

Tell me the stories of Jesus

Read Luke 10:25-37

1. Any initial thoughts or questions?
2. What was the lawyer trying to achieve with his initial question? Why?
3. What was the lawyer trying to achieve with his second question? Do you know anyone who thinks like this? (*e.g. who that they can work their way into heaven*)

The Parable

4. Why do you think the priest and Levite avoided helping the beaten man? What's both ironic and sad about both their responses?
5. In what ways can we avoid letting rituals get in the way of our faith?
6. What did the Samaritan give to help the man?

If the Samaritan didn't offer to pay the rest of this man's bills, the man would have probably been made a slave to pay for the services of the innkeeper!

The Response

7. What are the main implications of Jesus' twist of words in Verse 36? What does it mean for us?
8. How is Jesus our Good Samaritan or the ultimate Good Samaritan?
9. What is wrong with a 'passive' faith? (*e.g. someone who claims to be a Christian but doesn't love anyone!*)
10. Since we have been saved by grace, why is it important to follow God's commands for our lives?
11. What is something practical that you can do to help you love those around you?

Close with prayer and ask God to help us as we seek to serve him more wholeheartedly and love others as we would ourself.

- Well we have finished our series on the last chapters of Luke. Hasn't it been fantastic to see that journey? And finally to see the glory of our risen saviour?
- So for these next two weeks we will be looking at a couple of stories that Jesus told.
- And this week we are beginning with the parable of the Good Samaritan. I'm sure that this is a story that we are all familiar with but let's try and look at it afresh and see how it points us towards Jesus.
- Let's ask for God's help.

- Dinner in the Calder family is always a great time. Especially when all the siblings are together.
- Mum would usually make a delicious meal, we would eat it and catch up on how college and work and church were going. A fantastic time.
- Until we all finished. It was then time to dish out the chores.
- Mum would start off by saying: Philip (my brother) you're on cleaning the table, Emily (my sister) you're on packing the dishwasher and Michael (I dreaded what was coming next), you're on the washing up!
- My absolute least favourite thing to do. Having to use hot water, impossibly small gloves, trying to impossibly scrape off all the baked on food, spilling water and suds down my front. It wasn't fun to say the least.
- So I would do it and then quickly hurry off to my room.
- Until mum would call out! 'Michael! Come Here!' She was pointing to the suds left in the sink, the dirty kitchen benches and the soaking cloth in the sink.
- I protested 'You only asked me to do the washing up!' and then a discussion followed but of course, Mum had the final word.

- Now what has this parable got anything to do with me doing the washing up?
- Well I wanted to do the bare minimum and to tick the box.
- And in the parable, the lawyer wanted to know what was the bare minimum that he could do to earn eternal life.
- And sometimes I think we can be like that too with our relationship with God.
- So to unpack this further this morning, we will look at:
 - The Lawyers List. (10:25-28)
 - Jesus' Requirements. (10:29-35)
 - The Lawyers Response. (10:36-37)

- Our Response.
- Now this lawyer would have been someone who knew their stuff. And he stood up to test Jesus.
- To try and trap him, as we see the teachers of the law do time after time.
- He asks the ultimate question, 'Teacher, what should **I do** to inherit eternal life.'
- Now Jesus could have answered him right there and then, but he entertains the man by asking him another question. 'What is written in the law? How do you read it?'
- And the lawyer, being the expert he is, replies with the textbook answer: The Great commandment that sums up the whole law. Look with me at V27, '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 neighbour as yourself.' Like I said, a textbook answer.
- Jesus affirmed this. 'You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.'
- Now I don't know about you but this sounds like a pretty hard task.
- Complete and utter devotion of your whole life to God. Heart, Soul, Mind, Strength. Everything!
- Do you love God like this? I'll be the first to say that daily, I can't in my own strength.
- And then the second commandment. Love your neighbour as yourself.
- And it's at this point that the lawyer catches on. He has probably caught on to the fact that he hasn't done these commandments fully. That he physically can't obey these completely.
- So, he tries to justify himself, He tries to make himself right. 'Who is my neighbour?' He wants to know the utter bear minimum.
- He wants to know the least that he could do.
- He wants a checklist to tick off to get a ticket to eternal life.
- And so we come to our second point:
- Jesus response.
- Jesus tells this well known parable in response:
- V30:
 - 'A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead.'
 - Now this road was treacherous. It was well known to have robbers and thieves and it descended 3,600 feet through rocky terrain. It was probably well known to the locals, since the crowd were full of Jews.

- This man was beaten, stripped and left half dead by robbers. There's nothing that he could do to save himself. Naked, bloody, bruised and helpless.
- He needs someone to save him.
- V31
 - So a priest comes down from Jerusalem. Now we might expect the Priest to come and save him but he walks down the other side. Completely avoided the man. He was probably cautious about becoming ritually unclean. His corrupt religion got in the way of loving other people; of loving the one who needed it most.
- V32
 - Then a Levite comes down the road. A levite was expected to help in the temple courts, with the running of the temple. But he too passed to the other side; Not wanting to become ceremonially unclean and be unable to fulfil his duties in the temple. Just like the priest, he let his corrupt religion get in the way of loving other people.
- V33-35
 - Now Jesus was speaking to a bunch of Jews. So they were probably expecting an everyday, common-man, lay-person Israelite so save the man. Priest, Levite, Israelite.
 - But Jesus said something completely different. Look with me
 - **V33 'But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.'**
 - If you were in the crowd that day I wouldn't be surprised if you heard audible gasps of surprise around the place!
 - Why? Because the Jewish and Samaritan rivalry was massive. They hated each other.
 - *Take State of Origin for an example. Now I can speak from experience that there's nothing more humbling then going to school wearing a Blues jersey. When everyone else is wearing a Maroon one for a charity day. There's that deep rooted rivalry between the two states.*
 - *Or, when I'm browsing the sports channels late at night and see England playing cricket, and it doesn't matter who they are playing, Who do I go for? I automatically go for the other team.*
 - *Why? because there's a deep rooted rivalry in me, embedded from a young age.*
 - *Or think of Modern day Israel and Palestine. Constantly at war with each other. Not willing to make peace.*
 - *Now back to the passage, think of this rivalry between Israel and Palestine, and then you might get the sense of how much the Jews disliked the Samaritans and vice versa.*

- So going back to the passage, having a Samaritan man help the Jewish man would have been absolutely jarring for the audience. They would have had to seriously think, ‘Wait, did Jesus really just say that?’
- But this deep rivalry was put on hold for this man in the parable. The Samaritan spared no expense to help this man. He didn’t care how much it cost him, he didn’t care about his religion, he didn’t care if people insulted him for helping a Jew, he loved the beaten man unconditionally.
- He loved the man as he would love himself.
- **V34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. V35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’**
- The Samaritan offered everything that he had to save the life of this beaten man.
- He used expensive oil and wine. He gave the innkeeper about 2 months wages but he didn’t just leave him there. He wanted to help this man with all he had.
- And then we get Jesus question in V36: “Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”
- And now we come to our third point, we see the lawyer’s response.
- You can almost imagine him saying through gritted teeth. He couldn’t bring himself to say the word Samaritan. He replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” And Jesus replied. ‘Go and do likewise.’
 - He can throw away any ideas of a checklist! He can throw away any ideas of working his way into heaven!
 - The Lawyer wanted to do the bare minimum but Jesus needs TOTAL devotion.
 - Total devotion to him, total obedience and utter selfless love towards others. Not just the people we like but especially to the people we don’t like.
- Well, the bar is set high.
- Brothers and Sisters, our call as Christians is to go and do likewise. To go and love our neighbour fully, whole heartedly, unconditionally. But is this enough to inherit eternal life? Well, No.
- I don’t know about you but if this is the only way into eternal life, I’m not going to be there!!

- But I wonder if you noticed the subtle shift in the language used in V36.
 - Let's read it again.
 - **which of these three, do you think, proved to be the neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?**
 - Jesus didn't ask, 'who then is your neighbour.' No. He asked 'Who proved to be a neighbour.'
 - The neighbour in the parable is the person who acts! ***the samaritan!***, not an object or person to love, *the man*.
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- So what does this mean?
 - If we keep on thinking, 'who is my neighbour?' we are just like the lawyer. The issue remains a legal one. As in, 'Who must I love? How much must I love them? For how long?'
 - If we keep on thinking in this way, then we will have no assurance of eternal life. It will always be up in the air. If the bar is so high, then we are in big trouble.
 - But when Jesus changes the language, we see a whole different parable being played out. The neighbour is the person who acts. Who one who saves.
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- Brother and Sisters, we can't possibly live up to the standards that the Law sets out. So we live in sin. And when we are in sin, we aren't just half dead, we are dead dead. Ephesians 2:1-2a
 - **"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world."**
 - And when you're dead, there's nothing you can do by yourself to become alive. So we need a rescuer. A helper. We need someone to come 'be our neighbour'.
 - Some people look to religion as the answer, they look towards rituals and things to do, a shopping list.
 - But just like the priest and the levite walking by, no religious acts will save us.
 - So who can we look to? Well we can look to the most unlikely rescuer.
 - The baby boy who was born in a stable, the man who was hated by the religious leaders of the Jews, the man who hung on the cross BUT the man who rose again victorious. Conquering sin and death.
 - Even when our backs were turned towards him, even though we totally and utterly don't deserve it, he gave up everything. He gave his all. He loves us unconditionally.
 - Jesus is the only one who can save us.

- He is the one who brings us out of death and seals us for eternal life.
 - Jesus is our Good Samaritan!
 - He did the unthinkable just like this man did!
 - He gave his everything to save us even when we were still his enemies!
 - He made every effort and provision to pick us up, bind our wounds, mend us, restore us. Even though it meant laying down his life.
 - No amount of law following, ritual doing, neighbour loving will save us. Only Jesus can.
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- Now does that mean that we can go off doing whatever we want? No.
 - In response to his utter selfless love for us, we are still called to:
 - Love the lord our God, with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength. And we are to love our neighbour as ourselves.
 - But instead of these being a checklist, these commandments become a complete and utter joy!
 - Do you realise how much God loves you? If you do, then these commandments shouldn't be a heavy burden to carry but a delight to serve the one who saved you completely; and me too.
 - But does this mean it's going to be easy all the time?
 - Well no.
 - I don't know about you but I find it really easy to love people here at the Anglican Church of Noosa. When we first moved here, we were greeted with a whole lot of love, people are always encouraging me in my studies. Thank you! It's easy to love in this loving environment.
 - But what about when we step out those doors?
 - Sometimes it's not that easy to love that person who really gets on your nerves at work,
 - it's not easy to love the person who has insulted you or has hurt you,
 - it's not easy to love those who hate you BUT it's what we are called to do.
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- We are called to follow in the footsteps and the way modelled to us in the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - The one who ate with the sick, the adulterer, the criminal and the one who serves us by his death.
 - So go and do likewise.

- What's your faith like?
- Is it like the lawyers?
 - Is it just doing the bare minimum? Are you trying to do good things to inherit eternal life? Do you come to church sometimes just to tick the box?
- OR
- Have you accepted Jesus as your neighbour, as your ultimate Good Samaritan? as your saviour?
- But not only that..
- Do you strive to love others? Do you go out of your way to love others? Do you daily make a sincere effort to be more like the Lord Jesus?
- Because we are saved from death by Him. He stooped down to the lowest low to save us and we are commanded. To GO AND DO LIKEWISE.
- And we can only do that with God's help. So let's ask for that now.