

“A Heart for the Son of Man” Luke 10:25-42

Please Stand and Open your Bibles to Revelation 2:1-7

Why I had you read that will make sense in a little bit as we look at two stories unique to Luke that deal with our heart. Legalism and self-righteousness are a killer in our relationship with Jesus. We can be so right in all that we do that we become completely wrong. What happens when our orthopraxy does not match our orthodoxy? As a conservative, fundamental, Bible believing church we have solid convictions that should guide our practice. But what happens when that practice is not balanced with love? We see that reflected in the Church of Ephesus. They had done everything right but at the expense of love. Once you have forgotten how to love others you become a person with a religion and not one walking in a relationship. We will see two people today in two very well-known stories. One, who thinks their works can save him and another who thinks that the saved better be working. Let's jump in...

Luke 10:25

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

Now, let's not confuse him with the Rich Young Ruler, that guy will show up later on in Luke. But the question is similar. But is it not a question you would like to be asked? I wish everybody asked this question! It sure would make our jobs easier. But it's not the question that is telling but the introduction of the person. First, he is Lawyer. These were the experts in the Jewish Law and because of that you did not dare question their knowledge. They were in class all of themselves and it shows in their answers. Second, it says his motive was to test Jesus. This reveals to us that he is putting himself on a higher level than Jesus. Do you know that is what legalism will do to you? When you base your relationship with Him on your works you create a standard that is higher than Jesus's. This was the problem with the nation of Israel in the first century. How do I know this? By the question he is asking to test Jesus! If you think about it, you can almost hear the sarcasm in it. I mean what could this man possibly add to my ability to know and do the law? If someone asks you this question make sure you tell them the truth, you can do nothing. I mean I guess you could play along and tell him if he can keep the law. Then just take him through the big ten and see how they do.

Just like a good teacher, Jesus throws it back at him in the form of a question...

Luke 10:26

He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?”

It’s funny it says that he came to test Jesus, and he doesn’t even realize that he is now the one being tested. But without even thinking about it he answers...

Luke 10:27

So he answered and said, “ ‘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.’ ”

There are two different commandments that are being mentioned here. First is the Shema...

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

And the second is from...

Leviticus 19:17

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Let's be honest, none of us has ever kept this standard. But Jesus is not done yet and continues the test...

Luke 10:28

And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

And the Pastor Jed translation, "You're right, good luck with that one...". This is true. Keep the law and live. If you could keep all 613 commandments perfectly you could step right into heaven and have a seat. Talk to an orthodox Jew today and he thinks that you can keep all the laws. Of course, they explain it all away with legal mumbo jumbo, but they really believe it. But we need to understand that Jesus is trying to get him to think and to draw out what he was really trying to do and that is revealed in the next verse...

Luke 10:29

But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

This poor guy is so lost that he really thinks he is better than Jesus. He still thinks that he can one up Him. The thing about our relationship with Jesus is when you try to test Him like this you will always get more than you bargained for. He has a way to reveal to you your biggest hidden sin. For a super self-righteous first century religious Jew it would be his prejudice for not just a gentile, but worse in their eyes, a Samaritan. Let's look at this very well know parable.

The Good Samaritan

Luke 10:30-37

The first thing to note is the road from Jerusalem to Jericho was a treacherous one. It is the barren Judean wilderness and drops 3300 feet on a 17-mile journey. It was notorious for areas with robbers and never usually traveled alone unless you were well equipped and armed. This was a Jewish man from Jerusalem that was beaten to the point of death and left stranded and naked. So, what happens? A priest is traveling by and decides that this is not his problem and did not want the inconvenience of being unclean for a period of time. Most likely the same attitude of the Levite that does the same. The point Jesus is making is that these two guys are the most religious of society. If anyone was keeping the law, it should be them, right? But no, they don't trouble themselves and keep walking.

But who shows up to do something? A Samaritan! Unless you know the background, you would not be able to feel the air leave the room. You want to step into an area where there was the greatest prejudice ever in the world it would be between the Jews and the Samaritans. The Samaritans were the descendants of those that were brought back into the land of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians. They interbred with others that had been resettled there and became known as the Samaritans because of the capitol of that area. They were to a Jew worse than a Gentile as they were half breeds! So, for Jesus to interject one as being the one that helped this Jewish man it would have been an offence to this very religious man. Did you notice that this Lawyer could not even say who it was only that it was “He” who showed mercy. Let’s put this into a perspective. You are driving down the road and you see your worse enemy broke down with a flat tire. What do you do? Honk and wave? Yell out the window “Serves you right!” Imagine if it was Gavin Newsome? Come on Pastor now you’re messing! That’s the point.

Matthew 5:43-45

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you

may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust...”

Matthew 5:46-48

For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

That’s the point. You Can’t. All legalism will do is keep you from loving your neighbor. Why do we always put a higher standard on everyone else that we could never keep?

James 2:13

For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

And Jesus said himself...

Matthew 12:7

“But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless.”

Law without love is legalism. Love without law is license. Law with love shows mercy just as Jesus has had mercy on you.

Philippians 2:3-4

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Ephesians 4:32

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Mary and Martha

Luke 10:38-42

Mary and Martha are the sisters of Lazarus who Jesus will rise from the dead later and the village they are at would be Bethany. Jesus was close to this family and obviously spent a lot of time at their house. On this occasion they were at Martha's house and as was customary in that culture was to serve the guests. There was nothing at all wrong with that and we should commend Martha for doing it. The problem we see is not that it needed to be done but she was expecting others to do the same. Mary was more interested in devotion and Martha was more interested in duty. Both are good and both

were needed. But it wasn't for both of them to do. Martha should have been happy for her sister. Sitting at the feet of Jesus listening closely to His teaching and learning the ways of the Lord. But what was she focused on? Her works. She thought it was unfair that she had to do all the serving while she just sat and listened. She became envious and made a statement that is just not true. "Don't you care?" as if Jesus did not care. "My Sister has left me alone!". Can't you see this is all her fault? Notice she was "Distracted" with much serving? Are you letting your works you do for God become a distraction? Do you see others as disobedient because they don't keep up to your pace? Do feel like God doesn't care about all the work you do? Maybe your distracted instead of devoted. You are of no use to the Lord unless your works are based on devotion. If you are just worried about duty, you will be distracted and the works will become more important than Jesus. Jesus tells her she is troubled and worried about many things, but Mary had chosen the good part. I have been in leader's meetings where I have heard people complaining that no one is doing the work. All they do is come on Sunday and sit for the message and go home leaving us to clean up and do all this work. I usually kept my mouth shut but my answer would have been "Good! At least someone was listening to the message!" Mary had the right heart and Martha didn't. Works are great and there is a lot to be done but if we have not taken the time to sit and learn at

Jesus feet we are totally worthless. Don't let the works take away your devotion as it did in the church of Ephesus...

Revelation 2:1-3

“To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary.”

Here's a church that was doing everything right. They had the right doctrine, they kicked out the false teachers, they separated themselves from sin and they were prospering in good works. On the surface they were all that and a bag of chips. A member of this church would be able to boast about it. They had a statement of faith they lived by, and no one could say otherwise. But guess what? They were missing something. That good part that Mary had chosen. The part that Martha was too distracted to see. The Lawyer couldn't grasp it. What part was that?

Revelation 2:4-5

Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.

They had forfeited devotion for duty. They had lost their love for the distraction of service. They were doing everything because they “have to” instead of “getting to”.

John 13:34-35

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

This is the whole of the law. If we love God and love others, then we are doing things the way they are supposed to be done. I would rather be part of a sloppy, messy fellowship where everything is disorganized and dirty with love than the best ordered and cleanly run church without it. When we love God and do all things as a response to that love, we are doing the work that pleases Him.

1 John 4:7-11

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

May we as a church never lose that. And may all that visit us or remember us or have contact with us, if nothing else is said about us, may it be that we love God and love each other.