

# WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

Luke 10: 25-37

**INTRO:** Turn your Bibles, or turn them on, to Luke chapter 10. The 3<sup>rd</sup> book of the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, and then the Gospel of Luke.

Today, I want us to take a journey. Let's first go back in time about 2000 years to the city of Jerusalem. When we get there, we will plan to go another 18 miles or so through an arid desert, down a winding, treacherous road, that leads to Jericho. On this particular trip, we won't make it all the way to our journey's end. Some things will happen along the way that will keep us from reaching our destination. But hopefully, the lessons we learn will be of great value to us in the future.

I want us to read together, beginning at Luke 10 verse 25. In our passage, Jesus is also on a journey. He too is on His way to Jerusalem. And He's on a mission... to lay down His life as a perfect sacrifice for the sins of the World. He will make many stops along the way. There are those who need help, people who need healed, and others who need to hear the truth about the coming Kingdom, and the Messiah. He's not in a hurry, but neither will He be delayed. His itinerary was prepared by His Father. And He will arrive at His destination right on time.

Our passage picks up with Jesus paused in conversation with some Jewish leaders. Read with me...

**Luke 10: 25-37 (BSB)** *"One day an expert in the law stood up to test Him (Jesus). "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" Jesus 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 said. "Do this and you will live." 29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Jesus took up this question and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down the same road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, when a Levite came to that spot and saw him, he passed by on the other side. 33 But when a Samaritan on a journey came upon him, he looked at him and had compassion. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he said, 'and on my return I will repay you for any additional expense.' 36 Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37 "The one who showed him mercy," replied the expert in the law. Then Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."*

**Let's Pray.**

Today, I want to preach on the subject, "WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?" Let's quickly go through these verses and pay special attention to what's being said. Notice...

**I) THE INTERACTION:** **vv 25-28** *"One day an expert in the law stood up to test Him (Jesus). "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" Jesus 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 said. "Do this and you will live."*

**I) THE INTERACTION:** vv 25-28 Jesus here, is more than likely teaching, with a crowd gathered, when a Lawyer, that is an expert in the Mosaic Law, (part of the religious elite) stands up and asks Jesus a question. NOW, when this lawyer asks Jesus this question, he's certain of himself, that he knows the answer. He's probably hoping to catch Jesus off guard, and trip Him up, revealing that Jesus is a fraud. Jesus, of course, is God, and actually wrote the Law. So, this is not going to end well with the so called "expert". But it does make for an interesting INTERACTION.

So, the Lawyer asks a very important question, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" On the surface, this sounds sincere. But Jesus will test the limits of this man's sincerity. Jesus knowing, of course that this man's a Lawyer, says, "What does the Law say?" **V 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.'" Jesus then does something that surprises... well, most of us to be honest, He says, Good answer! Just go do that and you'll be fine. But see, Jesus knew this lawyer better than this guy knew himself. Jesus knew that in his fallen nature, he could never love God the way he said. And if he can't love an all loving God, he certainly can never love his neighbor as himself.

Notice a subtle point Jesus makes... Notice

**II) THE INTERPRETATION:** v 26-29 "What is written in the Law?" Jesus 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 said. "Do this and you will live." 29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

There's a difference in Knowledge of Script, and Interpretation. And Jesus makes that point when he asks, "How do you read it?"

I've known people in my life, some of them preachers, who could quote large portions of God's Word. THEY KNEW THE WORDS. But they did not have the Word of God in them. They didn't love others the way the Bible teaches. They had no love for those who were different from them. They spewed out curses and venom toward those that they deemed inferior.

Interpretation gets to the heart of the words. It discovers the meaning behind the spelling! Jesus knew this lawyer didn't get it. "How do you read it?" He asked. There was no depth of meaning, just words on the paper.

What does it mean to you when you hear these words? Listen to them, **v 27** "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.'" Can you say with conviction, I understand what is being said here? And can you agree with it?

**John 14:15** "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

**1 John 4:7-8** "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

**I) THE INTERACTION:** vv 25-28

**II) THE INTERPRETATION:** v 26-29

**III) THE INTERROGATION:** vv 30-36 “Jesus took up this question and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down the same road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, when a Levite came to that spot and saw him, he passed by on the other side. 33 But when a Samaritan on a journey came upon him, he looked at him and had compassion. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Take care of him,’ he said, ‘and on my return I will repay you for any additional expense.’ 36 Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

You should notice that Jesus doesn't exactly answer the Lawyer's question. But rather, He sets the scene in order to ask a question of him. It's a deeper than surface question, that would have most certainly caused the lawyer to leave questioning his own motives. Jesus was making a point, and He did, with the snaring of an evil lawyer.

If put in the same situation as these travelers on the Jericho Road, who would you stop and help, and who would you pass by? Think about it. Would you only stop and help those that you knew and were comfortable with, that you had things in common with? Or would you stop to help anyone you saw in need, no matter their ethnicity, or their political beliefs, or their past actions?

**IV) THE INSTRUCTION:** v 37 “The one who showed him mercy,” replied the expert in the law. Then Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

The Bible doesn't tell us what this young lawyer did with the instruction he received. The Bible doesn't tell us, because that's not important. What is important is what we're going to do with it.

What can we do, given the current climate of our society, to be the people God expects us to be?

**Proverbs 10:12** “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.”

**Ephesians 4:2** “With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,”

How long will we blatantly disregard the Word of God, and live our lives as if it doesn't matter?

**CONCLUSION:** Let me share the Good News with you. The Bible says in **Romans 5:8** “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” You see, I didn't look like God, act like God, or care anything about God, but HE LOVED ME. And one day He found me wounded and broken, beaten down by sin. He could have walked by, but He didn't. He stopped and touched my needs, and saved my life. HE WANTS TO DO THE SAME THING FOR YOU. Will you let him come near to you?