

RIDDLES

Christian Center Church
Wednesday, October 18
7:00 PM
Part 3

Who in the world is my neighbor?

Remember the purpose of the parables:

Matthew 13:10-11, 13

And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. ... 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

- To those who really want the truth – the truth will be revealed
- The primary role of the church is not to solve the social injustices of the world
- The primary role of the church is to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and see the power of the Holy Spirit transform the mind of those who come to Christ
- When their mind is transformed by the power of the Gospel – their life will be transformed

1Corinthians 1:23

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

If we meet the social need of people and never meet their spiritual need – we are trapped into a works based religion

- Believe it or not – the point of this story is to lead us away from a works based mentality
- Into a love based mentality

Luke 10:25

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

- The fact that he “stood up” means he was trying to intimidate Jesus with this question
- He wasn’t a criminal lawyer – he wasn’t a civil lawyer – he was a lawyer of the Old Testament law

Luke 10:26

He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

- Most people know the answer to the question of what is right and wrong – they are just unwilling to confront the fact they are not living what they know is right

Luke 10:27

And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18
- Two familiar Scriptures that sum up the entire law of God

Matthew 22:40

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

This lawyer answered correctly – he said exactly what he needed to say and he answered exactly as he should have answered

Luke 10:28

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

- There are too many people in the church doing the right thing but doing it for the wrong reason

Luke 10:29

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

- If you are walking in truth – you never have to justify yourself
- As the pastor of this church – my mission is to get us out of a religious works based mindset where we do things only because “That’s what we have always done”
- It is not what we do that matters – it is why we do it

Matthew 5:43

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies

- Clearly – this man didn’t believe that his enemies were his neighbor
- He believed that his neighbor was the person who looked like him – believed like him – worshipped like him – lived like him
- They did not love their enemies

It is easy to love the person who believes just like you do

- Who looks just like you do – acts just like you do – lives the same lifestyle you do
- But what about the person who doesn’t look like you – what about the person who doesn’t believe like you – what about the person who lives at a different level of life?

Matthew 5:46-47

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others]? do not even the publicans so?

- Religion will love people based on how we see them
- Righteousness will love people based on how God sees them
- This parable is not about the amount of good you do for others – it is about the amount of love you have for others
- People will never change what they do until they are willing to change who they are

Luke 10:30

And Jesus answering said, A certain [man] went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded [him], and departed, leaving [him] half dead.

- Jerusalem is 3,000 feet above sea level and Jericho is 1,000 feet below sea level
- The road between Jerusalem and Jericho is only 17 miles – so you are going down a very steep decline
- A favorite site of Arab robbers was the Pass of Adummim
- Adummim is a form of the Hebrew word “blood,” “blood pass.”
- The verb “wounded” is a constant verb which means they kept on beating him.

Luke 10:31

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

- Jesus uses very strong language using the Greek term anti.
- It means he goes against – completely opposite the other side

The Priest represents religious entitlement

- From the tribe of Aaron which means by birth he was entitled to the priesthood
- His position was granted to him by birth so he had no way of identifying with this man whatsoever
- His position stood in the way of loving this man

There are some people who have been in a spiritual position for so long that they are oblivious to the needs around them

- Don't become so spiritually high and lofty that you miss the needs of people around you

Luke 10:32

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked [on him], and passed by on the other side.

- From the tribe of Levi, son of Jacob, but not the family of Aaron
- Levites worked on the liturgy – they took care of the facilities – prepared the sacrifices – did the work that the priests didn't do in the temple

The Levite represents religious engagement

- I am so engaged in the work of God that I don't have time to be concerned – I don't have time to stop

Many of us are busy doing “the work of the Lord”

- But may the hard work we do not blind us to the legitimate needs of those around us

Luke 10:33

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion [on him],

Jesus indicts the religious establishment and introduces a hated man

- The fact the Samaritans even existed made them evil in the sight of the Jews
- They were considered evil because they intermarried with the Gentiles when the Northern Kingdom was occupied
- They were evil because they tried to disrupt the rebuilding of the Jewish city and the temple when they came back from the captivity
- They were considered half-breed traitors
- In fact, if you wanted to say something bad about someone – you called them a Samaritan

Think about this: Two men – representing the Jewish establishment – who thought they loved God and loved others as themselves, had absolutely no love

Luke 10:34

And went to [him], and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

- “Inn” is the word pandocheion – pan means “all.” So this is a place for all

Then the next day, he takes out two denarii.

- That’s a day’s wage.
- Just to let you know how much you had to pay for an inn, not too long after this there is some literature that has indicated that a board was found, some kind of a sign board from an inn in a city in the Roman Empire.
- The nightly cost was 1/32nd of a denarius.
- 1/32nd of a denarius would mean that the man for two denarii could – do the math – stay for two months.

Here is the point I want to drive home – this man didn’t just take care of his immediate need – he took care of him until he was well enough to be on his own

Love is a lifestyle of helping people with more than just a handout – love is empowering them to live a life beyond the moment they have been robbed and stripped of the enemy

- Love is not just an act – it is a lifestyle

Luke 10:29, 36

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? ...

- The lawyer was asking Jesus – who am I supposed to love?
- But Jesus changes the question:

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

- This isn't about who your neighbor is and who you are to go to love
- This is about are you that neighbor who loves at all times
- This isn't about who is qualified to be loved – this is about am I that neighbor who loves in an unqualified way
- Forget trying to qualify who deserves your love and just demonstrate love which knows no qualifications

This story is not a disposition on how we treat people – it is a disposition on how we obtain eternal life