**THE GOOD SAMARITAN**

***Luke 10:25-37***

Sunday School Lesson

*Parables of Jesus Christ*

Week 9 – 12/17/2017

**Introduction:** The parable of the good Samaritan is given by the Lord in response to a question asked by a Pharisaical lawyer. The lawyer tries to tempt the Lord by asking Him how he can inherit eternal life. Knowing that the man was relying on the works of the law for his salvation, Jesus asks the man what the Law advises that he should do. The lawyer advises that the Law says to love God and love your neighbor. Jesus encourages him to go and live by those principles then, but the lawyer pushes it further by asking Jesus who his neighbor is. Jesus decides to take this opportunity to show the lawyer, through this parable, that closely following the Law is not enough to save sinful man. Unfortunately, the lawyer refuses to acknowledge the truth found in the parable of the good Samaritan, and he leaves without repenting and putting his faith in Jesus Christ. As we study the parable, we ought to look closely and be honest with ourselves regarding areas that we can improve spiritually.

1. WE MUST REALIZE THAT THE LORD IS SHOWING US OUR INABILITY TO CONSISTENTLY FOLLOW THE PATTERN OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN. (25-29)
2. **Notice that the Samaritan does everything right.** It was not just that the Samaritan stopped and decided to help the man. He also followed through by providing care and continual support. Additionally, he helped a man who probably would not have helped him back, as they were enemies of each other. The Samaritan literally did everything right in this parable. While we may have times where we help those in need as the Samaritan did, none of us can say that we do it all of the time or that we always do it correctly when we help. (Romans 3:10)
3. **Notice that the Samaritan is a picture of Christ.** As we look at the Samaritan, we can make some obvious comparisons to Christ. He was hated by the Jews yet still was willing to save. He did what the religious leaders were unable to do. He was filled with compassion. He promised to return back again to ensure the debt was paid. He didn’t just help the man; he made sure the man was fully restored. He sacrificed himself to save the man. Christ was trying to show this man that only He had the power and righteousness to fulfill the works of the Law. (John 5:39)
4. WE MUST REALIZE THAT THE PRIEST AND THE LEVITE MISSED OUT ON AN APPOINTMENT THAT HAD BEEN DIVINELY SET. (31-32)
5. **Notice that a priest nor a Levite would believe in a chance meeting.** In verse 31, we see that the priest comes down that way by chance. The Bible teaches us that God has a Divine plan and frequently causes our paths to cross with others. By using the word *chance* here, Jesus is pointing out how the priest and the Levite turned a Divine appointment into just a chance meeting. They should have known better, yet they continued on as though it was just a coincidence to see the man there. This leads us to believe that they likely intentionally neglected an opportunity to do something for the work of the Lord. Given that the road from Jericho to Jerusalem was frequently travelled, it is very likely that they had other opportunities to interact and help someone in need as well. (Psalm 37:23)
6. **Notice that the Lord will often attempt to use multiple people to fulfill His plan.** If it were not bad enough that one priest passed by, the fact that two went by that way without stopping is hard to believe. When a servant of the Lord ignores a Divine meeting, He will often send another messenger. This shows the compassion of God that He would cause a Levite to pass by that way. A Levite had different responsibilities in the temple. He would have been significantly more likely to stop and assist a stranger in need. In this case, however, both of His messengers failed to fulfill their obligation of service for Him. Perhaps the second priest assumed the Lord would send someone else to come and assist the injured man? The issue with this thinking is that it is both very selfish, and we do not know how many messengers the Lord is willing to use. (Matthew 21:33)
7. **Notice that the priests both passed on the other side.** While this may not seem significant at first, we should realize that this means that they were both originally on the side where the man was at. Given that he was beaten and left for dead, it was very likely that he would have been cast on the side of the road where only a keen traveler on that side would see the man. Not only does God providentially provide the right time, but He also ensures the right place. These priests had to cross to the other side like Jonah.
8. WE MUST REALIZE THAT THOSE WHO SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE MOST LIKELY TO HELP WERE THE FIRST TO PASS BY WITHOUT A CARE. (31-32)
9. **Notice that they were both coming from Jerusalem.** In verse 31, we see that the priest came down to the man. In verse 32, It says that the Levite came likewise. This means that the priest and the Levite were both travelling from Jerusalem. Typically, this would only occur when they had fulfilled their work in the temple and were returning back home. This provides us with a picture of “Godly” men who were only concerned about doing Godly work while they were in the temple. Their view of neighborly responsibility was limited to those who came to them. They were not willing to minister unto those that they personally crossed the paths of. Consequently, they had a very shallow walk with God. All of their works were limited to those that could be seen by others in the temple. No one was watching on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. (Matthew 23:11)
10. **Notice that they most likely justified their decision to leave the man there.** According to the Law, priests were not allowed to touch someone who had passed away, unless it was a close relative. If they came into contact with a dead body, they were required to go through a seven-day cleansing practice. This may have been why they moved to the other side of the road. This would cause them to miss time working in the temple. Just as the lawyer tried to justify himself by stretching the definition of a neighbor, these priests may have hidden their disinterest and lack of compassion for the man in the requirements of the Law. While he was not actually dead, the Bible states that he was half dead. They potentially saw this as a wasted effort, and they convinced themselves that they were much more needed in the temple every day. (Leviticus 21:1-3)
11. **Notice that they may have been afraid of suffering a similar fate.** It was not uncommon in those times for someone to pose as injured in hopes of robbing a helpful bystander. Perhaps the priests or one of their friends had suffered from a similar fate previously? Had they grown callous to people’s individual needs because of the way that they had been treated? Did they not have the protection of God on their lives to where they could take confidence in the work that they were doing? Needless to say, they potentially did not practice the Bible principle of not being afraid. (2 Timothy 1:7)
12. **Notice that there was no compassion and no effort made.** The most that either priest did was look on the man. The first one just saw him and moved aside. How cold and compassionless these two priests were! Perhaps they could have at least sent someone back to inquire to the condition of the man or at make preparations for burial. Did they assume that him being attacked was a result of poor-decision making on his part? They may have just convinced themselves that God was judging this man for some prior decision made. Either way, they had absolutely no love for the man. (I Corinthians 13:1-6)
13. WE MUST REALIZE THAT THE GOOD SAMARITAN GAVE SACRIFICIAL ASSISTANCE. (33-35)
14. **Notice that his assistance required a great sacrifice of convenience.** Keep in mind that the path from Jerusalem to Jericho is seventeen miles long. While we do not know how far it was to the closest inn, we can speculate that it was at least several miles away. There were not many inns on this path. Jesus states that he gives up his own beast for the man. This means that he walked the animal all the way to the inn. He also had to take the time to tend to the man’s wounds. The Bible says in verse 35 that he did not leave until the next day. He gave up an entire day just to help a complete stranger! (Romans 12:1)
15. **Notice that his assistance required a great sacrifice of material.** In verse 34, we see that he uses his own oil and wine to help the man. Additionally, he pays to have the man put in the local inn. This was a significant investment made for this man. He does not help him with the expectation that he is going to recoup his financial losses. In fact, he leaves and promises to pay any of the remaining debts for the man upon his return. (Proverbs 28:27)
16. **Notice that his assistance required a great sacrifice of feelings.** In this parable, we never see any form of gratitude offered to the good Samaritan. Not even the host of the inn commends the Samaritan for his effort. We know that the priests were not going to rejoice his decision. Additionally, as a Samaritan, he was completely hated by the Jewish people already. He overcame all of these emotional obstacles and decided that he was going to help this injured man. (Colossians 3)

**CONCLUSION**: The Good Samaritan is a parable that should both remind us of our shortcomings as a sinner, and it should encourage us to treat others well. As seen by the examples in the parable, being a Christian does not mean that we will automatically do the right things in situations involving other people. We have to be constantly looking for opportunities to exhibit the same type of kindness that is found in this parable.