

Be Merciful

This is the fourth lesson from the series entitled, Road of Jericho Ministry. This lesson is different from the others in that it is a parable about the dangers of travelling the road of Jericho (Lk.10:30).

In our lesson text, Jesus taught a parable about the opportunities for ministry on the dangerous road of Jericho (Lk.10:33-35). The setting of this parable was the conversation between a scholar of Mosaic Law and Jesus, the teacher.

This conversation was based on two questions the scholar used to confront Jesus' theology.

- **First question** (Lk.10:25)
 - "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
- Counter question by Jesus (Lk.10:26)
 - "What is written in the Law?" How does it read to you?
- Correct answer by scholar (Lk.10:27)
 - Law (Deut 6:5; Lev.19:18)
- Impossible challenge for scholar (Lk.10:28)
 - "Do this and you will live." (James 2:10)

- **Second question** (Lk.10:29)
 - "But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"
- Parable of Good Samaritan (Lk.10:30-35)
 - Five different people were used to expose a theologically declining nation and Divine Agency.
 - Counter question at the end of the parable (Lk.10:36).
- Correct answer (Lk.10:37)
 - "The one who showed mercy towards him."
- Impossible challenge (Lk.10:38)
 - "Go and do the same."

Jesus' counter question and challenge gives both the doctrinal point of the parable and solution to the theological problem. **"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." (Lk.6:36)**

This lesson will study four aspects of doctrinal point of the parable of the Good Samaritan – "Be Merciful."

1. The background to this parable is reflected by the Jewish apostate theology about the Mosaic Law and the Messianic Salvation.

Scholar's motive: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life." (Lk.10:25) and **"But wishing to justify himself."** and "Who is my neighbor?" (Lk.10:29b)

Jesus dealt with this scholar's apostate belief and neglect of the weightier matter of the word of God by using a priest and Levite in the parable (**Matt.23:23-24/ 4th Woe**).

2. Jesus contrasted the Jewish apostate theology by the simple truth of conscience of the Samaritan.

(Rom.2:14-15) "For when **the Gentiles** who do not have the Law **do instinctively** the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their

hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them.” (Rom.2:14-15; 9:30-33)

The Samaritan’s motive (Lk.10:33) “And when he saw him, he felt compassion.” [Compare] (Lk.10:31-32) He felt compassion for another human being; and showed maximum mercy to a stranger (Lk.10:34-35).

3. At the end of the parable, Jesus used a counter question that opened the conversation again.

(Lk.10:36) “Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands?”

The Scholar’s answer: “The one who showed mercy towards him.” (Lk.10:37a)

The Law: “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do. Do not say to your neighbor, ‘Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it,’ when you have it with you.” (Prov.3:27-28; Lk.11:5-8)

Jesus’ impossible challenge: “Go, and do the same.” (Lk.10:38) “And those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Rom.8:9)

4. A biblical parable has only one main doctrinal point.

It is found in Jesus’ final counter question – “Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands.” (Lk.10:36)

Jesus dealt with the scholar’s motive indirectly within the parable. The scholar corrected the lie by the truth within himself (Lk.10:37).

(Matt.23:23) “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, **and have neglected the weightier provisions of the Law; justice and mercy and faithfulness**; but these are things you should have done without neglecting the others.” (4th Woe)

Notice that Jesus didn’t say you answered correctly (Lk.10:36, 28).

Jesus went right to the challenge – “Go, and do the same.” (Lk.10:38)

The challenge was to give unconditional mercy: **“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”** (Lk.6:36)