

Jesus' Parables in Chronological Order

Parable #24 — Luke 10:25-42 — The Good Samaritan

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

²⁷ He answered: “ ‘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, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Parable #25 — Luke 11:5-8 — Friend in Need

⁵ Then he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶ because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.’

⁷ “Then the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ ⁸ I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man’s boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Parable #24 — Luke 10:25-42 — The Good Samaritan

1. What are the greatest inconveniences in your life? (Ones involving expenditures of your time? Of money? Emotional issues? Travel plans? Working with others?)
2. Did the expert in the law who questioned and then answered Jesus understand what was necessary to inherit eternal life? Did he summarize the Law correctly? (Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18)
3. After Jesus affirmed his correct reply, what did the legal expert then want to do? (10:29)
4. Jesus replied to the legal expert's question, "who is my neighbor?" with perhaps the best-known parable in the Bible. Let's consider this parable from the point of view of the priest and the Levite. Could they have had good reasons for behaving the way that they did?
5. What natural inclinations make it easier for you to act like the priest and the Levite rather than the Samaritan?
6. What was the Samaritan's response to the situation? Why did he help the beaten man? (10:33) How practical was his approach?
7. How does it feel when someone has mercy on you? How do you feel when you get in trouble because of your own stupid actions? How does mercy feel then?
8. In what ways can you personally or can we as Christians be more like the Samaritan? Is this something to aspire to? Is this something God expects of you?
9. How would you summarize the message of this parable? (Three points)

Parable #25 — Luke 11:5-8 — Friend in Need

1. Have you ever turned down a request from a friend to do something and then changed your mind because he kept asking?
2. What is the reason for persistence in prayer? To help... (A) change God's mind. (B) change our hearts. (C) understand and express the intensity of our need. (D) recognize God's work.
3. What is the point of the parable? (Also see Hebrews 4:16)

Parable #24 — Luke 10:25-42 — Good Samaritan — Notes to Leader

1. What are the greatest inconveniences in your life? (Ones involving expenditures of your time? Of money? Emotional issues? Travel plans? Working with others?)

2. Did the expert in the law who questioned and then answered Jesus understand what was necessary to inherit eternal life? Did he summarize the Law correctly? (Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18)

- Deut 6:5 – Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.
- Lev 19:18 – Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

This was quite different from other common “eye for an eye” teachings of the day. Indeed, an Arab saying still widely quoted today in the middle east says, “He who does not take revenge from the transgressor would better be dead than to walk without pride.”

3. After Jesus affirmed his correct reply, what did the legal expert then want to do? (10:29)

4. Jesus replied to the legal expert’s question, “who is my neighbor?” with perhaps the best-known parable in the Bible. Let’s consider this parable from the point of view of the priest and the Levite. Could they have had good reasons for behaving the way that they did?

Let’s update the story: It’s 7:15 p.m. and the priest of Our Lady Queen of Apostles has just arrived at Renaissance Center in Detroit, his train an hour late. More than 300 people will be attending mass at 8:00 p.m. at the church on Prescott St in Hamtramack, the Polish district of Detroit. There are no cabs (as usual), so he’ll have to walk. His normal route on Woodward Avenue and Holbrook St is 4 miles, but today he’ll have to take the shorter, but much more dangerous route of Gratiot Ave and Mt. Elliott St. Just past the Cadillac assembly plant he sees a man along side of the road who has been mugged. He considers stopping but knows that 300 people will be waiting for him to conduct mass so he hurries on by. Is his behavior reasonable? Isn’t nurturing 300 people a greater good than caring for just one?

If we want to continue the update, maybe the organist (the Levite) is a block behind the priest. He’s also in a hurry because he’s late, so he walks on by the poor slob who was mugged. Reasonable?

The behavior of the priest and organist (Levite) in the example above is not selfish or even uncaring. The problem is that Jesus emphasizes in his teachings that we are to care for the one sheep that got lost, not the 99 who didn’t go astray

and in our example, the one person who was hurt, not the 300 who were okay. These are difficult lessons and following them may well put us in awkward or uncomfortable situations.

5. What natural inclinations make it easier for you to act like the priest and the Levite rather than the Samaritan?

6. What was the Samaritan's response to the situation? Why did he help the beaten man? (10:33) How practical was his approach?

Verse 10:33 says simply that he took pity (or compassion) on him. The Samaritan is not the friend or acquaintance of the man he helps. They don't live on the same street or in the same city so they are not physical neighbors. Moreover, they belong to peoples that are hostile to one another. Samaritans are "half-breeds," Jews who intermarried with their Assyrian conquerors in 740 BC and other invaders over the next centuries. The few Jews among the Samaritans still worshiped at Mt. Gerizim and not in Jerusalem. Each is zealous for his own faith and despises that of the other. The barriers between them are as strong and high as they can be, without personal hatred.

Yet the natural pity and compassion of the Samaritan leap over their differences. He sees in the distressed man, not a Jew, not a devotee of the temple in Jerusalem, but a needy man and a brother. With the generous humility, refusing to be hampered by artificial relations and the accidents of birth, residence, and creed, he bestows upon him his sympathy and aid.

7. How does it feel when someone has mercy on you? How do you feel when you get in trouble because of your own stupid actions? How does mercy feel then?

8. In what ways can you personally or can we as Christians be more like the Samaritan? Is this something to aspire to? Is this something God expects of you?

9. How would you summarize the message of this parable? (Three points)

- 1) The lack of love is easy to justify, even though it is never right.
- 2) Our neighbor is anyone of any race, creed, social background, or IQ who is in need.
- 3) Love means acting to meet the person's need. In God's sight, there is no valid reason for refusing to help.

Parable #25 — Luke 11:5-8 — Friend in Need

1. Have you ever turned down a request from a friend to do something and then changed your mind because he kept asking?
2. What is the reason for persistence in prayer? To help... (A) change God's mind. (B) change our hearts. (C) understand and express the intensity of our need. (D) recognize God's work.
3. What is the point of the parable? (Also see Hebrews 4:16)

This parable appears only in Luke and immediately follows the verses of the Lord's Prayer. So it effectively enlarges on the petition about daily bread. As a rule in Biblical days, the woman of the house made enough bread for the day and in this case it happened that the family ate the last scraps at dinner. Thus the need for more to feed another friend who just returned from a long and arduous trip.

So Albert and his family are in bed. As strong as his friendship with Bill is, it isn't strong enough for him to wake up his whole family. But Bill's "boldness" tips the scale in Jesus' parable. The Greek word is the noun *anaideia*, meaning persistence or impudence, literally, 'shamelessness,' from the verb *anaideuomai*, i.e., be unabashed, bold, literally 'shameless.'

The point of the parable, of course, is the importance of persistence, of never giving up. But Jesus' expression, "because of the man's *shamelessness*" is remarkable. Bill, the friend, has no sense of decency of waiting until morning, of not disturbing his sleeping neighbor. He goes at midnight and knocks—for some bread! And he shamelessly keeps on knocking until Albert gets up and shoves bread at him just to shut him up. Shamelessness! Brashness! Boldness! Chutzpah! That's what the parable illustrates.

How does this apply to us today? We are encouraged to boldly ask, seek, and knock on the door of our heavenly friend and father, knowing that we can trust him. We must practice the same perseverance, and even though the answer to our prayer may be delayed, we must continue to ask, seek, and knock. The writer of Hebrews encourages us, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). The word translated "confidence" (NIV) or "boldness" (KJV) is the Greek *parresia*, " 'outspokenness, frankness, plainness' of speech that conceals nothing and passes over nothing." It can also carry the ideas of "courage, confidence, boldness, and fearlessness."

We aren't to pray with a whimper or a whine or a whisper. No. We are to come with a confident asking, seeking, knocking. God our Father desires to hear our petitions and we should be entirely open with him. Prayer is not a time to hide what is going on inside us, but to share it openly—warts and all—with our Father whom we know loves us and understands us and seeks good for us. We can trust him, even though we might misunderstand an issue, ask for the wrong thing, or

ask at an inconvenient time.

You may object to the neighbor who is so reluctant to give being compared with God, but the real emphasis of the parable is on the man's perseverance in asking even in the face of a seeming refusal.

(Last section adopted from notes by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson, Jesus Walk Bible Study Series, http://www.jesuswalk.com/lessons/11_5-13.htm and also from the book, "The Parables of Christ" by Leopold Fonck.)

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