The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Summary and Goal

The lawyer asked Jesus what it takes to inherit eternal life. Responding to Jesus' response, he asked a follow up question, "Just who is my neighbor?" Perhaps he was really asking, "What is the least I can do?" Jesus told a story defining just who our neighbor is. The follow up question for us, the hearers of the story, could be, "Are we truly ready and willing to love our neighbor?"

Main Passages

Luke 10:25-37

Session Outline

1. Godward Affections (Luke 10:25-33)
2. More Than a Feeling (Luke 10:34-35)
3. The Blazed Trail (Luke 10:36-37)

Theological Theme

Jesus taught that Christians ought to love their neighbor and that one's neighbor extends even to those who have acted as an enemy.

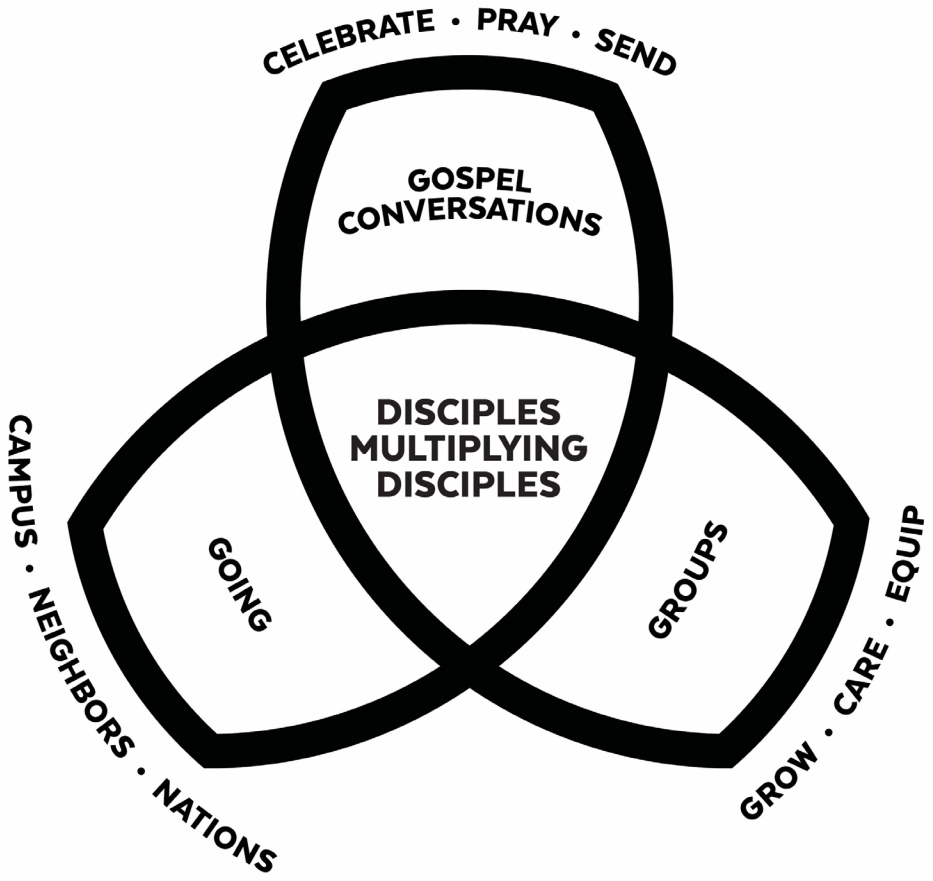
Christ Connection

Jesus Christ embodied the compassion and mercy that the Good Samaritan symbolized. Those who are in Christ will also love their neighbor in this way.

Missional Application

The parable of the Good Samaritan helps Christians to capture a biblical vision of mercy and loving one's neighbor. Today, Christians may look for opportunities to serve their neighbors in the same way that the Samaritan served the Jew.

Disciples Multiplying Disciples



DxD This Week

For the Leader

Pre-enlist your co-leader to lead this lesson. Equip group members to meet their neighbors by using "how can I pray for you?" cards or having conversations of hope with neighbors.

2

Session Plan

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Introduction

For the Leader

If meeting by Zoom, ask each person to share their favorite neighborhood they've lived in as an adult.

- What comes to mind when you hear the word *mercy*?
- What are some practical ways to show mercy?

Mercy is doing good to someone when you have the power to do so and they are powerless. This is what we see in the story of the Good Samaritan. Let's look more closely at this parable so that we can understand how to walk in mercy as we go about our daily lives.

1. Godward Affections (Luke 10:25-33)

In Matthew 9:13, Jesus quoted Hosea saying, "Go and learn what this means: I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners." Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan is an illustration of the abstract principle laid out in Hosea. Preceding the enacted mercy of this parable is an internal reality, or what some call "affection."

- What place do feelings have in our relationship with God and others? Why are they important?
- All people have the capacity to show compassion, even if they are not followers of Jesus. So, how should Christian compassion differ from worldly compassion?
- Application: What place do feelings or affections have in your spiritual life? Do they have too important a place? Do you ignore them altogether? What would it look like to have your affections rightly ordered?

2. More Than a Feeling (Luke 10:34-35)

Micah gave us one of the most well-known verses about mercy in the Bible. He wrote, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." In the parable of the Good Samaritan, mercy was preceded by the religious affection of compassion. But compassion

is an internal feeling. It alone isn't sufficient. The compassion of the Samaritan wasn't idle. He did not find it sufficient to say, "Be healed, be helped" (Jas. 2:16).

- How did the Samaritan act in accordance with his compassion? Why is it important that followers of Jesus act in line with the things of God and not only hold them inside?

- What evidence is there that this Samaritan was more devoted to God than even the religious leaders of the day? How were the religious leaders of Jesus' day misled by "good works"?

- Application: What are ways you look to serve others? Are you willing to forgo your plans and needs in order to meet the needs of someone else? Are you more often concerned about showing mercy or being productive?

3. The Blazed Trail (Luke 10:36-37)

Jesus once told another parable about mercy. It is commonly known as The Unforgiving Servant, but others know it as The Unmerciful Servant (Matt. 18:21-35). It is a shocking contrast between mercy and cruelty with a clear point: those who have been shown mercy ought to show mercy. Or we may relate it this way: it is good and fitting for those who have been shown great mercy to show mercy to others. The opposite took place in the parable, and that is what is so shocking about it. But Jesus didn't tell the parable to entertain His audience. Rather, He told it because we often slink back into patterns of mercilessness despite the great mercy that we have received.

- How have we been shown mercy by God?

- Why should the mercy that God has shown us draw out our souls to show mercy to others?

- Application: How do good works of mercy, grace, and compassion adorn the gospel that you claim to believe? What needs to change?

Conclusion

- How do feelings or "affections" relate to the truth of Scripture?

- Are you a merciful person? What opportunities have you had recently to show mercy? Did you? Why or why not?

- If you lack mercy, what practical steps can you take in order to become more compassionate and merciful?

For Further Discussion

How has God's mercy affected you? Does it compel you to show mercy to others? Why or why not?

Expanded Session Content

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

For the Leader

If meeting by Zoom, ask each person to share their favorite neighborhood they've lived in as an adult.

Introduction

What comes to mind when you hear the word *mercy*?

What are some practical ways to show mercy?

There was a time when kids liked to play a popular game called "Mercy"—maybe you remember it. Two participants would lock their hands together by placing hands palm on palm and then interlocking their fingers. The contest would begin and the object was to twist and bend your opponent's fingers and wrists to such a degree that they cried, "Mercy!"

When a person calls, "Mercy," they are in a position of complete helplessness. In this contest, the party that concedes victory to their opponent doesn't have the ability to walk away and remove themselves from the contest. Rather, they are dependent on their opponent to heed the cries of mercy and respond by halting the onslaught of pain and releasing them. The victor doesn't have to do this. They could continue to inflict pain and eventually lasting harm.

That's what makes mercy peculiar. It's using one's power to lift someone else up. In reality, it's wielding your power in such a way that you become less powerful. Think about it: If you are dominating your opponent in a game of "Mercy," then as long as you keep the person's wrists bent backward, you are in complete control. You have power over this person. But when you use that power to free your opponent, you lose that power. That's mercy.

Mercy is doing good to someone when you have the power to do so and they are powerless. This is what we see in the story of the Good Samaritan. Let's look more closely at this parable so that we can understand how to walk in mercy as we go about our daily lives.

Session Summary

To properly understand this parable, it is critical to understand the Jewish perspective on the Gentile and Samaritan in Jesus' day. Matthew Henry reported that the Jewish teachers of the day made these claims: "Where he saith, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, he excepts all Gentiles, for they are not our neighbours, but those only that are of our own nation and religion."[1] This teaching had wicked consequences. For example, if a Gentile was in danger of death, an Israelite was under no compulsion to help save his or her life. Samaritans were worse than Gentiles in the mind of the Israelite. Samaritans represented those Israelites who had left the camp and joined together with Gentiles. This was abhorrent to the Israel sensibilities. Samaritans were viewed as traitors.

That's the background to the story of the Good Samaritan, and that's what made the story so shocking to Jesus' audience. Notice that the lawyer, after hearing the story, wouldn't even acknowledge that the man was a Samaritan instead saying "the one." Jesus tore down racial prejudices and showed that whoever may be in need and within our power to help, or whoever has the power to help meet a need that we have, those are neighbors. Neither nationality nor religion make the list of criteria for determining who is our neighbor.

1. Godward Affections (Luke 10:25-33)

In Matthew 9:13, Jesus quoted Hosea saying, "Go and learn what this means: I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners." Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan is an illustration of the abstract principle laid out in Hosea. Preceding the enacted mercy of this parable is an internal reality, or what some call "affection."

The text says that he "had compassion." We might say that he felt compassion. What preceded any actual concrete steps was what we might describe as an emotion or a feeling. Something stirred inside the Samaritan that eventually led to action.

> ? What place do feelings have in our relationship with God and others? Why are they important?

Feelings can get a bad rap among some Christians. It's true that feelings have oftentimes been given places of position that they shouldn't hold; and they've been used, manipulated, whipped up in ways that are ungodly and unchristian. However, that doesn't mean that feelings hold no weight in our relationship with God. Jonathan Edwards spent a lot of energy defending the place and importance of feelings or "affections" in the Christian life. He said, "Seeing holiness is the main thing that excites, draws and governs all gracious affections, no wonder that all such gracious affections tend to holiness."[2]

Jerusalem to Jericho

The road from Jerusalem to Jericho, a distance of seventeen miles with a descent of more than three thousand feet in elevation, was a dangerous route through desert country. It had many places where robbers could lie in wait. It is possible that the priest and the Levite ... passed by on the other side of the road because they thought the wounded man was dead and they would become ritually unclean by touching him, but it is more likely that they were afraid of being attacked by the same robbers or simply did not want to be bothered with the inconvenience of helping the man.

Here Edwards gives us a clue as to the place of "affections" or feelings in our lives as followers of Christ. He says that "seeing holiness" is what produces godly affections. In other words, when we read the Scriptures and encounter the character and actions of the one true and living God, feelings will well up within us, feelings like compassion for those in need. These feelings never take precedence over the truth of Scripture, but when they are in their proper place, they accompany the truth of Scripture to spur us on to good works.

All people have the capacity to show compassion, even if they are not followers of Jesus. So, how should Christian compassion differ from worldly compassion?

Compassion and mercy are universal characteristics that can be seen demonstrated among all people. This is because all people were created in the image of God and experience the benefit of God's common grace. However, there is a distinction between Christians and non-Christians in this area. Because seeing God and His glory is what produces godly affections, then Christians ought to be much more compassionate and merciful than non-Christians. Christians have encountered and experienced God in ways that unbelievers have not. We have beheld the beauty of His holiness and goodness in the sacrifice of Christ. Our religious affections should be "turned up to 11," so to speak.

Application: What place do feelings or affections have in your spiritual life? Do they have too important a place? Do you ignore them altogether? What would it look like to have your affections rightly ordered?

2. More Than a Feeling (Luke 10:34-35)

Micah gave us one of the most well-known verses about mercy in the Bible. He wrote, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." In the parable of the Good Samaritan, mercy was preceded by the religious affection of compassion. But compassion is an internal feeling. It alone isn't sufficient. The compassion of the Samaritan wasn't idle. He did not find it sufficient to say, "Be healed, be helped" (Jas. 2:16).

How did the Samaritan act in accordance with his compassion? Why is it important that followers of Jesus act in line with the things of God and not only hold them inside?

The care that this Samaritan showed was exemplary. He went to the man, bound up his wounds, set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, took care of him, and paid the innkeeper to continue to watch over him in his absence.

God asked through the prophet Isaiah, "Isn't this the fast I choose . . . Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, to bring the poor and homeless into your house, to clothe the naked when you see him, and not to ignore your own flesh and blood?" (Isa. 58:6-7). Some have conjectured that the priest and the Levite avoided helping the man because they had important responsibilities to tend to at the temple. We can reasonably suppose that the Samaritan was on business of his own. Of those who passed by, it was the Samaritan who understood that both God's sacrifice and His business must include showing mercy to a person in such a situation.

What evidence is there that this Samaritan was more devoted to God than even the religious leaders of the day? How were the religious leaders of Jesus' day misled by "good works"?

Some say this parable must be based on a true event because Jesus used actual place names to tell the story. Even if it is, there is no way for us to investigate more into the heart and motivation of this Samaritan man. Details other than what Jesus provided are lost to us. But we can assume some things because of the way in which Jesus told the story.

The Samaritan's outward action indicates a superior religious internal reality. How do we know? Because outward action stems from inward pulling of the soul—and an inward inclination of the soul is shaped by what we behold, treasure, and go hard after. The Samaritan's actions betrayed the Godward affection of compassion, which in turn betrayed a soul that treasures God and His character.

There are dangers associated with the good works that God has prepared beforehand for those whom He would save (Eph. 2:10). The first is simple and straightforward. Good works become dangerous when they are carried out with the idea that they will in some way justify the doer before God. These good works stem from an ignorance of the gospel, fear of judgment, and a high view of man. The Bible is clear about this. Works cannot justify a person before God. They do serve as a proof of salvation—evidence of a justified and cleansed soul—but they are incapable of rescuing a sinner.

The second danger has to do again with a misunderstanding of the gospel. Some people who experience the grace and kindness of God fail to understand that true saving faith and repentance result in good works. This is what James was getting at when he said, "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world" (Jas. 1:27). In fact, if good works fail to manifest in the life of a person who professes Christ, then it is reasonable to question the genuineness of the individual's faith.

Application: What are ways you look to serve others? Are you willing to forgo your plans and needs in order to meet the needs of someone else? Are you more often concerned about showing mercy or being productive?

3. The Blazed Trail (Luke 10:36-37)

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How have we been shown mercy by God?

Ephesians 2:4-5 sums it up like this, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace!"

Why should the mercy that God has shown us draw out our souls to show mercy to others?

Good works are good. Just because we weren't saved by our works doesn't mean that they have no place in our new lives in Christ. Quite the opposite. We pursue a life of joyful obedience (good works) to God's Word. That's why Jesus said, "If you love me you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). John Tweedale wrote, "Far from undermining the gospel of grace, good works are the perfect complement to the gospel."[3]

On this subject, Richard Sibbes wrote, "We have this for a fountain of truth, that there is more mercy in Christ than sin in us."[4] This truth causes our hearts to leap with joy (another Godward affection), but it doesn't end there: Godward affection always leads to godly living. If we have truly experienced the mercy of God, then we will, however imperfectly, show mercy to others.

Application: How do good works of mercy, grace, and compassion adorn the gospel that you claim to believe? What needs to change?

Conclusion

The parable of the Good Samaritan shows us that we are to show mercy to others in the same way God has shown us mercy. This begins with Godward affection that recognizes the compassion we have been shown by God and that we are to show to others. Secondly, we must act on these affections in line with the character and Word of God. As Jesus reminded us in this parable, we are called to go and do likewise. God has shown us endless mercy in the person and work of Jesus. Now we are called to go and show that same mercy to others, that they might come to know the same salvation.

- How do feelings or "affections" relate to the truth of Scripture?
- Are you a merciful person? What opportunities have you had recently to show mercy? Did you? Why or why not?
- If you lack mercy, what practical steps can you take in order to become more compassionate and merciful?
- How has God's mercy affected you? Does it compel you to show mercy to others? Why or why not?

Prayer of Response

Spend some time praying toward a merciful way of living. Pray first of all that we would behold the beauty of God in His holiness and glory. Then, pray that as we discipline ourselves to seek God through His Word, He would shape our affections to produce in us mercy as well as the fruit of the Spirit. Finally, pray that Godward affections would translate into the practical demonstrations of mercy that we see in the Good Samaritan.

Additional Resources

- *Hear Then the Parable* by Brandon Bernard Scott
- *The Gospel According to Luke* by James R. Edwards
- *Luke* by J. Vernon McGee

For Next Week

Session Title

- The Parable of the Rich Fool

Main Passages

- Luke 12:13-21

Session Outline

1. Myopia of the Heart (Luke 12:13-14)
2. A Warning (Luke 12:15)
3. Temporary Treasures (Luke 12:16-21)

Memorize

[27] He answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind," and "your neighbor as yourself."
- Luke 10:27

Daily Readings

- Monday - Luke 10:1-12
- Tuesday - Luke 10:13-16
- Wednesday - Luke 10:17-20
- Thursday - Luke 10:21-24
- Friday - Luke 10:25-37
- Saturday - Luke 10:38-42

Historical Context of Luke

Purpose

The Gospel of Luke is a carefully researched (1:3), selective presentation of the person and life of Jesus Christ, designed to strengthen the faith of believers (1:3–4) and to challenge the misconceptions of unbelievers, especially those from a Greek background. Its portrait of Jesus is well balanced, skillfully emphasizing his divinity and perfect humanity.

Author

The author of the Third Gospel is not named. Considerable evidence points to Luke as its author. Much of that proof is found in the book of Acts, which identifies itself as a sequel to Luke (Ac 1:1–3). A major line of evidence has to do with the so-called "we" sections of the book (Ac 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–37; 28:1–16). Most of Acts is narrated in third-person plural ("they," "them"), but some later sections having to do with the ministry of the apostle Paul unexpectedly shift to first-person plural ("we," "us"). This indicates that the author had joined the apostle Paul for the events recorded in those passages. Since there are no "we" passages in the Gospel of Luke, that fits with the author stating that he used eyewitness testimony to the life of Jesus (1:2), indicating he was not such an eyewitness himself.

Since Luke wrote both the Third Gospel and the book of Acts (Ac 1:1–3), it is relevant to consider the dating of both books together. The events at the end of Acts occurred around AD 62–63. That is the earliest point at which Acts could have been written. If Acts was written in the early AD 60s from Rome, where Paul was imprisoned for two years (Ac 28:30), the Third Gospel could date from an earlier stage of that period of imprisonment. The other reasonable possibility is during Paul's earlier two-year imprisonment in Caesarea (Ac 24:27). From that location, Luke would have been able to travel and interview the eyewitnesses to Jesus's life and ministry who were still alive.

Setting

Traditionally, the Gospel of Luke is believed to have been written after both Matthew and Mark. Those who date Matthew and Mark in the AD 60s or 70s have tended to push the dating of Luke back to the AD 70s or 80s.

Special Features

The Gospel of Luke is the longest book in the New Testament. Focusing on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, this Gospel is part one of a two-part history, the book of Acts being part two. Both were dedicated to "most honorable Theophilus" (Lk 1:3; Ac 1:1).

Extended Commentary

Luke 10:25-37

10:25. A man with excellent religious credentials stood among the crowd. He studied God's law continually and interpreted it so the people would know how to obey it. He tried his best to obey the law himself. He helped administer justice within the Jewish system. People respected his expertise and his life. He had a question for Jesus. He thought it would reveal the weakness and falseness in Jesus' teaching and lead people away from him back to the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, the qualified religious leaders. God had given Israel an inheritance, namely the land of Israel. They had forfeited this inheritance through disobedience. Now they looked for a new inheritance, one that would last forever. The rabbis debated exactly what this inheritance was. The lawyer gave Jesus opportunity to provide a new definition.

10:26. Instead, Jesus bounced the question back to the lawyer. Both agreed the answer must be found in Scripture, particularly in the Law of Moses. So Jesus asked, What does the law say? Both knew the Law had to be interpreted for modern times, so Jesus asked for the lawyer's own interpretation. Now the lawyer was being tested, not Jesus.

10:27. True to his profession, the lawyer quoted Scripture. Interestingly, in Matthew 22:37–40 and Mark 12:29–31, Jesus quotes the same Scriptures (Deut. 6:4–5; Lev. 19:18). Thus, both from the Jewish leaders' viewpoint and from Jesus' unique teaching, these Scriptures stand at the top of all other Old Testament teaching. Love God. Love neighbor. Then you will be and do what God expects in the Old Testament. Such love must not be half-hearted. It must be all-encompassing. Every part of you—thoughts, emotions, feelings, actions—must be controlled by love for God and for others.

10:28. For once Jesus agreed with a Jewish religious leader. Again, he emphasized the nature of this answer—not just an idea of the mind, but an action of one's strength, a feeling of one's soul, an emotion of one's heart. Love must control the entire person.

10:29. The leader tried to take the offense again and put Jesus on the defensive. One more trick question: Who is my neighbor? That is, how far does my love have to extend? Jewish legal interpretation sought to govern every situation and every relationship: Jew and Gentile; Jew and Roman; man and woman; free man and slave, priest and laity, clean and unclean, righteous and sinner. Every relationship was clearly defined, and the definitions determined how and when a person could participate in Jewish worship. The question was vital to Jewish identity.

10:30–35. Jesus answered with a parable—a type of story dedicated to teaching the mysteries of the kingdom to the disciples and keeping them hidden from unbelievers. He described a normal trip a person would take, seventeen miles from Jerusalem down to Jericho through a mountain pass that fell almost 3,300 feet in elevation. Herod had built New Testament Jericho as his winter palace on the same spot Hasmonean rulers had earlier built their palace. Herod included three palaces, a swimming pool, and a sunken garden. Thus, government officials frequently made the trip from Jerusalem to Jericho as did Jewish religious and political leaders. Criminals

took advantage of the upper class's need to travel this winding, crooked road through dangerous passes. They hid behind the large rocks above the narrow passes and preyed on travelers. Jesus told the story of one victim without identifying the man by race, occupation, or reason for traveling.

Fellow travelers soon happened on the situation. A priest, the highest of Jewish religious officials, hurriedly stepped to the other side of the road and continued on his important business, even though rabbinic law expected him to bury any corpse he discovered. Similarly, a Levite, who carried out the more mundane tasks of temple worship and operation, passed quickly by. No reason why, except not enough love for this "neighbor."
Next we expect a member of the Jewish laity, the clergy having failed the love test. Instead, we get an unexpected Samaritan, one who in Jewish eyes had little reason to be in Jewish territory and who would be the last person to qualify as a neighbor to be loved. Such qualification is made from the lawyer's worktable interpreting the law. From the dying man's ditch, anyone who will offer first aid and emergency assistance qualifies as a loving neighbor. Thus, Jesus uttered shocking words for a Jewish audience grilled in legal interpretations and prejudiced judgments. The Samaritan had compassion—a Greek expression built on the word for a person's inner parts, the seat of emotions and feelings. It expresses Jesus' feeling for those in need (Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 6:34; 8:2; Luke 7:13). It is the feeling and attitude of a master who cancels a servant's massive debt (Matt. 18:27). This is true neighborly love—a love that goes beyond anything society or religious law expects and acts simply because of the extreme need of another.

Thus, the Samaritan took the dying man from the ditch and gave him life under supervised care without cost to the suffering man. The Samaritan representing everything the Jews hated became more than one they should love as a neighbor. The Samaritan became the hero of the story, the person showing love, the individual whose love Jews should imitate.

10:36. Jesus had the lawyer set up for the obvious question: Who among the three was the loving neighbor?

10:37. The lawyer gave the only possible answer: the one who showed mercy to the traveler. Again, this Greek term is often applied to Jesus, who responds to calls for mercy (Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 17:15; Mark 10:47–48; Luke 17:13; cf. Mark 5:19). Jesus promised God's mercy to those who show mercy (Matt. 5:7). So Jesus told the lawyer to go and show mercy like the Samaritan had done.[5]

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3. "What Is Our Response? by John Tweeddale." Ligonier Ministries. Accessed December 03, 2020. https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/what-our-response/.

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5. Butler, Trent C., and Max Anders. *Luke*. Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.

Author Bio

Trent Butler (Luke)

Trent C. Butler is a freelance author and editor. He served ten years on the faculty of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschilkon, Switzerland, and for twenty-two years as editor and editorial director for Holman Bible Publishers and LifeWay. He wrote the Word Biblical Commentary volume on Joshua, the Layman s Bible Book Commentary on Isaiah, the Holman Old Testament Commentaries on Isaiah and Hosea through Micah, and the Holman New Testament Commentary on Luke. He served on the editorial Board of the Holman Christian Standard Bible, and edited the Holman Bible Dictionary. Dr. Butler has a Ph.D. in biblical studies and linguistics from Vanderbilt University, has done further study at Heidelberg and Zurich, and has participated in the excavation of Beersheba.

Max Anders (Luke)

Dr. Max Anders is the author of over 25 books, including the bestselling 30 Days to Understanding the Bible, and is the creator and general editor of the 32-volume Holman Bible Commentary series. He has taught on the college and seminary level and is a veteran pastor. Max provides resources and discipleship strategies at www.maxanders.com to help people grow spiritually.

Matthew Henry (Commentary on the Whole Bible)

Matthew Henry (1662-1714) has been known and loved for three centuries for his devotional commentary on the Bible. It has not been generally known that he was also a distinguished preacher. He began preaching at twenty-four years old and held pastorates until his death. The greatness of his sermons consists in their scriptural content, lucid presentation, practical application, and Christ-centeredness.

Jonathan Edwards (Religious Affections)

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) began his education at Yale College when he was thirteen years old. He served as pastor of the Congregational Church in Northampton, Massachusetts for over twenty years. His published sermons were widely circulated in America and England. He also served as a missionary to native Americans, and he was called to be president of the College of New Jersey (Princeton) just prior to his untimely death.

John Tweedale (What is Our Response?)

Dr. John W. Tweeddale is academic dean and professor of theology at Reformation Bible College in Sanford, Fla.

Richard Sibbes (The Bruised Reed)

Richard Sibbes was born at Tostock, Suffolk, in 1577 and went to school in Bury St Edmunds. His father, 'a good sound-hearted Christian', at first intended that Richard should follow his own trade as a wheelwright, but the boy s 'strong inclination to his books, and well-profiting therein' led to his going up to St John's College, Cambridge in 1595. He was converted around 1602-3 through the powerful ministry of Paul Bayne, the successor of William Perkins in the pulpit of Great St Andrew's Church.

Brandon Bernard Scott (Hear Then the Parable)

Brandon Bernard Scott is the Darbeth Distinguished Professor of New Testament at Phillips Graduate Seminary, at the University of Oklahoma. He is the author also of *Hollywood Dreams and Biblical Stories* (Fortress Press, 1994).

James R. Edwards (The Gospel According to Luke)

James R. Edwards is the Bruner-Welch Endowed Professor of Theology at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. His other books include Is Jesus the Only Savior? the 2006 Christianity Today Book of the Year in Apologetics.

J. Vernon McGee (Luke)

Dr. J. Vernon McGee (1904-1988) spent more than 50 years teaching the Bible on his "Thru the Bible" radio broadcast. He pastored for more than 40 years and has authored many best-selling books, including Doctrine for Difficult Days.