

08/02/2020

Pastor Dan Esh

Calvary Chapel Central Phoenix

Outlines: <http://www.calvarycentral.org/media>

RSS: <http://www.calvarycentral.org/feed>

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS

THE ONLY GOOD SAMARITAN

LUKE 10:25-37

I. INTRODUCTION

A. A Parable Misunderstood

1. One of the most well-known but also one of the most misunderstood parables in all of scripture
2. The meaning of the parable of the good Samaritan is often reduced to simply showing mercy and kindness to someone in need. Helping the outcast and the rejected and the ignored of our society. Caring for the suffering. Being a good neighbor.
 - a) Those are all good and noble pursuits – Biblical pursuits – God honoring and God requiring pursuits but ultimately, they are not what this parable is primarily about
 - b) What we'll find is if we limit this parable to just those things – we will miss them all together

B. Jesus tells over 40 parables in the gospels

1. Every single one of them center on salvation
2. The seed and the sower, or the man who builds his house on the rock and the man who builds his house on the sand, or the pearl of great price, or the fishing net, or the rich fool, or the lost sheep, or the lost coin – they all have to do with the subject of salvation – God's saving work through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ
3. And the parable of the Good Samaritan is no different. There are themes of compassion and self-sacrificial love and unmerited kindness but all of those take a back seat to the gospel, because without the gospel, without the transforming power of the resurrected Christ in our lives, none of these things are possible.

Luke 10:25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" 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.' " 28 And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

II. DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE

A. Lawyer – Scribe – they were responsible for interpreting the law.

1. Although the Mosaic Law was quite comprehensive, it was impossible for the Law to cover every circumstance and situation, so these lawyers/scribes would act as advisors to the courts

2. They dedicated their lives to studying and interpreting the law and they would also act as instructors to the Hebrew youth
- B. This should be our first insight into the motivations of this lawyer
1. The second clue is much plainer. “and testing Him said” – This lawyer is not a genuine seeker. Very different from the blind man who was given sight or the leper who was healed.
 2. He had heard the message of Jesus. That the Kingdom of Heaven was near, so repent and believe in God’s only Son. And, in his mind, that contradicted the law.
 3. The lawyer asks the million-dollar question – How can I inherit eternal life? What is the path to a right relationship with God? How can I guarantee that I will spend eternity in God’s presence?
 - a) Same question the rich young ruler asked and the same question that Nicodemus asked.
- C. Instead of answering it, Jesus turns the question around
1. “What is written in the law? How do you interpret it?”
 2. This is an easy question for the lawyer because of what is known as the Shema Prayer, or the Shema Israel.
 - a) If you were with us on Wednesday night, you may remember this from our overview of the book of Deuteronomy.
 - b) The Shema Prayer begins with one of the best-known, most fundamental expressions in the Mosaic Law - *Deut 6:4 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.***
 - (1) Shema – Hear, listen. Not just with your ears but with your lives. Listen and obey.
 - c) This is a prayer that the Jewish people would recite multiple times a day, so as a child it would be engrained in your mind. It’s Judaism 101, so of course this expert in the law knows the answer.
- D. And Jesus commends him!
1. “You have answered rightly.” And then Jesus adds another foundational principal from the Mosaic Law – “Do this and live.”
 2. That is a major theme woven through the Mosaic Law – Do this and live. Obey God, follow His commands, and receive life.
 3. The specific command in this context is “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.”

III. GOOD NEWS OR BAD NEWS

- A. Some of you may be wondering “what about the gospel? What about grace?”
1. On the surface it appears that Jesus is teaching salvation by good works. He is contradicting everything else He has taught about salvation through faith alone.
 2. We must not forget that there are two ways to eternal life – there are two ways to please God and spend eternity with Him and one does not contradict the other.

- a) Salvation through grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone
- b) Second is by faithful obedience to the commands of God – *all of them, all of the time*

B. What sounds like good news to this lawyer is actually terrible news

1. How may I inherit eternal life? You already know! You've been reciting it since your youth.
2. Love God perfectly and love others perfectly. Do this and you will live.
3. Jesus isn't preaching a different gospel here. This is where the gospel begins. The good news begins with some very bad news.
 - a) ***Romans 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.***
 - b) ***James 2:10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.***
4. This lawyer who thought he was justified by the law was actually condemned by it.
 - a) Until he came to terms with his helpless state, he could not receive the rest of the gospel
 - b) Having sight, you are blind! The well have no need for a physician.
 - (1) Those who came to Jesus acknowledging their helpless condition – the gulf between them and God caused by their own sin – they were forgiven – they believed in Jesus and received everlasting life
 - c) Jesus is drawing out of this lawyer the poison of self-righteousness that keeps him from seeing the truth
 - (1) We know that is the case because look at the lawyer's response. He was convicted! The law had its intended effect.

C. ***Luke 10:29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"***

1. The lawyer, realizing his good works left him tragically short of God's righteous requirements, so he attempted to justify himself.
 - a) "If I can't rise to God's standards maybe He will lower them to mine" The lawyer is trying to move the goalpost
2. But God does not change. He is perfect all of time and He requires the same from us.
 - a) We have momentary flashes of Godliness, in ideal conditions. Good night's sleep, our morning cup of coffee, the kids are behaved, we get to work on time – on the way home we stop to get groceries and the cashier is noticeably upset. We ask them what's wrong, they share a trial they're going through – so we give them a big hug and some encouragement and walk away feeling pretty good about ourselves.

- b) Those moments are not good enough. The law requires perfect love of God and man all the time, every moment of everyday. And God will not lower His standards, or He would no longer be perfect. It's not part of His nature
 - (1) But Jesus doesn't come out and say that. Instead He shares a parable that the lawyer will have to roll around in his mind for days

IV. THE LAW

Luke 10:30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'

A. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho

- 1. Well known path, one the lawyer would definitely be familiar with. Jericho was only 17 miles from Jerusalem, but Jerusalem is 3000 feet above sea level and Jericho is 850 feet below sea level
 - a) It is to this day a steep and winding road surrounded by cliffs and canyons.
 - b) It was a perfect place for thieves to hide out and wait for unsuspecting travelers.
 - (1) This road featured what was called the Pass of Adummim which literally meant "blood pass"
- 2. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was literally a valley of death – you would never travel it alone and you certainly wouldn't travel it at night

B. This stranger seemed to have done both

- 1. He was attacked by thieves and not just robbed – he was stripped naked and beaten within a half inch of his life – and left for dead.
- 2. This language should stir up images of the work of our enemy – the enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy – in the New Testament there are a number of instances of demons violently attacking men, stripping them naked, and leaving them for dead
 - a) This man was left in a desperate situation. If someone didn't intervene, he would die. In that moment he was completely dependent on the kindness of another to live.

C. What do you know – a priest approached – a man who represented God to the people, a man of position and influence.

- 1. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side

2. And then a Levite approached, a temple worker, someone who attended to the daily needs of the temple – keeping the oil in the candle stands, setting out the show bread
 - a) He came and looked at the man and passed by on the other side
3. There are a lot of assumptions made about why these men didn't stop – if he was dead then he was unclean so they couldn't touch him, it was a possible trap, maybe they thought he deserved it, traveling alone at night – but Jesus doesn't give us a reason because that is not the point of this parable
 - a) Both of these men did nothing for the man who was in need. These men who represented the law, these men who the lawyer had to identify with, they were powerless to help him
 - b) These men represent every religion, every belief system that seeks to justify a man by his own works – every system that says “do this and live”
 - (1) Religion cannot and will not heal anyone! It is completely powerless to make someone whole.
 - (2) Religion/belief systems/world views that look to subjective morality, or look to the government, or to programs, or to principles, or to legislation to deal with our brokenness but are powerless to transform a person's heart

V. THE GOOD SAMARITAN

- A. Then comes along the most unlikely of heroes. A Samaritan – whose very existence made the Jews sick to their stomachs
 1. They were seen as a stain on the earth. Half-breeds in the eyes of the Jewish people. If you really wanted to insult another Jew, you would call them a Samaritan
 2. The best insult the Jews could come up with for Jesus in John 8 – they said “you are a Samaritan and have a demon.”
- B. But it is this Samaritan, a man who would have been rejected by the Jewish people, that saw the dying man and had compassion on him
 1. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.
- C. Let's cut to the chase. This is not a parable primarily about showing kindness to strangers, or caring for the suffering, this is a parable about our inability to fulfill the righteousness standard of the God's law apart from Jesus
 1. ***Rom 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.***

2. I'm not the good Samaritan, you're not the good Samaritan. Jesus is. Jesus is the one who found us helpless, beaten and robbed in the valley of death, had compassion on us, bandaged our wounds, cleansed us with His blood (wine), and anointed us with His Spirit (oil), and then promised to continue to care for us until He returns – paying any debts that we incur
 - a) That is the difference between self-justification and falling into the hands of a loving Savior. We can never care for ourselves the way that Jesus cares for us.
 - b) The Samaritan could have bandaged his wounds and set him on his way but instead he lavished him with care. God's love is never just enough. He never barely meets our needs.
 - (1) That is why Paul prays in Eph 3 that we may be able to grasp how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge

36 So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"37 And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

VI. GO AND DO LIKEWISE

- A. Jesus hits the lawyer with that impossible task again. "Go and do likewise."
 1. Go and love perfectly and you shall live. That is what the law teaches, "First do and then live." But Jesus teaches "First live, and then you will do."
 2. That is why all this talk about social justice without Jesus is so hollow. How dare we talk about justice and leave out the only one who is truly just? How dare we talk about love and compassion and leave out the author of love? It is an affront to God
 3. We cannot love as deeply and as selflessly as God requires. Our righteousness does not measure up. We are the priest and Levite who pass by others every day without care or concern - we may have moments of compassion, but moments are not what God requires. He requires perfection.
 - a) That perfection is only available through the blood of Jesus, through His sacrifice. His clothing were stripped from His body and His body was broken and beaten and He was nailed to the cross, left for dead – He became this man on the road to Jericho, He took our place so that we might take His place in heaven
 - b) Paul writes - Cor 2 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- B. Once we are made alive through His death and resurrection, then we are able to go and do likewise.

VII. COMMUNION