Together…with My Neighbor

Luke 10:25-37

**Background**

The nation of Israel anticipated the promises expressed in Daniel 12:2-3. The wanted to know about eternal life. But this lawyer is actually challenging or testing Jesus, not just wondering about this truth. He is trying to minimize the efforts he is required to put forth.

This event is also recorded in Matt. 22:34-40 and Mark 12:28-34.

**Vs. 25 The Lawyer’s Question:** “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

This is the same question a rich man asked in Mark 10:17 and Matt. 19:16-22

**Vs. 26 Jesus’ Questions (2 parts):**

What is written in the law?

-The emphasis is on the first five books of the OT, known as the Pentateuch

-Jesus may have been pointing to one of the lawyer’s phylacteries (the leather boxes) he would have been wearing that contain scripture verses.

What is your reading of it?

Jesus is just using a standard answer the Rabbis all used.

**Vs. 27 The Lawyer’s Answer:**

The Shema: Deut. 6:5

Love the Lord with all your heart, soul and strength

Jesus adds “with your mind”

“Love your neighbor as yourself”- Lev. 19:18

**Vs. 28 Jesus’ Affirmation:**

“You answered correctly.Do this and you will live!”

1. DO THIS: The Christian life is NOT just an agreement to a doctrinal statement, or a church membership or even a willingness to live in the light of scripture. It is meant to be an active pursuit of holiness (on the inside) and outwardly life in service to others.
2. LIVE: We are meant to LIVE not just survive. See John 10:10

**Vs. 29 The Lawyer’s Clarification** (wanting to narrow down his responsibilities)

Who is my neighbor?

*My answer: Anyone who has a need that I can meet.*

**Vs. 30-37 Jesus Answers with a Story**

We have called this story, “The Good Samaritan”

The setting: Just after the Feast of Tabernacles, everyone was headed home.

The road: runs 17 miles between Jerusalem and Jericho. It descends toward the river Jordan. It is curvy, rugged, bleak, rocky road that is filled with thieves and robbers.

Vs. 31 The Priest: A descendent of Aaron (See Lev. 8-9 and 21-22)

“going down” implies he was observing one of the three feasts days (Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacle) that required him to visit Jerusalem. He offered sacrifices, met the minimal requirements for fulfilling the Law.

He may have avoided touching the man assuming he was already dead…didn’t want to become “unclean” (Num. 19:11, Lev. 21:11)

Vs. 32 The Levite: A descendent from the tribe of Levi (Numbers 18:2-7)

“There were three family clans within the tribe of Levi — Gershon, Kohath, and Merari but it was only Kohath who supplied the Aaronic priests. Subsequent to the induction of Aaron and his sons into the priesthood, the entire tribe of Levi was "set apart" following the golden calf incident (Exodus 32:26-29). Their zeal for the Lord caused the male Levites (except for Aaron's family, who were already designated as priests) to be set apart as caretakers of the tabernacle and as aides to the priests (Num 1:47-53). Each clan in the tribe now had specific duties related to the tabernacle ([Num 3:14-18](https://www.biblestudytools.com/passage/?q=Numbers+3:14-18)).”

Vs. 33 The Samaritan:

“…their beginnings should be traced back to the 6th century B.C.E. When the Assyrians destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722, they exiled the upper crust of society in order to deprive the country of its leadership. At the same time, as they did elsewhere, they brought in foreign elements in order to create a mixed population unlikely to unify and revolt. These new elements eventually mixed with the native population and together they evolved a syncretistic form of Israelite worship.

When the Judeans returned to rebuild the Temple in about 520 B.C.E., the Samaritans, identifying with the Judeans, offered to help in the endeavor. The Judeans rejected the Samaritans because of their questionable Jewish descent and their syncretistic cult. As a result, long centuries of hostility began. The Samaritans constantly attempted to block the rebuilding of Jerusalem by appealing to Persian authorities.”

“Samaritans were ethnic and religious outcasts to many first-century Jews. Descended from intermarriage between Israelites and foreigners, religious differences were significant. Samaritans only regarded the five books of the Torah as “Scripture”; they had their own version of these texts (the Samaritan Pentateuch), and—in violation of Deut. 12; they worshipped God in their own temple at Mount Gerizim rather than at the temple in Jerusalem.”

For an example of a Samaritan interacting with Jesus: See John 4 (the woman at the well)

Vs. 33 -35 “Saw him and took pity on him”-

He generously gave: cloth, wine, oil, transportation, money (standard silver coin. Worth maybe $3.60 each. 2 denarii- worth 2 days wages) and time.

Vs. 36 Who was the real neighbor? In Lev. 19, the neighbor is the recipient of the love and care. In this story, the neighbor is the one doing the love and care.

Note that the capacity to love one’s neighbor is NOT dependent on the identity of the person that needs the love. It is dependent on the capacity of the Christian to love.

**So What?**

Vs. 37 “Go and do likewise.”

1. See Matt. 7:12 for the “Golden Rule”
2. See Micah 6:8

“Do Justly”

“Love Mercy”

“Walk Humbly with your God”

Those three disciplines will guide our everyday lives, if we let them.