

PARABLES OF JESUS

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN - LUKE 10:25-37

A. Context of Chapter 10

1. Jesus sent out 72 who declared that even the demons were subject to them in Jesus' name.
2. Jesus warned several cities that their rejection of Him would bring great judgment upon them.
3. The 72 were told by Jesus that their joy should not be in their power over demons but that their names are written in heaven.

B. A lawyer tried to test Jesus with a question concerning salvation (25-28)

1. He asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life (25), *And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*
 - a. This incident is similar to one recorded in Mark 12:28-34.
 - b. The lawyer, an expert in the Law of God, sought to test Jesus.
 - 1) He was checking to see where Jesus stood on the Law.
 - 2) Also, the force of the word can mean *to try to trap or catch someone in a mistake.*
 - c. The focus of the question was on himself, *what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*
 - 1) The direction of every person is self-centered until confronted by grace.
 - 2) The lawyer assumed eternal life was something one must gain by personal effort.
 - 3) As a Jew, he probably considered eternal life something to be inherited based on his nationality.
2. Jesus responded with a question for the lawyer (26), *He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?"*
 - a. Jesus directed the lawyer to the authority they both accepted, the Old Testament.
 - b. Jesus wanted the lawyer to give his interpretation of Scripture concerning the important subject of eternal life.
 - c. Thomas Constable, *...by asking this counter-question Jesus put Himself in the position of evaluating the lawyer's answer rather than having the lawyer evaluate His answer.*
3. The lawyer gave a worthy response (27-28), *And he answered, "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 neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."*
 - a. The lawyer gave the same answer Jesus gave to the same question on another occasion.
 - 1) Matthew 22:37-40, *And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."*
 - 2) Mark 12:29-31, *Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*
 - 3) Jesus and the lawyer were quoting from the Old Testament.
 - a) Deuteronomy 6:5, *You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*
 - b) Leviticus 19:18, *You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*
 - b. Jesus affirmed the lawyer's answer by saying, *You have answered correctly.*
 - 1) This is the same word from which we get the term, orthodox, commonly accepted.
 - 2) The lawyer's answer was from the head but Jesus said that knowing the answer is not enough.
 - 3) To inherit eternal life, one must not only know the truth but fully live it; that's the problem.

- c. Jesus said life comes by truth tied to obedience.
 - 1) Knowing the truth must be followed by obeying the truth.
 - 2) Thomas Constable, ...*He (Jesus) proceeded to assure the lawyer that orthodox thinking would not gain him eternal life by itself. He needed orthodox practice too; he needed to practice what the law required.*
 - 3) Jesus emphasized this point by referring to Leviticus 18:5, *You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.*
 - 4) The lawyer thought the Law could justify but the Law was given to condemn because nobody is able to keep the Law. It was given to point helpless sinners to sinless Messiah Who alone can save sinners.
- 4. The lawyer tried to limit his responsibility (29), ***But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"***
 - a. The lawyer didn't ask Jesus how such a difficult task could be accomplished but he tried to lighten his load.
 - 1) Religion seeks to justify people based on self-righteousness.
 - 2) Christianity justifies people based on receiving by faith the righteousness of Jesus.
 - b. Saying you love God with all your heart is one thing but loving others as yourself is observable.
 - 1) The lawyer knew he didn't love others as himself.
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *He (the lawyer) should have acknowledged his inability to keep these commands and asked Jesus what He should do. Instead he tried to "justify" himself by limiting the demand of the law and then showing that he had fulfilled that limited demand.*
- C. Jesus responded to the lawyer with a parable (30-35)
 - 1. He told of a man who was robbed and beaten on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho (30), ***Jesus replied, "A 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.***
 - a. Jesus told this parable to show that one may not limit the meaning of neighbor to a select few.
 - b. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho descended 3,300 feet from Jerusalem to Jericho and was a favorite road for robbers.
 - c. The traveler was probably a Jew and was left on the side of the road in terrible condition.
 - 2. Jesus tells of the response of those who approached the injured traveler (31-35)
 - a. A priest passed by on the other side (31), ***Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.***
 - 1) The priest saw the beaten man but chose not to help him.
 - 2) Thomas Constable, ...*a priest, of all people, should have shown compassion. He served in a "helping occupation," and he had frequent contact with the Scriptures and their demands.*
 - b. A Levite passed by on the other side, as well (32), ***So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.***
 - 1) The Levite behaved in the same way as the priest.
 - 2) Levites were descendants of Levi but priests were descendants of Aaron.
 - 3) They assisted priests in their responsibilities of worship.
 - c. A Samaritan had compassion evidenced by physical and financial aid (33-35), ***But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, "Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back."***
 - 1) A Samaritan saw the man and rendered aid.
 - 2) He tended to his wounds, took him to an inn and promised the innkeeper that he would cover any costs incurred by the injured man when he returned.
 - 3) Samaritans and Jews despised each other. Samaritans were Jews who had intermarried with non-Jews. But, this Samaritan demonstrated what it mean to love your neighbor, even if your neighbor is a Jew.
 - 4) The lawyer was being shown by this parable that the definition of neighbor is not based on cultural or racial ties.

- D. Jesus applied the parable with a command (36-37), *Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?* He said, *“The one who showed him mercy.”* And Jesus said to him, *“You go, and do likewise.”*
1. Jesus asked the lawyer which man proved to be a neighbor to the injured man.
 - a. The lawyer said that it was the one who showed mercy, the Samaritan.
 - b. J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Lord’s answer shows that our neighbor is any person in need whose need we know and whose need we are able to meet. If we refuse to respond to the need, then we are not neighborly.*
 2. Jesus told the lawyer what it means to be a neighbor.
 - a. He was to behave like the Samaritan.
 - b. Thomas Constable, *...Jesus showed that the real test of love is action, not just profession.*
 3. Jesus was not teaching the lawyer how to inherit eternal life.
 - a. Eternal life is a gift of God.
 - b. Being a neighbor is how those who have received eternal life should live out their faith.
 - c. None of us can *do likewise* without a heart transformed by the finished work of Christ.

<i>CONCLUSION</i>

- A. The definition of neighbor is much broader than we want to admit.
- B. Our responsibility as Christians is to love others by serving them, not by judging them.
- C. Eternal life is inherited by receiving the work of Christ by faith, not by our ability to love God fully and to love our neighbors as ourselves.