

Hi5

"WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?" LUKE 10:25-37

This Week's Core Competency

Humanity – I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior. John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Jews in Jesus' day must have been interested in eternal life because he was apparently questioned frequently regarding how to obtain it (Mt 19:16; Mk 10:17; Lk 10:25; 18:18; cf., Jn 3: 3, 14-16, 36). From what we read in scripture, it seems they associated it with life with God in a future world following the resurrection. The prophet Daniel writes, "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever (12:1-3). No wonder Martha responds to Jesus' statement, "Your brother will rise again" (Jn 11:23) by saying, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (v. 24). Again it seems they believed only the righteous, those who loved the Lord with all their heart, soul, strength, and mind and loved their neighbors as

If any are saved, they will be saved by grace.

themselves, qualified to inherit it—assuming that the lawyer's answer to his own question to Jesus was typical (Lk 10:27).

Clearly Jews in the first-century believed that they should love their neighbors as themselves just as the Lord commanded in Leviticus 19:18. Through Moses, he told the entire assembly of Israel, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD." And they generally agreed that "neighbor" meant "fellow-countryman" but excluded foreigners. Full proselytes were also considered neighbors, but there were some exceptions. The Pharisees tended to exclude those who were not Pharisees. Another group, the Essenes, taught their members to hate outsiders whom they called "sons of darkness." One rabbinical saying ruled that heretics, informers, and renegades "should be pushed (into the ditch) and not pulled out" (Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 202-203), and the popular view the Lord's command excluded personal enemies, "You have heard that God said: 'You shall love your fellow-countryman; but you need not love your enemy' " (Mt 5:43).

No wonder Jesus caused a stir when he said, "I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

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"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (vv. 44-48).

The Jews were not wrong to believe that they would inherit eternal life by obeying the two great commandments. To the lawyer Jesus said, "Do this and you will live." They were wrong to think that they could actually do so. *Absolute* obedience to both commandments is required; *relative* obedience will not do. As James says, "whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it" (2:10), which means the rich young man was only fooling himself when he told Jesus, "All these I have kept . . . What do I still lack?" (Mt 19:20). Jesus made what he lacked obvious by saying, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possession and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven" (Mt 19:21). It seems the young man didn't really love his neighbor as himself. It's easier to profess love for God and to observe religious rituals as proof of this love than it is to show love for one's neighbor, which leads to the Jews' second error. They were wrong to limit their definition of neighbor. The wrongheaded assumption that some people are "non-neighbors" is what Jesus corrects in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Luke 10:25-37

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

27 He answered: " '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, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' "

28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened

to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two silver coins 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.'

36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Underline "expert in the law" in v. 25.

* Circle "test" in v. 25.

* Highlight the expert's question in v. 25.

* Circle "eternal life" in v. 25.

* In the margin next to the expert's answer in v. 27 write, "See Dt 6:5; Lev 19:18."

* Highlight the mark Jesus gives his answer in v. 28.

* Circle "correctly" in v. 28.

* Circle "live" in v. 28.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. What do you infer from the fact that the expert's question is asked elsewhere in the Gospels (Lk 18:18; cf., Mt 19:16; Mk 10:17)?
2. Is this scribe or lawyer being disingenuous—what's he up to?
3. Why do you suppose Jesus directs him to the Law for the answer to his question?
4. Lawyers never ask a question unless they already know the answer. Is that true in this case? Explain.
5. So who's testing whom?
6. Identify the two scriptures the expert quotes in his answer.
7. Put the *first* thing a person must do to inherit eternal life in your own words.
8. Explain the *comparison* "love your neighbor *as yourself*" in the second thing one must do.
9. **Discussion:** Talk about Jesus' reply to the lawyer's answer and his comment, "Do this and you will live."

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

Luke 10:25-28 is important because the conversation between Jesus and the expert in the law contains a number of critical questions. First, it opens with a most important question: What must a person do to obtain eternal life? Second, Jesus answers that question by asking one of his own: What does the Law say? Third, the expert's interpretation begs a follow-up question that unfortunately is neither explicitly asked nor answered: What can a person do if he is unable to do what the Law requires? And finally, the conversation triggers a second question from the expert (v. 29) that Jesus answers in the Parable of the Good Samaritan: Who is my neighbor?

Luke tells his readers that this expert in the law (or "lawyer," ESV)—a designation used by Luke for 'scribes' or teachers of the law, most of whom were Pharisees—wants to "test" Jesus. This doesn't necessarily mean that he has ulterior motives. During Jesus' public ministry people are deciding what to think of him. Verse 27 suggests that the lawyer knows how he would answer the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life? He simply wants to know how Jesus would. Presumably, the answer he receives from Jesus will determine in large part what he thinks of him. Evidently, the salvation question (see Mt 19:16; cf., v. 25) was often asked in Jesus' day, which means he likely answered it repeatedly. This time he turns the tables on his interrogator by asking, "What is written in the Law?" In other words, since the Law is the final authority on such matters, and you are an expert in the Law, "How do you read it?" Ironically, the one being tested turns out to be the one doing the testing.

The expert answers Jesus' question by combining quotations from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. He replies, "'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 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Jesus affirms his answer. "Do this and you will live," he replies. In other words, "Do this and you will *inherit eternal life*." The implicit follow-up question that is neither asked nor answered is made explicit by the following commentator: "The man's response should have been to ask, 'How can I do this? I am not able. I need help.' Instead, he tried 'to justify himself,' that is, to defend himself against

the implications of Jesus' words" (John a. Martin, "Luke," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 234).

The lawyer is not wrong to think he would inherit eternal life by obeying the two great commandments. He is wrong to think he is able to do so! *Absolute* obedience to both commandments is what the Law requires; *relative* obedience will not do. Praise God for he has made righteousness available by faith to those who are unable to meet the requirements of the Law! Paul speaks of a righteousness that comes by faith not by works in Philippians 3:4b-9: "If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, *not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith*" (italics added). Justification comes by faith not by the works of the Law (Ro 3:28; Gal 2:15-16).

But instead of putting his wrongheaded thinking behind him, the lawyer attempts to justify himself by finding a loophole in the second commandment by asking, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus would have none of it. One commentator writes: "Implicit in his question is an excuse for failing to keep the second commandment, that is, one must love only one's neighbor (when properly identified and qualified) and not others. (According to Lev. 19:18 only Israelites are 'neighbors.')

But this is not how Jesus understood the commandment. The commandment to love one's neighbor is to be applied universally, not selectively. As the Parable of the Good Samaritan will illustrate, it is the man who treats a stranger as a neighbor that really keeps the commandment of the law" (Craig A. Evans, *Luke*, NIBC, 176).

The Message of the Passage

*Since relative obedience to the demands of the Law will not do,
all who obtain eternal life must obtain it by faith.*

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 25 **on one occasion** Luke does not specify exactly when this lawyer questioned Jesus. "The incident opens without details of time or place, but may have taken place in or near Jerusalem (Grundmann, 221)" (I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT, 441). Grundmann's inference is apparently based on the fact that Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem (9:51) and is nearly to Bethany (10:38).
- v. 25 **expert in the law** Lit., "lawyer." Experts in the law are also mentioned by Luke in 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52 and 14:3. The same are also called "teachers of the law," in 11:53, e.g., scribes.
- v. 25 **test** Commentators are divided as to the lawyer's sincerity. One infers he was disingenuous based on the negative connotations of Luke's use of "test" (v. 25) and the lawyer's desire to "justify himself" (v. 29) (Martin, 234; cf., Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, 317). But another writes, "The suggestion is that a recognized religious authority is testing the unofficial teacher to see whether he gives the right answers; we should probably not see here the motif of temptation or of 'testing the Lord' (cf. H. Seesmann, TDNT VI, 28, 35)" (Marshall, 442). It seems more likely that he asks simply to see whether Jesus would answer correctly and not necessarily to trap him or trip him up. The lawyer apparently knows the answer to his question before he asks it (cf. v. 27).
- v. 25 **what must I do** In other words, "How good must I be to receive eternal life in the kingdom of God?" (cf., 18:18, 24; Mt 19:16, 21). Commentators have reached no consensus regarding the relationship of this passage to Mark 12:28-34. One writes, "If, however, Luke's version of the story is not from Mk., is it an independent account of the same incident, or were there two similar incidents? It is certainly possible to regard the versions in all three Gospels as independent developments of the one basic story; opinions then vary as to whether the more primitive form is to be found in Lk. (J. Weiss, 463; Easton, 169f) or in Mk. (Linnemann, 141-143). Over against this view stands the sturdy commonsense argument of T. W. Manson (*Sayings*, 259-261; cf. Langrange, 309f.; Jeremias, *Parables*, 202), that 'great teachers constantly repeat themselves'. The sort of question raised by the lawyer was one that could arise frequently, especially since we know that it was asked in rabbinic circles . . . There is nothing surprising in the question being asked on more than one occasion, since it was a rabbinic theme: Rabbi Eliezer (c. AD 90) was asked by his pupils, 'Rabbi, teach us the ways of life so that by them we may attain to the life of the future world' (b Ber. 28b; SB I, 808)" (442).
- v. 25 **inherit** "The combination of inherit with eternal life asks, in effect, "What must I do to be saved?" (The NET Bible, 86sn, Lk 10:25). The term "can be weakened to mean simply 'to obtain', but here has the idea of being qualified not to receive a future blessing from God" (Marshall, 442).
- v. 27 **Love the Lord** The lawyer based his answer on Dt 6:5 and Lev 19:18. "The expert's answer consisted of two OT passages. The first (Deut 6:5) was called the *Shema* because it begins 'Hear of Israel.' A devout Jew would repeat it twice each day (Ber. 1:1-4). In the *Shema* three prepositional phrases describe the total response of love toward God. These involve the heart (emotions), the soul (consciousness), and strength (motivation). The Synoptic Gospels all have 'hear' and 'soul,' Matthew omits strength, and all add 'mind' (intelligence). The second OT passage is the lawyer's answer is Lev 19:18. It is found also in Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; and Jas 2:8. In Luke the two OT passages are combined into a single command, whereas in Mark 12:31; Matt 22:39 they are left separate. Whether these two OT passages were linked before Jesus' time is uncertain. They appear together in the early Christian literature. That this twofold summary was basic to Jesus' teaching is evident by its appearance in his parables (Luke 15:18, 21; 18:2; cf. also 11:42, where 'justice' equals 'love your neighbor'). For a similar but indirect connection, see Mic 6:8" (Stein, 316).
- v. 28 **correctly** "Jesus' affirmation reveals to Luke's readers that 10:27 is indeed the way to eternal life (cf. 18:20)" (316).
- v. 28 **live** "The thought is primarily of life with God after death, which can be expressed by [zoe] or (as here) by [zoe aionios] (R. Bultmann, TDNT II, 856 n. 197; cf. Dn. 12:2; 4 Mac. 15:3; Ps. Sol. 3:16; T. Ash. 5:2). [klepronomeo] 'to inherit' (18:18*; J. Herrmann, and W. Foerster, TDNT III, 767-785, especially 780), can be weakened to mean simply 'to obtain', but here has the idea of being qualified now to receive a future blessing from God" (Marshall, 442).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

"A person's a person no matter how small." Dr. Seuss' character, Horton the Elephant had a mission. He discovered a microscopic planet on a speck of dust in the jungle. This planet's future was in jeopardy. If it landed in the water, all the Who's who lived on the planet would drown. Horton took it upon himself to be the protector of this tiny world. He carefully placed the speck of dust on a clover and vowed to put it somewhere it would be safe. The other animals in the jungle ridiculed Horton and tried to take the clover. They didn't believe there were small people living on a tiny speck of dust. Throughout the book, Horton risks his own life to protect the Who's. He knew that even though he couldn't see the Who's, they were his neighbors and neighbors had a responsibility to help each other. Horton reminds me of the Good Samaritan in our story this week. Just as Horton could have never paid attention to the Who's in crisis, the Samaritan could have kept walking when he passed the wounded Jewish man on the road that day. However, the Samaritan man had a bigger definition of what it meant to be a neighbor. To him, a neighbor was anyone who was near. He chose to not walk past a neighbor in need. Look around you this week. Who is near and needs help? Decide to be a good neighbor to that person.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Luke 10:25-37

1. What question did the expert in the law ask Jesus?
2. How did Jesus respond?
3. What question did the man ask Jesus in verse 29?

What Do You Think

Jesus said the most important thing was to love God first and then love other people. In what ways are you showing God that you love Him first?

What R U Going To Do

Make a list of all the people you regularly spend time with that don't live in your house. This may include kids at school, people who live in your neighborhood, kids on your soccer team or in your dance class. Post this list somewhere you can see it daily and begin praying for these people by name!

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Humanity - I believe God loves everyone and we all need Jesus as Savior.

Memory Verse

Matthew 22:37 - Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.