

The Good Samaritan

Luke 10:25-37

PPT Title

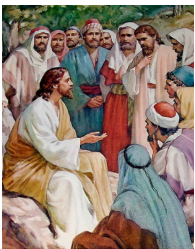
The Good Samaritan

Main Point: We should show love and compassion to others, just as Jesus shows love and compassion to us.

Key Verse: *Here is My command. Love each other, just as I have loved you.*
– John 15:12

Props: A hand mirror. A globe or world map. A marker and pad of Post It notes.

BACKGROUND



Say: From time to time when Jesus was teaching, someone would ask a question that was meant to test or trick Jesus. Sometimes the person asking the question just wanted to see how much Jesus really knew about the scriptures. Other times the questioner wanted Jesus to say something that would make the crowd angry with Him.

Today we are going to look at a parable that Jesus told after He was asked two questions by someone who wanted to test Him. Remember, a parable is a small, seemingly simply story that reveals BIG truths about the kingdom of God. In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, we find several tough questions and a BIG answer that reveals an even BIGGER truth about God's kingdom. Let's read together in Luke 10:25-37 to see what those questions were, and how Jesus answered them with the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Teacher Note: The structure of the Parable of the Good Samaritan is defined by two main questions. The first, "What must I do to receive eternal life?" is dealt with in verses 25-28. The second, "And who is my neighbor?" is answered in verses 29-37. In between these two questions, Jesus asks a couple of questions of His own: "What is written in the Law?" and "How do you understand it?"

Jesus asks these questions in lieu of giving an outright answer to the initial query from the scholar who seeks to test Him. The man's intent in asking the question was probably to compare Jesus' ideology to that of Jewish law. He more than likely expected Jesus to contradict the Jewish bottom line.

But Jesus, in asking the questioner a question in return, sets out to show that Jewish teaching is not wrong at all, but that the practice of it often is. Once the scholar has answered his own question using scripture, Jesus basically says: "Good answer. Now go do it." These words, as we will see, prompt the man's second question and Jesus' beautifully powerful Parable of the Good Samaritan in response.

WHAT MUST I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?

Say: *One day an authority on the law stood up to put Jesus to the test. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to receive eternal life?"*

"What is written in the Law?" Jesus replied. "How do you understand it?"

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love Him with all your strength and with all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.'"

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do that, and you will live."
– Luke 5:27-28

Teacher Note: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love Him with all your strength and with all your mind" is from Deuteronomy 6:5, and "Love your neighbor as you love yourself" is from Leviticus 19:18.



Say: The man who stood up to ask Jesus a question was an expert in the Jewish law. The law was the set of rules that God gave to the Israelites through Moses. The law includes the 10 commandments and many other rules found in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy in the Old Testament. The law was God's way of showing the Israelites how to live a life pleasing to Him, and how to prevent sin from creating separation between God and man. Of course, no one could possibly keep all the laws. People's sinful nature would continue to destroy their relationship with God. That's why God allowed people to make sacrifices to atone for the sins they did commit. Does anyone know what atone means? To atone is to make up for something you have done wrong. If I ate your cookies without asking, I can't undo that; I can't give them back. I could atone for it by making you some more cookies. In the case of sin, we can't undo that either. By His grace, God allowed His people to atone for their sin by making special animal sacrifices. By atoning, our relationship with God is restored, or made right again.

By the time Jesus started traveling and teaching, the Pharisees had added so many extra rules to the original law that God had given that people were feeling completely crushed by all the rules they had to keep. All day long they worried about which laws they were breaking and if they were going to be caught.

So you can imagine how interested people must have been when the expert in the law stood up and asked Jesus what someone had to do to live with God forever. It's really too bad, though, that the man asking the question didn't think that Jesus could actually teach him anything. The legal expert thought he already knew the answer. He thought that he would be able to show the crowd that Jesus didn't know the law as well as he did.

So what did Jesus do? He resisted the urge to give the man an answer and said, "You know the law. What do you think it says about this." Well, the man must have felt really smart when he quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. He said that we needed to do two things. First, love God with everything you have. And then, love your neighbor as you love yourself.

And you know what? The answer the legal expert gave is completely right! Jesus said to him, "OK. You know what the law says. Now do it."

Do you think this might have made the man nervous? I do. Because the legal expert knew that keeping the whole law is something he could not do. He just wasn't strong enough or good enough to keep every single rule and regulation all the time. And he knew there could never be enough sacrifices to make up for all the times he broke the law. Jesus knew this too, and wanted to show the man how badly he needed someone to rescue him from his life of sin and disobedience to the law.

James 4:17 says, *...when you know the good things you should do and don't do them, you sin.* Jesus is reminding the man that there is no possible way to love God with ev-

First, love God.
Then, love your neighbor.

everything you have, that there is no way a sinful man or woman can love other people as completely as the law requires.



Hold up the hand mirror so the kids can see your face reflected in it. Say: Jesus is using scripture like a mirror. He is holding it up to the man and asking him to look at his life. He is asking him if he can really keep the law and earn eternal life by obeying all the rules and regulations.

Application: Is it possible for anyone to lead a sinless life? *No.* Just like the man asking Jesus the question about eternal life, we will always mess up and do something that separates us from God.

James 1:22-24 says this: *Don't just listen to the word. You fool yourselves if you do that. You must do what it says.*

Suppose you listen to the word but don't do what it says. Then you are like a man who looks at his face in a mirror. After looking at himself, he leaves. Right away he forgets what he looks like.

The legal expert was someone who had listened to the law his whole life, but he wasn't really sure what it meant to actually follow it. When studying the law, he would briefly examine his life—like looking in a mirror—but then he would turn away from it without trying to live like God wanted him to. Immediately, he would forget that his failure to keep the law was sin. He just didn't want to face what he saw in the mirror.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Who is my neighbor?

Say: But when Jesus reminded the man to do what the law said, the man got nervous. He wondered what it really meant to love your neighbor as you love yourself. He wanted Jesus to assure him that he was already doing what he needed to do for eternal life. So he asked another question...“Who is my neighbor?”

Maybe he thought Jesus would say that his neighbors were his close friends and family. Or legal scholars like him. Or his fellow Jews. The man probably wanted to believe that his neighbors were people that were easy to help. People who didn't require too much time or effort or money.

The man wanted to feel good about what he saw in the mirror. He wanted to look good in front of his friends in the crowd. But Jesus had a deeper truth to reveal to the man. Something that could only be told through a parable, a small story that contains BIG truth about the kingdom of God. Let's look at Luke 10:29-37.

Say: *But the man wanted to make himself look good. So he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*



Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robbers attacked him. They stripped off his clothes and beat him. Then they went away, leaving him almost dead. A priest happened to be going down that same road. When he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. A Levite also came by. When he saw the man, he passed by on the other side too.

But a Samaritan came to the place where the man was. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him. He went to him, poured olive oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey. He took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins. He gave them to the owner of the inn. 'Take care of him,' he said. 'When I return, I will pay you back for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of the three do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?"

The authority on the law replied, "The one who felt sorry for him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do as he did." – Luke 10:29-37

Say: This parable must have come as a big shock to the legal expert. In the story, the first two men who noticed the victim were Jews like him. First a priest and then a Levite passed by the dying victim on the road, but they just crossed to the other side and kept walking. The victim was obviously very hurt. He obviously needed help. The priest and the Levite were very religious men who knew everything about the law! Yet they wouldn't help the poor injured man at all. In fact, these two men had just been in Jerusalem, probably to worship God and perform their religious duties in the temple. But they wanted nothing to do with a person who needed their help so badly. They knew the law backwards and forwards, but had no idea what it meant to really keep it. They didn't know what it meant to have a close, loving relationship with God.

Who remembers who actually did help the man who needed help? A Samaritan. That's right. A Samaritan came along next. Samaritans were people who lived in the area called Samaria. Now, a Samaritan was not a Jew. In fact, Jews and Samaritans were actually enemies. They didn't agree on very much regarding religion. But the Samaritan had something that the Jewish priest and the Levite didn't have. He had compassion. Compassion is really feeling the pain or sadness that someone else feels, and wanting more than anything to help that person. The Samaritan felt sorry for the man who had been beaten and stopped to help him.

Application: The Samaritan didn't have a first aid kit in his saddle bag. He didn't have any medical training. He didn't have a way to call a doctor or an ambulance. But he knew the victim needed help badly. So he got to work and used the resources he did have to take care of him. The Samaritan had a little wine and some oil and a bit of cloth. So he used those to clean the man's wounds and bandage them up. Then he gently placed the man on his donkey and walked to an inn, where he knew the man could get some rest. Then the Samaritan took out two silver coins to pay the innkeeper to look after the man. Not only that, but he promised to come back in a couple of days to check on the victim and pay the innkeeper more money if necessary.

The Samaritan made a lot of personal sacrifices to help the man who had been beaten. He used his own supplies to treat his wounds. He used his own money to pay the innkeeper. He took a lot of time to help him, and promised to devote even more time to him later. This was no easy thing the Samaritan did! And he did it all without grumbling or complaining.



Hold up the globe or the map. Point to the place on the globe or map where your class is being held. **Say:** This is where we live. It is easy to think of the people in our neighborhood as our neighbors. It is easy to think of our friends and family as neighbors. It is easy to think of people who are just like us as neighbors. But when Jesus told this parable, He asked, "Which of the three do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?"

Do you see how Jesus changed the question that the legal expert had asked? The expert had asked, "Who is my neighbor." But Jesus said the real question should be, "Who am I a neighbor TO?"

The Samaritan had shown real love and compassion to someone in need. The experts in the law had looked the other way. Knowing what the law says is not enough. To love your neighbor as yourself, you have to put it into practice. You have to show love to those in need.

GO AND DO AS HE DID

Say: At the end of the parable, Jesus gave a very simple instruction: "Go and do as he did." But how can we do that? It is not always easy to love other people the way we should.

In John 15:12, Jesus says this: "*Here is my command. Love each other, just as I have loved you.*" If we are trying to love other people with our own strength, it is a very hard thing to do. We might be tempted to just look the other way like the priest and the Levite did.



But when we remember how much love Jesus showed for us when He died on the cross, it is our natural response to take that love and pass it on to other people. It's like Jesus is pouring His love into our hearts, and we pour it back out into the lives of anyone in need. **Jesus was the perfect neighbor to us, taking care of us when we were helpless to take care of ourselves, healing our sin-wounds when we were powerless to heal ourselves.**

Application: Write the word "neighbor" on a Post It note and stick in on a random place on the globe or map. **Say:** I just wrote the word "neighbor" on this piece of paper. Did I stick the paper somewhere close to where we're at? No. Because Jesus wants us to see anyone in need, anywhere, as our neighbor. Wherever we see people hurting, He wants us to show them compassion. Those hurting people might be in your school, or your own home. But they also might be thousands of miles away.

Jesus wants us to always be watching for those who need love and compassion. He wants us to remember what He did for us on the cross. He wants us to remember how much love it took to die for our sins, so that we might live forever with God. And He wants us to show that same love and compassion for others who need it.

As the priest and the Levite proved, that is hard to do if we're just living by a bunch of laws and religious rules and too busy doing things our own way. But when we believe that Jesus has rescued us from sin and separation from God, we have His love in us. And we can't help but share that love with our neighbors, wherever they might be.

Teacher Note: "Jesus Christ is the only righteous man to have lived on this earth. He alone fulfilled the law perfectly. And yet He took our sins upon Himself, bearing the curse of death which the law pronounced upon us. And by trusting in His death, burial, and resurrection on our behalf, our sins are forgiven and we receive the free gift of eternal life.

"Since this eternal life is not the result of our good works, but the result of God's grace manifested in and through Jesus Christ, we have nothing to be proud of, no basis for feeling self-righteous. And because God has been merciful and gracious to us, we can show mercy and compassion toward others. Grace leaves no place for self-righteousness; it is the basis for compassion. That is what Jesus is trying to help this lawyer to understand through the parable of the Good Samaritan.

"And just as this despised and rejected Samaritan became the 'savior' of the robbery victim on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, so the despised and rejected Jesus of Nazareth has become the Savior of all who trust in Him." — from *The Good Samaritan* by Bob Deffinbaugh, Bible.org.

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PPT Main Point

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