

Hi5

"HOW IS MY NEIGHBOR?"

LUKE 10:25-37

This Week's Core Competency

Compassion – I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need. Psalm 82:3-4

*3 Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless;
maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.*

*4 Rescue the weak and needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.*

God expects people to show compassion to one another because it's the right thing to do. While the law was given to Israel, it makes righteous demands on everyone. Paul implies as much when he writes: "God 'will give to each person according to what he has done.' To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil; first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For God does not show favoritism" (Ro 2:6-11). He doesn't stop there but goes on to say that Jews and Gentiles alike will be judged in light of the law's righteous demands. He writes: "All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by

*Maybe I cannot help everywhere,
but I can help somewhere . . .*

— Darrell L. Bock

the law. For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares" (vv. 12-15). Gentiles are not exempt from the righteous demands of the law simply because the law was given to Israel and not to them.

Here's the point: If the expert in the law who stood up to test Jesus was right to assert that the law's manifold demands might be succinctly expressed in two great commandments (as Jesus affirmed); and if God expects everyone to meet the righteous demands of the law (as indicated above); then God expects everyone to, as the lawyer says: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lk 10:27b). Paul puts our obligation as Christian "neighbors" this way: "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Gal 6:10).

On what it takes to be this kind of neighbor, one commentator writes: "How can one be a neighbor? It takes eyes and ears to be a neighbor, as well as a compassionate heart. The one major difference

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between the priest and Levite on the one hand and the Samaritan on the other is not what they see and hear, but what they do with what they see and hear. Only the Samaritan takes pity. Only he has a heart. Neighbors are people with a heart that does more than pump blood. It sees, feels, and serves.

"One often hears that the task of dealing with pain in the world is so vast that we do not know where to begin or how we can even hope to make a dent in what needs to be done. Such thinking can become an excuse for inaction. If I cannot know where to begin, I will not even start to help, because if I do, I will be overwhelmed. A better attitude is to pitch in where one feels a sense and ability to help. Maybe I cannot help everywhere, but I can help somewhere and try to do a meaningful work of service. Being a neighbor does not require meeting every need of which I become aware, but of becoming one piece of a large puzzle that helps meaningfully in a specific context" (Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, 302).

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.

* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 29.

* Circle the word "justify" in v. 29.

* Highlight the expert's second question to Jesus in v. 29.

* Underline "going down" in v. 30.

* Circle "robbers" in v. 30.

* Bracket "half-dead" in v. 30.

* Circle "priest" in v. 31.

* Circle "happened" in v. 31.

* Bracket "when he saw the man" in v. 31.

* Underline "other side" in vv. 31, 32.

* Circle "Levite" in v. 32.

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. "In reply Jesus said" (v. 30). In reply to what?
2. Explain the relationship of Jesus' *parable* to reality.
3. Put yourself in the "expert's" shoes. What likely crossed his mind upon hearing Jesus describe a brutal assault on the Jericho road?
4. How does the critical condition of the victim contribute to the story?
5. Two men "happened" to be travelling the same road. What does the insertion of "happened" add to the story?
6. The two passers-by are identified as a "priest" and a "Levite," while the victim's identity is not specified. How come?
7. Put yourself in the "expert's" shoes. What likely crossed his mind upon hearing Jesus say both the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side?
8. How does the story *so far* prepare the way for the answer to the lawyer's question?
9. **Discussion:** Talk about how being religious can get in the way of doing what is right.

day 3

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

Before commenting on Jesus' parable, a word on its interpretation is in order. No parable has been wrongfully allegorized more often than the Good Samaritan. The irony of all allegorical interpretations, including this most famous one of Augustine, is that they fail to deal with the question that introduces the parable, "And who is my neighbor?" One commentator states flatly: "This parable, as the other parables, is not to be allegorized. The **man** leaving **Jerusalem** does not represent fallen Adam's exit from Paradise (Gen. 3:22-24); the **robbers** do not represent Satan and his demons; **stripped him** does not refer to humanity's loss of immortality; the **priest** does not represent the Law nor the **Levite** the Prophets or some other part of the OT or Jewish practice; the **Samaritan** is not Jesus; the **oil and wine** do not represent the Holy Spirit and/or gifts of the Holy Spirit; the **inn** is not the church; the **innkeeper** is neither the Apostle Paul nor the Holy Spirit; and the **two silver coins** refer neither to the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper nor to anything else" (Craig A. Evans, *Luke*, NIBC, 178).

In his conversation with Jesus, an expert in the law asks first regarding what he must do to inherit eternal life (v. 25). When Jesus replies by asking for his expert opinion on what the law says, he answers: "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 marks his answer "correct," and replies, "Do this and you will live." Put differently, "Do this and you will *inherit eternal life*."

At this point Luke inserts a comment to reveal the motive behind the lawyer's follow-up question: "Who is my neighbor?" He wants to justify himself. "Jesus has said in effect, 'You have no need to ask me the question about eternal life; as a lawyer you know the answer. All you have to do is to practice what you preach'. So he professes inability to practice the law until its meaning has been clarified. The commandment speaks about loving one's neighbour. But where are the limits of duty to be set? The question implies that there can be a non-neighbour (Derrett, 225)" (I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT, 447). In a nutshell, the lawyer is fishing for a reassuring retort from Jesus, one that will limit his legal obligation enough to assure his obedience. If

anything, Jesus does the exact opposite.

Jesus answers his question by telling the celebrated parable recorded in Luke 10:30-36. The story contains four characters: a nameless man, a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan. In it Jesus uses *contrast* to make his point. He contrasts what the priest and Levite do with what the Samaritan does. The word "but" indicating contrast marks the turning point in the story in verse 33. As the story opens (vv. 30-32), the unidentified man is on his way to Jericho when he falls victim to a brutal mugging. Even though it is frequently travelled, perhaps *because* it is frequently travelled, it is notoriously dangerous, a bandit magnet. The geography en route provides plenty of places for brigands to hide in wait for vulnerable travelers, especially those traveling alone. Robbers attack the man, strip him of his garments, beat him to within an inch of his life, and leave him half-dead along the side of the road.

According to one reference work, "In Jesus' time the 25 km-long Jericho-Jerusalem road was notorious for its danger and difficulty. The road is most renowned for its appearance in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), which is commemorated today by a building known as the Good Samaritan Inn, or Khan al-Ahmar. This building is an Ottoman hostel (caravanserai) located on the south side of the main highway from Jericho to Jerusalem, 10 km east of Jerusalem, on the site of an earlier, sixth-century Byzantine inn that also marked the place of the parable. In fact, the earliest archaeological findings on the site date back to the days of the Second Temple period (first century C.E.). In Jesus' time, the site had apparently functioned as a way station for travelers, which it remained through the Byzantine era, the Crusades, and the Ottoman era" (www.bibleodyssey.org/en/places/related-articles/road-to-jericho.aspx).

Along come a priest and a Levite, obviously two religious men, whom one might expect to stop and render aid, but neither does, and not because they do not see the wounded man. Jesus makes it perfectly clear that both men see the victim, presumably a fellow Jew, before passing by him. It seems that the Levite may have actually walked up to the man to take a look up close before, like the priest, passing by

on the other side. Perhaps they fear becoming contaminated by the man. If so, the following comment is in order: "Ironically, those who were most concerned with keeping every requirement of the law (as seen through the grid of many oral laws and traditions), the **priest** and **Levite**, were unable to aid a fellow human being in great need for fear of becoming ceremonially 'unclean.' Because of their religious duties there was no room left for the duty

that every person, especially a priest, has as neighbor to another" (Evans, 176).

The story *so far* is shocking in a number of ways: the brutality of the robbers is shocking; the condition of the victim is shocking, and the indifference of the priest and Levite is shocking. But what is even more shocking is yet to come: the compassion of a Samaritan half-breed.

The Message of the Passage

Refusing to extend compassion to others in need is contrary to the righteous demands of God's law.

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. 29 **justify** In other words, he is looking for an interpretation of the law that will allow him to claim that he has met its demands. "The lawyer wants to know if he can be a neighbor to a select, elite few" (Bock, 301). He wasn't looking for a definition per se; he was looking to limit the extent of his obligation. "Jesus was not being asked for a definition of the term 'friend', but for an indication as to where, within the community, the limits of the duty of loving were to be drawn. How far does my responsibility extend? That is the meaning of the question" (Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 2nd rev. ed., 203). The expert's question is the kind Peter asked: "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" (Mt 18:21).

v. 29 **neighbor** For most Jews, neighbors were other Jews. Samaritans and Gentiles were not neighbors. "The counter-question as to what the scripture meant by the term 'friend' was justifiable, since the answer was in dispute. It was generally agreed that the term connoted fellow-countrymen, including full proselytes, but there was disagreement about the exceptions: the Pharisees were inclined to exclude non-Pharisees (*'am ha'ares*); the Essenes required that a man 'should hate all the sons of darkness'; a rabbinical saying ruled that heretics, informers, and renegades 'should be pushed (into the ditch) and not pulled out', and a wide-spread popular saying excepted personal enemies ('You have heard that God said: You shall love your fellow-countryman; but you need not love your enemy', Matt. 5.43)" (202-203).

v. 30 **Jericho** The road from Jerusalem to Jericho descends approximately 3300 feet over a distance of about 17 miles. It was a dangerous road to travel because it ran through desert and rocky country well suited to give cover to robbers. Because many priests and Levites lived in Jericho, they had to make the dangerous round trip to Jerusalem regularly. "Because Jerusalem sits on a mountain twenty-five hundred feet above sea level, one always goes down from Jerusalem no matter which direction one takes" (Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, 317). "Josephus records that Herod enriched the town with a number of public buildings, including a hippodrome and an amphitheatre, together with a winter palace for himself and villas for the Jewish upper class in the new town west of ancient Jericho. He also built a new wall with two towers around the town, one tower named Kypros after his mother and one named Phasael for his brother. When Herod died his palace was burned down, but his son, Archelaus, rebuilt it and improved its palm plantations . . . Jesus was familiar with the district. The scene of his Temptation may have been in the desolate mountains above the town, and the place of his baptism by John was not far away. He made the road leading to Jericho the scene of his parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30). The road he took on his last visit to Jerusalem led Jesus to Jericho where he stayed at the house of Zacchaeus, a rich publican (tax collector, Luke 19:1-9), and restored the sight of the blind beggar, (18:35-43). Jericho, in Jesus' time, was a thriving, prosperous city, centre of development for the Romanized Jericho Valley. It contained a small wealthy middle class and a great number of poor people who lived in hopes of better things to come" (Biblical Archeology, "Jericho," www.bible-archaeology.info/bible_city_jericho.htm).

v. 31 **priest** A descendant of Aaron who offered sacrifices and presided over temple worship. One might have expected a devout priest to aid a man in need—presumably another Jew. Why he did not has been the subject of much pointless speculation. "Attempts to ascertain the inner thoughts and motives of the priest are irrelevant because he is a fictional character. This particular priest never existed. It is pointless to discuss what the priest and Levite were thinking as they came upon this man. If an author wants to place particular thoughts in the mind of his fictional character, he may certainly do so, but he must then share them with his readers" (Stein, 317). However, the fact that the two passers-by are a priest and Levite may be significant. "The most that we can say is that there may be an attack on the ritualism which prevents acts of love, just as in the case of Jesus' healings on the Sabbath, but the essential point is the attack on failure to show love, whatever the pretext" (Marshall, 448).

v. 31 **happened** Cf., "by chance" (NET). "The point is that the road was lonely, and a man might lie a long time before help arrived" (Marshall, 448). The term "adds an initial note of hope and fortune to the expectation in the story" (the NET Bible, 102sn on Lk 10:32).

v. 31 **passed by** A striking way of describing the priest's unwillingness to love his neighbor as himself.

v. 32 **Levite** A descendant of Levi who assisted the priests in their various temple duties. One might have expected him to help; the possibility of defilement was less acute for a Levite than for a priest.

v. 32 **other side** Perhaps the Levite went over to see the man up-close before passing by on the other side (see Marshall, 448-49). "The clause containing the aorist active participle [elthon] suggests that the Levite came up to the place, took a look, and then moved on" (the NET Bible, 108tm on Lk 10:32).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Compassion is an easy core value to display throughout the holiday season. Our families have had many opportunities to participate in compassion initiatives. Most of our families packed a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child or bought gifts for an Angel Tree child. You may have served at Mission Arlington or donated through your workplace. You may have put coins in the Salvation Army bell-ringer's bucket many times over the weeks leading up to Christmas. Reflecting on God's great gift to us simply compels us to be generous and compassionate. But living as compassionate people isn't a seasonal thing, it's a life thing. I have to remind myself of this often. Christmas was almost a month ago and we have a brand new calendar hanging on the wall but people around us are still in need. Some of these needs are physical and tangible and some are emotional and spiritual. As we enter 2015, let's keep our compassion radars on. Let's model to our kids that compassion is a lifestyle that responds to needs when they present themselves, not at a certain time of year or when it is convenient. I'm sure the Good Samaritan had an agenda that day on the road to Jericho. He likely wasn't on a pleasure walk. However, he allowed himself to be interrupted to help. Let's do the same this year.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Luke 10:25-37

1. What happened to the man traveling on the road to Jericho that day?
2. Who passed by and didn't help?
3. Who stopped to help?
4. What did he do?

What Do You Think

1. What did it cost the Good Samaritan to stop and help?
2. What do you think he gained by it?

What R U Going To Do

There is someone around you today in need. It may be a physical need (a warm coat, help with homework), an emotional need (someone to be a friend) or a spiritual need (invite them to church or tell them about Jesus). Look for an opportunity to show compassion this week.

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Compassion - I believe God wants me to help others in need.

Memory Verse

Mt 22:38-39 - *"This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"*

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 Psalm 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 Psalm 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 Psalm 95:1-7

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

Prayer Psalm 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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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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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.