

## 'Love Thy Neighbor' and The Parable of the Good Samaritan

The command to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (**Leviticus 19:18**) was explained and expanded by this parable of Jesus in **Luke 10:25-37**.

Soon after the Feast of Tabernacles, an expert in the Law asked Jesus how to inherit eternal life.

Jesus asks what does the Law say? The lawyer recites the well known saying included in everyone's phylacteries - "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

But the lawyer, wanting to justify himself, asks, "and who is my neighbor?"

(Thank God He will speak to us even when we're trying to justify ourselves! That's how lots of Bible study starts out - we want to justify our predetermined positions.)

This parable is familiar to us all, but John Gill, a Bible scholar from the 18th century, has an explanation of the parable as a type of Christ's redemption of humankind.

[For a fuller explanation of this see <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/gill/luke/10.htm> ]

In this story, "a certain man" is Adam, who is beaten, robbed and left for dead by Satan and his deceptions. The "man" is you and me.

A point on the road to Jericho was widely known as a site where robbers would ambush travelers. It was called Adomim - "bloods" after Adam/Edom = ruddy, red like clay. Symbolically it represents the destiny of every human.

**John 10:10** - "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

They stripped him of his garment - i.e. he was left "naked" and alone like Adam and Eve in the Garden, uncovered and without any natural righteousness because of their sin.

First a priest, then a Levite pass by without helping him. They are doing the right thing according to the Law. They were not to defile themselves by touching a dead body.

(Although a rabbinical exception was made for just this situation!)

They represent the Law. The meaning is that the Law can do nothing to give life to the man.

**Romans 8:3** - "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God

sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"

- Remember that the lawyer's original question was how to inherit eternal life.

Then a Samaritan man stops to help the man. Samaritans were hated by the Jews - they were old usurpers in the land, planted there by the Babylonians during the exile, and who practiced a heretical form of Judaism. Jews would not walk through their portion of the country.

The Samaritan is Jesus. (Jesus was called a "Samaritan and a devil" by his religious enemies - **John 8:48**)

He "came to where he was," as Christ humbled himself to become one of us (**Philippians 2**)

He had compassion on him or "showed mercy on him" as the lawyer admits later.

**Hebrews 2:17** - "Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God"

He bound up his wounds:

From God's point of view, all humanity is in the same wounded condition:

**Isaiah 1:6** - "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

He poured in oil (anointing of the Holy Spirit) and wine (symbolic of the blood of Christ) which were used for medicinal purposes.

He set him on his beast and brought him to an inn.

The church is the inn - our mission of to care for people Christ brings to us.

He "took out two pence" - Jesus provides all that we need to care for the broken souls he brings to us. The ultimate healing - eternal life - "when I come again, I will repay thee."

This outlines the program and mission of the church. We cannot do this in our natural state. God provides everything. We only have to be available and have our eyes open for people in need.