

Luke 10:25-37

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[0 : 00] Luke chapter 10. I know we've been in Luke the last couple of weeks, but we're going to be in Luke chapter 10. We spent the last couple of weeks in Luke 15, but we're looking at the parables of Christ. And we're going to look at another very familiar parable, which you have heard much of and probably read it many times.

But again, as we say with so much of scripture, do not let your familiarity with it kind of blind you to the way the Lord's going to speak to your heart, okay? So Luke 10, verses 25 through 37, we know it as the parable of the Good Samaritan.

But I want you to see from this parable of Christ this morning, how we can live in genuine love, living in genuine love. So if you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you'll join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God found in the gospel according to Luke, Luke chapter 10, starting in verse 25.

And then we're going to read down to verse 37 and we will pray. It says, and a lawyer stood up and put him to the test saying, teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And he said to him, what is written in the law?

How does it read to you? And he answered, 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. And he said to him, you have answered correctly, do this and you will live.

[1 : 16] But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, and who is my neighbor? Jesus replied and said, a man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers and they stripped him and beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

And by chance, a priest was going down on that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise, a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan who was on a journey came upon him.

And when he saw him, he felt compassion. And he came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. And he put him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

On the next day, he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, take care of him and whatever more you spend, when I return, I will repay you. Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robber's hands?

Verse 37. And he said, the one who showed mercy toward him. Jesus said to him, go and do the same. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for allowing us the opportunity of gathering together.

[2 : 21] Lord, what a privilege it is to open up your word as a body of believers. Lord, of those coming to hear a word from you. Lord, we pray that you'd speak to our hearts and minds. Lord, may you take the truth of scripture and impress it upon every one of us.

And Lord, may those truths captivate our heart, captivate our mind, and change our lives for your glory and yours alone. Lord, we ask that you would be lifted on high. We ask that your name would be magnified.

And we ask it all in the sweet name of Jesus. Amen. You may be seated. We've come this morning to a very familiar parable, Luke chapter 10, verses 25 through 37.

And as we have seen, the parables which Christ used to teach the multitudes, he would often speak to the disciples in private and would speak to them in clarity with simple proclamation, right? He would open up the parables to them, but to the multitudes, quite often, he would teach in parables. And parables were allegorical stories, not actual events, not actual happenings, but allegorical stories which told of a heavenly truth being played out in an earthly realm.

[3 : 22] It would be revealing what heaven desires to take place on earth. There are a number of parables that we can look at of Christ, and we can see things of what heaven is like and what man must be like and how we should live and how we should order and ordain our lives for his glory.

There are some that we put into the category of parables that are not parables. Rather, they're actual accounts. We know a parable because they never give specific names. This is just one of the things that we need to understand when we're studying scripture.

When you open up your Bible and you're reading the words of Christ and you're reading through what Jesus is teaching the multitudes, if you come upon an account in which he uses a name, that is not a parable.

That is something that actually happened, right? Parables never use names. It is always a man or an individual or a woman. One of those that often is called a parable is the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Remember Lazarus at the gate and the dogs would come and lick his sores. And Lazarus died and was carried away into Abraham's bosom. And then the rich man died and he was carried away as well. You remember that? Most people think that that is a parable.

[4 : 23] Well, really, this is not a parable because Jesus gives us a name. And that name is Lazarus. By the way, where was Lazarus carried by the angels to? He's carried into Abraham's bosom, which is a picture of heaven. And you say, well, we don't know the name of the rich man.

That's why, because when you're in Hades, you have a number. But when you're in heaven, you have a name, right? That's a good thing there. So Jesus gave us the name of the one who is in Abraham's bosom, which is a picture of paradise in Old Testament reference.

But anyway, we get off our divergent and we come back. Here, very clearly, we are looking at a parable. Jesus is not speaking of something that actually happened. So with that in mind, we don't need to know why this man was attacked by the robbers, right?

We don't need to know to what extent was he beaten. We don't need to know where the Samaritan was going. Those things don't matter because what we need to know is that which Jesus is revealing to us, and that is how to live a life of genuine love.

How to live a life of genuine love. Because this is the call of Scripture. And we are introduced to it by this individual called a lawyer. All of a sudden, many of us say, lawyers, I can't trust lawyers.

[5 : 26] I don't even like lawyers. I don't have anything to do with lawyers. Oh, they're lawyers. Well, wait a minute. Let's back up. Let's define lawyer according to the way it is defined in Scripture. A lawyer was not necessarily someone who went to court and tried a case.

The reason they refer to his lawyers here is because there was a religious court, and then there was the legal court. Think Sanhedrin. Remember when Jesus stood before the Sanhedrin? I know I'm throwing a lot of information at you, but you're good with it.

You just nod yes and say, yes, that's good. Let's keep going, right? Jesus had how many trials before he was crucified? Six, right? He had three religious trials and three civil trials. He stood before the Sanhedrin.

He stood before the high priest, and he stood before the father of the high priest. And then he went before Pontius Pilate. He went before Herod, and then he went back before Pontius Pilate. So he had six trials, right?

So at the Sanhedrin, that's the 70 elders. That is the religious court. There were lawyers in that, and the lawyer's job, we need to understand this to properly understand the Scripture. The lawyer's job was to have an exact and depth knowledge of Old Testament law.

[6 : 29] So they were not to know what was going on in civil law, but they were to know what was going on in the Word of God, as we would refer to it as Genesis through Malachi, right? They were to study. They were also called scribes. They were those who recorded Scripture that would copy Scripture.

The reason you have the privilege of holding a Bible in your hand, and quite often we overlook this, is because a lawyer or a scribe sat down many, many ages ago and hand-copied your Scriptures. They hand-copied them and hand-copied them and hand-copied them to such an extent of perfection that we took those copies of copies of copies of copies and can today with all authority say, this is what was originally written.

So these were well-educated, well-trained people who knew the law. Which gets us to the first thing of living with genuine love. We see a false hope of wisdom. Friend, listen to me.

Number one, there is a false hope of wisdom. You do not live a life of genuine love simply because you know you should. Or simply because you know all the facts. Or because you know the Bible inside and out.

[7 : 29] Look at what the Word of God tells us. It says, And at that time a lawyer stood up and put him to the test. And saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

So now we're seeing an individual who knows the Word of God as they have it recorded, Genesis through Malachi, better than the majority of the people of that day. He was a Jew whose job it was to study the Word of God, to know the ins and outs of the Word of God, of the law of God, to be able to hand translate or hand transcribe the Word of God.

And he stands up for the sole purpose of putting Jesus to the test. And he is a man full of wisdom. But we see where this wisdom has led him. He says, Teacher, Friend, do you understand this? That if all you ever want to attain is a knowledge of Scripture, you will come to Jesus as a teacher. And he is a teacher, but he is not a teacher alone. He is so much more than a good teacher. There are many people today who will testify that Jesus was a great teacher, that he was an excellent teacher, that he taught great truths, that he taught great standards, that he taught great morality, and he taught all these great things.

[8 : 33] And if we come to Christ as a teacher and say, Oh, just teach me what I should do, we understand here the failure of wisdom. Wisdom is something that we must not lean upon because we are not in need of more knowledge.

We are in need in transformation. We see this false hope because the lawyer stands up and says, Teach me what I must do to inherit eternal life. If we are trusting in our wisdom or in our knowledge or in what we know, then the question is always this, What can I do?

That is a great problem. This is the same question, by the way, in which another parable was started. When the rich young ruler came to Jesus and said, What must I do to inherit eternal life? And with each of these, we are seeing Jesus address a problem.

With the rich young ruler, we find the answer in the question, right? He was a rich young ruler. And Jesus said, Go sell everything. And now we found that his God was his wealth. But with the lawyer, Jesus addresses his God, which is his knowledge.

Do you know that it is quite possible to know the Bible inside and out and still not have a salvific relationship with Jesus Christ? It is quite possible to have Scripture memorized, to know the Bible, to know the historical aspects of the Bible, to tell me everything about the Bible.

[9 : 43] You would know more Scripture than just about anybody else that I know. And still, my friend, listen to me, if that is all you're trusting in, that is your wisdom of Scripture, you have still not come to the reality of what the Bible is pointing you to.

Many classes in our colleges today, many of our higher academic education levels, which still teach Bible, they are taught by agnostics or atheists. They are taught by people who deny the existence of a God because they teach the Bible as they would any other historical book.

Or they are taught by people who completely ignore the reality of a God because you can teach it historically and not really be changed at all by it. Friend, listen to me. Knowing the Word is not the same as being known by the Word.

It is quite possible to open up the Bible and gain a bunch of information and never allow it to go further than your head, that is to go into your heart. And this is exactly what the lawyer is doing. The lawyer says, I know it because Jesus says, what does it read to you?

How do you read it? What do you say? And look, he gives a good answer. He says, the Word of God tells me to do this. He's asking him, what must I do? And he says, this is what you should do. He answered in verse 27, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your might, and your neighbor as yourself.

[10 : 55] This is the Old Testament in a nutshell. What is the Old Testament teaching you? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus says, great. You know intellectually what it is you should do. So Jesus says, just do this and you will live. Do this and you will live. Here is the false hope of wisdom, because we find it in what the lawyer does next.

Wishing to justify himself. He asks the question, who is my neighbor? You know the problem with the collection of information, the problem with the collection of wisdom.

We will always filter those facts through our own understanding and through our own opinions. We will always filter those facts through how we see it.

And it is not up to us to gather information and try to justify ourselves. Friend, we do it all, every one of us do it. We read a portion of scripture that is very difficult. We read a portion of scripture that sounds really hard.

[12:02] I mean, such as when someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him your left also. Or whoever asks you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to whoever asks of you. I want to just tell you as a pastor, that's very difficult because I justify that.

We get calls to the church all the time, well give to whoever asks of you is a very bold and audacious statement, right? And then we have to filter how we give to whoever asks because the reality is we live in a culture in which a lot of people ask, right?

But the scripture says give to whoever asks of you. So you justify it. You have to reconcile it. Sometimes we do it with wisdom and sometimes we do it because it is convenience that I really don't want to obey this portion of scripture.

I will justify myself and say, well surely that is not my neighbor. Friend, listen to me. The command of scripture is to love with abandon. To love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.

It is all your being and your neighbor as yourself. Every wedding I officiate, I always look at Ephesians 5. In Ephesians 5 it says, woman, that wives should submit and respect their husbands, right?

[13:02] We're like, oh wait a minute, wait a minute, that's not good. And everybody gets all kind of, I hear the air come out of the room and you get the ladies in the room started getting tense and getting mad. And I said, but wait a minute. It also says husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church that he gave himself up for her.

And I always highlight, the greater that responsibility falls upon the husband. Because if the husband will give of himself, his wife will not have a problem honoring him. Right? If he will die to himself and love his wife sacrificially, then there will never be a question of, can I honor this man? The greater responsibility falls upon the husband to love sacrificially. And it says, whoever loves his wife in this manner loves himself. Whoever loves himself loves his wife. The command of the Old Testament is to love your neighbor as yourself.

And let's just be honest. We love us a lot of self. I know that's bad English, but it's true. We love ourselves because we do all we can to preserve ourselves.

And the command of Scripture is to love your neighbor that way. But we justify our actions because we see here, just because we know it, it does not mean we do it. The false hope of wisdom.

[14:09] What we do not need is more information. We do not need to come to Christ as a teacher because the reality is that every one of us can open up our Bible and read what it says. Do you know, people tell me all the time, the Bible is just difficult.

I can't understand it. The Bible is very difficult and I can't understand it. And I agree with you. I mean, man, you know, on Sunday nights, we've been going through the book of Leviticus. On Wednesdays, we've been going through the book of Psalms and those are difficult to break down. But the reality is this, that the highest level of education in which all the Scripture is written is it's written on sixth grade level of education. Especially the New Testament.

The New Testament was written in common day, everyday language. It's not that the Bible is hard to understand. It is hard to put into practice because we can read it and see what it says.

The reality is is that we don't need more wisdom. We need life transformation. We can say, well, that's what it tells me to do, but what does it really mean for me to do? I think when Jesus said, walk, when someone asked you to walk one mile, walk two miles, I think he really meant walk two miles.

[15:13] I really think that's what he meant. I mean, I just kind of take this little application. It means to go above and beyond, right? I think he really meant that. I think that's what he really meant. And we say, well, where's the application? But what is it? I just don't know.

We don't need more wisdom. We need life transformation, which leads us to the second thing that is an example to follow. So the lawyer asked this question, wishing to justify himself.

Let's never forget that, right? I have that underlined in mind, wishing to justify himself because many of the questions which we ask the Lord are questions in which we are asking to justify ourselves.

At least me. Maybe not you, but at least that's me. Okay? Most times I'm like, but God, I really don't understand it. All I'm trying to do is justify my actions. Like, it's the whole Tony Evans thing, and I'm reminded of this, especially in light of the meal we're going to have tonight because I know I will do this before the meal.

I will probably get asked to pray and bless the meal. Okay? Bless the food. And we're going to ask the Lord to bless this food for the nourishment of our bodies. Now, let's be honest. There's some things that are going to be sitting back there that aren't going to be real nourishing to our bodies.

[16:13] But we're asking somehow or another for the Lord to justify this unnourishable food and to, as Tony Evans said, Lord, make this Big Mac turn into broccoli on the way down and really do something good inside of me, right?

That's what we're going to ask. And we justify it. Well, tomorrow I won't, but I'm just going to go and be honest. I'm just going to confess. I'm going to eat a whole lot tonight and I probably shouldn't eat tonight and I'm going to feel terrible by the time I get done eating it, but it sure is going to be good when it goes down.

Okay? I'm not justifying it. I'm just telling you what's going to happen. But we do that. Our lives are that way. It's not that we need more wisdom. I know what's good for me and I know what's bad for me. I just like the stuff that's bad for me a lot of times.

It tastes better. It just does, right? But we know these things, so now we come to the second point and that is an example to follow. Jesus says, okay, I'll give you an example. The question is what? Who is my neighbor? The answer that Jesus gives is, are you a neighbor? Never miss that. The lawyer asked the question, who is my neighbor? The answer that Jesus gives, are you a neighbor? [17:11] Because, look at what he does. This is a man who is going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. This is something you need to understand in Scripture as well. Because of the elevation of Jerusalem, Jerusalem was higher in elevation than any other area, or still is, in any other area around the nation of Israel, it is always said that you go down from Jerusalem.

I don't care if you're traveling north, you're traveling south, you're traveling east, you're traveling west. You always go down from Jerusalem. That is also a very intentional purpose because in Jerusalem, the temple of the Lord God was there, so you would never go up from God's presence. You always come down from God's presence, right? So anytime you've been in the presence of the Lord, you're going down. You can't go up from there. So anytime you were in Jerusalem, you went down from Jerusalem. So he is going down from Jerusalem and this certain man who was going along and he fell into the hands of robbers and they beat him and they kicked him and they left him half dead.

Now, here's the reality of this parable. Jesus leaves that man. The question is what? Who is my neighbor? Now, this man laying on the side of the road, we don't talk about him anymore. He's not the focus of the story.

The focus of the story is not who is my neighbor. The focus of the story is who's going to be a neighbor to this man because the reality is they're out there everywhere, people who are hurting and people who are suffering and people who are living in difficult situations.

[18:22] And so Jesus uses this example and he brings two prime suspects to the front. He talks about a priest who is going down along the road and he sees the man and he goes to the other side of the road and he passes by. Now, many people allegorize this story and say, well, this is justifiable because if he is probably on his way to Jerusalem, he is either on his way or on his way from Jerusalem and he is either about to enter into the temple and therefore cannot desecrate himself, he must remain holy, or he has just performed a holy service and he must not pass his holiness on to something else.

I mean, the law says not to do that. Well, wait a minute. That's not the point. Let's not get caught up in this. This is one that we would expect to be able to love sacrificially, right? This is one that we would be able to expect to live with a genuine love.

A priest is one we would expect who could keep the old commandment to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength and your neighbor as yourself. But what we see is him passing by on the other side of the road.

Secondly, we see a Levite coming along. Now, a Levite, they weren't quite as high standard as a priest because they couldn't go in there and offer anything on the altar, but they worked inside the temple. Again, a Levite, one we would expect that would know the Old Testament and would be able to live a life full of Old Testament living, living a life of genuine love, he sees the man and

passes by on the other side of the road.

So what is Jesus showing us? Here are two that we would expect to see do this, but they do not do this. And then we are introduced to a Samaritan. Now, to us a Samaritan doesn't mean much, but to the Jewish lawyer which he was speaking to, the Samaritan would have meant a lot.

[19 : 53] If you've read through your Old Testament as recently, if any of you are reading Robert Mermitt's reading plan, and you have been going through that glorious book of 2 Kings where he's hearing all these names mentioned, and you're going through 2 Kings and you've seen the fall of the Northern Kingdom.

The Northern Kingdom is either referred to as Israel or Samaria because Samaria became the capital city of the Northern Kingdom after the divide of Solomon. And because of the wickedness of the kings of the Northern Kingdom, it fell first, right?

It fell to the kings of the Assyrians. And they come in, Tiglath-Pilser of all people, what a cool name that is, he came in and he carried them away. Well, what this king did, because you can't leave land uninhabited, what he did is he moved people in, right?

He took the Jewish people out of Samaria and he filled or he populated that capital city with people from all these other lands which he had conquered. You remember the story, right? It's in the Old Testament there that when they got there, they did not know the God of this land, it says in Scripture because they worshiped many gods and people were dying by lions.

So they reached out to the king of Assyria and said, we don't know how to worship the God of this land. So he said, okay, I'll send some of the Jews' priests back to you. So he sent them back so that they could teach them how to worship the God of that land and you had all this mixed worship because they still worship their false gods and now they were trying to worship the true God and they were just trying to appease the gods of the land.

[21 : 14] Quick Old Testament study, as many people in the Old Testament thought every god was confined to a certain land. This is why when Naaman washed three times in the River Jordan, it's why he went and asked for a sack full of dirt.

The reason he needed some dirt is so that when he went back to his land, he could pull that dirt out and stand on the land that God owned and worship that God. Okay, he just didn't need some dirt. He thought he wanted to take a little bit of God's land back with him. So anyway, so they're there in Samaria and what you have here is a mixed multitude of Jews and non-Jews living in Samaria with messed up worship.

Why is that important? Because by the time of Jesus' day, no Jew would have had anything to do with a Samaritan because they were a mixed multitude. They weren't pure.

They didn't know the right way to behave. They had a, even to this day, if you go to Samaria, they still, there's portions of the Old Testament which they have rewritten. There's portions, we see this when Jesus meets the woman at the well in Samaria, right?

He meets the Samaritan woman at the well. They had rewritten portions of the Old Testament and they'd rewritten all this stuff and so what we're introduced to now is the man that we would least expect. As a matter of fact, as a Jew, the man we would hope would not act like a neighbor.

[22 : 24] But Jesus says, but this man, he saw him, he went to him, he tended to him, he cared for him, he put him on his animal, he took him to the inn, he paid for his stay and he said, I'll come back again.

Here's the example. Friend, I want to tell you something, genuine love. I just wrote this down when I was reading this passage. A life of genuine love is this, it is an intentional interruption of inconvenience in your life for the sake of someone else.

I want to give you that one more time. A life of genuine love is an intentional, I see him, interruption, I'm going to go to him of inconvenience.

You know, because it says in here, this Samaritan was on a journey. He was going somewhere, right? The others are just going down the road but the Samaritan was on a journey. He made an intentional interruption of inconvenience for the sake of someone else and that's the example Jesus sets before this lawyer.

Now, he asked the lawyer, which one of these, which one of these was a neighbor? He asked him that question in verse 37, who showed mercy towards him?

[23 : 33] Or he who showed mercy towards him was what he said. He says in verse 36, which of these do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robber's hands? And just to show you the animosity that Jews had for the Samaritans, he didn't say the Samaritan, right?

He wouldn't even name him. He said, oh, he who showed mercy, that other guy. If it had been the priest, he would have said the priest. If it had been the Levite, he would have said the Levite. But he would not say the Samaritan. So what we see here, here's the example.

To live a life of genuine love, it must be an intentional interruption of inconvenience for the sake of others. Third and finally, we see this, this clear command. This is a very clear command. It is full of impossibilities.

Look at what Jesus says at the end of verse 37. Go and do the same. Or go and do likewise. Go and do the same. You know, scripture is very full of simple commands that are absolutely impossible.

Go and do the same. You say, okay, well that makes sense. Listen, everybody I see that is hurting, I'll do this. I want to go ahead and tell you something, friend, listen to me. That is simple in concept, but it is impossible in practicality.

[24 : 34] It is impossible for you to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and all your strength. It is impossible for you to love your neighbor as yourself on your own. That's an impossibility.

Because many of us would be like the priest or the Levite and understand that if we go over there and mess with that guy, it's going to mess up my life. Listen, if the priest had stopped, he wouldn't have been able to perform his priestly service.

If the Levite had stopped, he would have been considered unclean. Listen, it's an impossibility in our own strength and it's an impossibility in our own legalism. It's an impossibility in our own wisdom. The only way these things are possible, the only way they're possible, is if we have known the self-sacrificing love of Christ in our own lives and it has transformed us from the inside out.

I've just finished reading a book put out by Nine Mark's Ministry. Many of you may not be familiar with them. Maybe you are. Mark Dever, Mark Dever, who pastors, by the way, in Washington, D.C. A lot going on in Washington, D.C. I don't know if you guys have heard about that or not. There's a little bit going on right now. But this is what is cool, though, is that God knows who's in Washington and who's not going to be in Washington, right? He's got pastors up there who are doing some great work.

[25 : 41] He's got some pastors up there who need to be transformed and do great work. But the same thing is here, right? He's still the God in Washington as He's God in War Trace and He's still in control and He's still got all things in the palm of His hands. I don't know what He's doing with the people in the palm of His hands, but I know He's in the palm of His hand, right?

That's all I can tell you is He's there and God's got it and everything's good and we'll trust in the, as Tony Evans says, the hope doesn't ride on the back of a donkey and doesn't ride on the back of an elephant. The hope we're looking for rides on the back of a white horse and we've seen Him in the book of Revelations, okay?

He's coming someday and when He's on that horse everything will be taken care of and by that time we'll be with Him and we'll be riding behind Him. But anyway, Mark Dever and the church there in Washington put out a great book called Compelling Community and it was about the community of the church and how God uses the community of the church to attract people.

Do you know the reality of this? As a pastor, you have to kind of swallow your pride and accept this, okay? As a pastor, you swallow your pride and accept this. Most people, as a matter of fact, to the tune of like 85 to 90% of people will never come to church to hear me preach.

That's why my job responsibility, Ephesians 4, is to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry. My job is not to preach to attract crowds. My job is to preach to equip you.

[26 : 51] 85 to 90% of people attend church for the first time as a direct result of an invitation from someone other than the pastor. Huh. Crazy, huh? Now some of you say, well, I just came here to hear you preach.

That's because probably you heard about some redneck named Billy Joe who is from Belbuck who is now at Water Trace and you've got to come to see this site and you've got to see what's going on. I don't know what in the world. You know, and that's fine and the Lord does mysterious things.

He makes donkeys talk and roosters crow, right? And he can move in those things. But here's the reality even in that book is the compelling community, the way God draws and attracts people is through the community called the church and it is the magnet that attracts people because the world is looking to see if community is really real.

