

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

MESSAGE INTRODUCTION

As we consider God's holy ways and His desires for us, we sadly tend to limit our obedience according to what comes most easily to us. When we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourself, for instance, we tend to seek out people that are like us and that are easy for us to love. In this lecture, we will examine the parable of the Good Samaritan, a well-known passage that conveys a biblical understanding of what it truly means to love one's neighbor.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Luke 10:25-37

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

1. To present and exegete the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37.
2. To describe the uneasy relationship between Jews and Samaritans.
3. To discuss the biblical idea of neighbor.
4. To encourage Christians to be active in helping others who are in need.

QUOTATIONS

Brothers and sisters, let what we do for others always be done in the noblest style! Let us not treat the poor like dogs to whom we fling a bone, nor visit the sick like superior beings who feel that they are stooping down to inferiors when they enter their rooms. But in the sweet tenderness of real love, learned at Jesus' feet, let us imitate this Good Samaritan! –Charles Spurgeon

For the love Jesus demands is love of one's neighbor, that is to say, not some general love of mankind, but a love that does not pick and choose, that is unreservedly and principally committed to God's will and guidance also with respect to its object. For the neighbor is anyone whom God places in our way, as is described in such an unparalleled and beautiful way in the parable of the Good Samaritan. –Herman Ridderbos

BIBLE STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the lawyer ask Jesus? Based on the lawyer's words, how did he understand God's law?
2. Why is it significant that Jesus responded to the lawyer's questions by telling this parable? How do you think the lawyer would have reacted to this parable?
3. Why do you think the priest and the Levite did not stop to help the dying man? Are these good reasons? When you see someone in trouble, what is your first instinct? Why do you respond this way?
4. How did Jesus' definition of a neighbor differ from the lawyer's idea of a neighbor? How do Jesus' words challenge your own way of thinking about who your neighbors are?