

An Investment We Must Make

(The Story of the Good Samaritan)

#7 in Series: *Stories from The Master*

Luke 10:25-37 (NASB)

²⁵ And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” ²⁷ And he answered, “You shall 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 your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸ And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.” ²⁹ But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ³⁰ 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. ³¹ And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, ³⁴ and 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. ³⁵ 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.’ ³⁶ Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ *hands*?” ³⁷ And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”

Out of curiosity, I did a Google search on “*Sermons on the Good Samaritan*” and in 0.42 seconds Google had 613,000 results... There is certainly a lot of familiarity with this story.

Our culture is so familiar with this story that there are at least 30 hospitals in the US named after the Good Samaritan... At least, I stopped counting at 30...

Earlier this week I was talking about this message with Matthew and Pastor Kemp. Pastor Kemp reminisced about the days when television stations would sign-off the air late at night. Not only did the stations play the national anthem while showing a video of the U.S. flag waving and the flying jets from one of our armed forces – but he told me that one of our local stations always ended with someone sharing a devotion from the Scriptures... One particular night, the devotion was on the Good Samaritan. The simple and brief outline shared that night was this:

- *You have something I want, and I'm going to take it*
- *I have something you need, and I'm going to keep it*
- *I have something you need, and I'm going to give it*

That's not a bad outline to this story...

This story has a lasting and universal impact on us... In fact –

Warren Wiersbe – “Jesus did not say that this story was a parable, so it could well be the report of an actual occurrence. For Jesus to tell a story that made the Jews look bad and the Samaritans look good would either be dangerous or self-defeating. ‘You just made that up!’ they could say. ‘We all know that nothing like that would ever happen!’ So it is possible that some of His listeners, including the lawyer, knew that such a thing had really happened. Either way, the account is realistic.”

So, there is some speculation that Jesus was telling of an actual event – but we share this story in our series on the parables of Jesus because that is how it is most commonly known. It serves as a teaching point for driving home the concept that we have a responsibility to our neighbors – and a neighbor is anyone you encounter along life's way...

Remember – the worst thing we can do with any parable, especially this one, is to try and assign a meaning to everything in the story. If we do that – when Jesus did not do that – we would be guilty of turning His parable into an allegory... I have read and heard sermons that did just that: The victim would represent the lost sinner who is “half-dead”... That is, he is alive physically, but dead spiritually... Being helpless and left in the ditch on the road of life – he is left on his own... The priest and Levite would become representatives of the law and the sacrifices – which show that neither of which can save the sinner...

The reading of meaning into every detail of the text goes on and on... Be careful!

The term for such a poor method of study could be called; *eisegesis hermeneutics*... Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation, and *eisegesis* is reading into Scripture what you want it to say – rather than exegesis which is reading out of Scripture what it says itself... So, we try to be very careful NOT to try and make the Scripture say something we would prefer that it say – but rather, our job is to accurately handle the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15)...

In our approach to this story, let's first consider the:

1. The Lawyer's Request :25-29

There was a common practice in that day – that rabbis would hold open theological discussions in public... And so, it was in that setting that we read of a Scribe (Lawyer) who came to question Jesus...

²⁵ And a lawyer (an expert in the Mosaic Law) stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

The question that this lawyer asked was not original. It is a question that was often debated among the Jews.

It was a good question asked with an apparent bad motive. The lawyer wanted to somehow trap our Lord – but in the end, Jesus is the One that trapped the lawyer!

The exact motive as to why the Lawyer wanted to “test” Jesus isn't made clear – but it is the question that really matters: “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

The question itself opposes all that Jesus taught... The question the Lawyer raised was about inheritance – and inheritance in any form is the result of a relationship... It is not a goal achieved through effort... So, likewise, eternal life is a gift we inherit from God through a right relationship with Him – and not something that we earn through works of our own...

Jesus counters with a question. He asked, “What is written in the law?”

The Lord pointed the man back to the law – why? Was it because the path to one's salvation is prescribed in keeping the law?... No – the law was never

given to be a means to save us... As we learned in our study of the book of Galatians – the attempt to use the law as a means of salvation was an abuse of the law and contrary to God’s provision for salvation – which is Christ alone:

Gal. 2:16 (NASB) “nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.”

Gal. 2:21 (NASB) “I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness *comes* through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”

Gal. 3:21 (NASB) “Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.”

So, if the law was not given to save mankind – what is its purpose?... The law confronts us with our need for salvation – it convinces of our need to be saved...

Rom. 3:20 (NASB) “because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law *comes* the knowledge of sin.”

In fact – in the process of confronting us, the Law convinces us, and the Holy Spirit convicts us – all of which is essential for converting us!

When Jesus asked the lawyer the question – the scribe gave the right answer... But – he comes very short of applying the answer to his own life... It will become evident that this Scribe did not love God – because he would be devoid of love for his neighbor...

Rather – instead of throwing himself on the mercy of God – as we saw the tax-collector do in last week’s story (Luke 18:9-14) – we find this guy trying to justify himself and use an old debating tactic to try and wriggle out of his predicament... He was basically saying; “*Define your terms! What do you mean by ‘neighbor’? Who is my neighbor?*”

Let’s look at –

2. Jesus’ Reasoning :30-35

³⁰ 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. ³¹ And by chance a priest was going down on that

road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.³² Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.³³ But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,³⁴ and 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.³⁵ On the next day he took out two denarii (The denarius was equivalent to a day's wages) and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'

- **A Cruel Incident**

A display of hostility ...

Jerusalem is about 2500 ft above sea level. Jericho is about 1000 ft below sea level, near the Dead Sea. They are 15 to 18 miles apart, depending on which map you go by... The road, or path between them was a dangerous journey – not only because of the terrain – but because of crime that occurred on a regular basis ...

What most often occurred along this road could be categorized as *Sin of Commission*... A sin of commission happens when we willfully do something we know we should not do.

But Jesus's story moves into what we might call –

- **A Gross Indifference**

Which will be seen as *Sin of Omission* ... A sin of omission occurs when we fail to do something we know we ought to do...

In Jesus' story, the priest and the Levite willfully demonstrated an act of indifference toward their fellowman who was in a desperate situation.

The Priest represents religion with its rituals... and this priest fails to do what priest should do. He failed to intercede for the one who was in great need for someone to help... The representative of religion and ritual demonstrates that neither religion nor ritual can deliver one out of their most desperate need...

Levites were custodians of the law. This Levite looks, studies and leaves him... The representative Law shows us that Law cannot rescue us either... The Law can describe us, and condemn us, but it can't save us...

Neither the priest nor the Levite even attempted to help... They did nothing ... but provide for us an example of how evil indifference is.

Watchman Nee (1903-1972 – was a Chinese Christian author and church leader during the early 20th Century. He was imprisoned in 1952 for his faith, and remained in prison until his death in 1972.) – “Never adopt an attitude of indifference, for if you do you will suffer for it. The weight will grow heavier and heavier.”

In other words – allowing the attitude of indifference to remain in your heart will only cause you to become even more indifferent over time...

- **A Compassionate Investment**

Genuine compassion – not mere sentimentality ... compound word = “with” / “feels deeply”

- **The sacrifice of his plans** – his involvement would be an interruption to his plans... He would have to suspend his previously planned actions in order to come along this person in his time of need...
- **The investment of his resources** – his involvement will cost him not only his time – but it will call for him to give out of his resources to meet this man’s needs...

³⁵ On the next day he took out two denarii (The denarius was equivalent to a day’s wages) and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.’

John MacArthur told of a geological find of a sign from the region that showed the expense for a night’s stay and it was 1/32 of a denarius. So, if we do the math, this man provided to the innkeeper enough resources for the injured man to stay for two months!...

3. The Conclusion Required :36-37a

³⁶ Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ *hands*?” ³⁷ And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.”

Notice that there is no room for a neutral answer. There is no middle ground. One cannot fail to come to a sound and valid conclusion...

It seems that this lawyer, in his cultural prejudice can’t even bring himself to

answer by saying “The Samaritan”... He simply says “The one who showed mercy toward him.”

4. The Sovereign’s Command :37b

Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same (Or *likewise*).”

A.W. Tozer – “Our Lord told His disciples that love and obedience were organically united. The final test of love is obedience.”

“Salvation apart from obedience is unknown in the sacred Scriptures... Apart from obedience there can be no salvation, for salvation without obedience is a self-contradictory impossibility.”

Adrian Rogers – “You cannot obey God without your obedience spilling out in a blessing to all those around you.”

5. Our Response

You may say; “*Which verse Pastor? I don’t see what my response is required in this text... Your outline makes this a major point – but it is a point not stated in the Scripture. And for that matter, you said that we should be careful not to read into the Scripture something it does not say!*”...

Such a challenge to my point is right. Afterall, the very next verse after Jesus’ statement; “Go and do the same.” – is ³⁸ Now as they were traveling along...

Is there not a response being called for?... I say; YES!

Every message from our Lord calls for a response. If not explicitly, or openly – it does so implicitly, or subtlety!

In the larger context of Scripture there are clear calls to respond! There are two places in God’s Word that immediately come to mind that calls for your and my response:

James 1:22-25, 27

²² But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of

person he was. ²⁵ But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does... ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of *our* God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, *and* to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Matt. 7:24-27

²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and *yet* it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.”

What is your response?

May I offer some very practical ways you can and I can “Go and do the same”?

Begin by being a “neighbor” to one another:

Gal. 6:10 (NASB) “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

Start investing in the relationships God has already given you in one another. Be committed to sharing life together – not merely attending together once a week in this setting...

Get involved in small groups. Rearrange your schedule to be here 9:00 each Sunday to be in an Equipping Class and grow together in God’s Word. Find a Community Group and allow the Lord to use others to pour into your life and let Him use you to invest in others for their edification as well...

Don’t say; “*I don’t like that Pastor. Don’t try to manipulate me into rearranging my schedule or investing myself in others!*” To which I would say; – It’s not ME who is calling my brothers and sisters to obedience – it is the LORD Himself – to Whom you and I belong!... So, ... What is YOUR

response ... to HIM?

Questions to consider in Community Group. (Given that there are several questions, feel free to use only those that you believe would be most beneficial for your CG discussion.):

- What is the outline that Pastor Kemp shared about the Good Samaritan?
- What's the difference between *eisegesis* and *exegesis* in the science of hermeneutics?
- What was wrong with the Lawyer's question that he asked of Jesus? What was right about it?
- In speaking to Rom. 3:20 (NASB) "because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law *comes* the knowledge of sin." – Pastor said; "In the process of *confronting* us, the Law *convince*s us, and the Holy Spirit *convicts* us – all of which is essential for *converting* us!" ... How does the law *convince* us? What does this say about the principle of *revelation*? How should we converse with those who reject the very concept of revelation when discussing matters that should be persuade them?
- Someone briefly tell the story Jesus gave in your own words.
- Discuss Watchman Nee's quote – "Never adopt an attitude of indifference, for if you do you will suffer for it. The weight will grow heavier and heavier." What does he mean "the weight will grow heavier and heavier"? What is the danger he seems to be warning us to avoid?
- Just what does it mean to be compassionate toward someone? How is compassion seen in the Samaritan's example? What should we glean from his example?
- Discuss the quotes from:
- A.W. Tozer – "Our Lord told His disciples that love and obedience were organically united. The final test of love is obedience." ... "Salvation apart from obedience is unknown in the sacred Scriptures... Apart from obedience there can be no salvation, for salvation

without obedience is a self-contradictory impossibility.”

- Adrian Rogers – “You cannot obey God without your obedience spilling out in a blessing to all those around you.”
- The title of this message is “*An Investment We Must Make*” What investment and in whom? How are we to make such an investment?
- Please spend some time praying for the Lord’s leadership and our obedience as a church family for how we are to share life together throughout the week – not just on Sunday mornings.