

## THE PARABLES OF JESUS

### LESSON 4

#### The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37)

Today, a Samaritan is synonymous with a do-gooder, but in the first century Jerusalem it was just the opposite. Samaritans were thought of as evil, half breed, pagan enemies, considered unclean. When Assyria defeated Israel about 750 years before, they carried off all the leaders and brought in new foreign leaders. Over time the population was mixed both in their ancestry and religion. Samaria had been the capital in the north so they were called Samaritans. When the Jews in the south came back from the Babylonian captivity to rebuild Jerusalem, the Samaritans objected. Samaritans became hated enemies and rivals.

#### Context

1. What two questions did the lawyer ask Jesus in Luke 10:25 and 29? What is the answer to the first question (v. 27)? Read Matthew 5:43-48. The law read "you shall love your neighbor" but they added hate your enemy. What did Jesus say here in Matthew 5 that defined who your neighbor is?

2. Everyone is always interested in what "they can do" to be saved (Mark 10:17, Luke 10:25). Jesus' answer about loving your neighbor prompts the question, "who is my neighbor?" In I Corinthians 13:4-7 the Bible gives us a good definition of love. Besides Jesus, do you suppose any man has ever perfectly loved his neighbor (or enemy) as described here? Is this kind of love natural to man or God? According to John 3:16, Romans 5:8, I John 4:7-10, where does this kind of love come from? Who initiates or inspires this kind of love in us (I John 4:19)?

3. Being a lawyer this man (v. 29) wants to perfectly define what his obligations are. He was willing to treat the priests, scribes, and Pharisees well, but surely there was a limit. Jesus is going to show that all "religious systems" of achieving righteousness come up short because they depend on external acts instead of internal, spiritual love. Read the story in Luke 7:36-50 of the sinful woman. Why was she forgiven (Luke 7:47, 50).

#### Read Luke 10:30-37

4. After the poor man was robbed and beaten, what did the first two passersby do? Priests and Levites would have been the most religious, hard working people of that time and culture. The priests were the clergy responsible for the worship and sacrifices of the Temple and the Levites assisted them in these Temple duties. How would you explain their behavior?

5. Who would be the last person a first century Jew would expect to stop and help (v. 33)? Why did he stop and help? What all did he do to help the guy?

6. The Lord is deliberately and carefully shocking His audience. The man in need is them. The people they look up to (priests) are not helping. The man they reject (Jesus) is the one who loves them and is offering help. What was Jesus' ultimate offer of help (Mark 10:45, Luke 24:46, I Corinthians 15:3-4)?

7. Was the love shown for the victim in this story merited or unmerited? Did the Samaritan just help him, or did he go way beyond the call of duty? Would you say the love the Samaritan showed was gracious and from the heart, or did he do it out of an obligation or in keeping with a religious command? What kind of love does God have for us (John 3:16; Romans 5:8, 8:31-32; Ephesians 2:4-5; 2 Thessalonians 2:16; I John 4:8-19)?

8. What are the three philosophies of life portrayed in this parable?

- a. The robbers--
- b. The religious--
- c. Christ's--

9. The lawyer asked (v. 29). "who is my neighbor?" Jesus is not only defining a neighbor in this parable, but also loving one's neighbor. According to the parable, who do you think is your neighbor and how do you love him?

10. The lawyer (in v. 25) asked Jesus about his "inheritance in heaven." Jesus' response demonstrates that there are rewards for the obedient believer in heaven. Since rewards are merited by action (v. 28, 37), according to this parable to whom will rewards be given?