “That IS good. When did it happen?”

“About 2 minutes ago.”

Most of us will never be put in the Samaritan’s position. We are tested in more subtle ways as needs of others are revealed. Our character is seen in our attitude to these needs, and to our possessions.

With the lawyer’s question, I point to the other person and ask, “Is he my neighbour?”
With Jesus’ question, I point to myself and ask, “Am I a neighbour to one who needs me?”

In his speech “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop,” Martin Luther King, Jr. put it this way. “The priest and the Levite ask, ‘If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?’ But then the Good Samaritan came by, and he reversed the question: ‘If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?’”

From Owen Bourgaize. We cannot read backwards from our time into this parable.

With a little knowledge it would be quite easy to draw an allegorical interpretation to this parable; for example. We could say that traveller represents man, who has left the heavenly city (Jerusalem) for the worldly one (Jericho). The robbers could represent the devil and sin, which leave man dying in sin. We could also say that the priest and the Levite refer to the Law and its sacrifices, which are unable to help, the good Samaritan is Jesus, who provides the help needed, the wine represents the blood of Christ; the oil, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the inn is the church, the inn-keeper is representative of the apostles and the two coins represent baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

From Scott Kircher. Modernising/contextualising this parable.

I want you to imagine for a moment, that you are single woman, living in the city. By day you work as a check out girl at a local grocery store and to try and make ends meet you are also working at an all-night diner waitressing during the night shift. Life is hard in this age of rising prices.

There are bills that are due, but you had some pretty good tips tonight so you should be able to pay the gas bill and the electric bill that is a week overdue. It is March, but winter has been sticking around longer than expected.

As you get home from your waitressing job, it is about 3 am and as you park the car and get out, you feel the chill in the air. It is about 30 degrees but you only have your spring coat on. You found a parking spot on the street that was only about 2 blocks from your apartment. In the city you could almost classify that as a miracle, especially at 3 in the morning.

You begin walking to your apartment down the street. You get this strange feeling that there is someone watching you. You pick up the pace.

Then you hear footsteps approaching you, running. You run. You don't feel the cold anymore. Your heart is racing. Then someone grabs you from behind and you feel a sharp pain in your back. You have been stabbed. You scream out for help.

The man stabs you again. You scream again. You see a couple lights go on. The attacker jumps on top of you. Someone screams out from a window for this man to leave you alone. Your attacker takes off. The window closes. You're lying there. You don't feel cold anymore. You feel the warmth of your blood on your back.

You notice it is quiet again. There is no one around. The lights that had come on are off again.

Where is that man who opened his window? Where are the police who have surely been called? You don't hear sirens. You don't hear anything. Maybe if you get to your apartment, you can call an ambulance.

You get up, but you are dizzy. You stumble, but catch yourself on a tree. You are feeling light headed now. You fall when you are almost to your building. You crawl up to your apartment door which is in a small enclave. Still no sirens. No help. Then you hear some footsteps coming. Finally, someone to help.

You turn to sit and say please help me, only to discover it is your attacker with the knife. He tries to stab you again but you put your hands up and get stabbed in the hands. You scream again and his knife finds its way to your stomach.

Through the glass entrance you see a door open up the stairs, and a head peak out.

Finally some help, but the door shuts. The man continues his attack as you pass out.

Most of you here right now are probably empathizing with this woman being attacked...

What if in the first story I told you this morning that the man who opened the window and yelled was a pastor. The second person who opened the door was a deacon.

And then, after the women passed out there was a Muslim man who came out on his way to morning prayers and kicked the attacker and he fled. He saw she was bleeding and took his head scarf to slow the bleeding. He called the police and an ambulance. He stayed with her until they came. He gave his statement to the police. He missed his morning prayers and arrived at the cab company where he worked late so he didn't make as much money that day.

You might be appalled and shocked that I would tell a story like that using those characters that way. I can guarantee that most of those who were listening to Jesus were shocked that he would tell such a story with those characters he included.