

The Greatest Question Ever Asked
Series: E-100—Luke 10:25-37
May 1, 2016 Pastor Bill Bump

As Jesus entered the final months of His life on earth, the Pharisees continued to try to trap Him so they could damage Him in the eyes of the people.

Luke 10:25-29 ²⁵ *One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”*

²⁶ *Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?”*

²⁷ *The man answered, “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”*

²⁸ *“Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!”*

²⁹ *The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”*

In verse 25, we find the greatest question ever asked. It is one that every one of us should ask.

Because the Pharisees were focused on keeping the law, Jesus asked the expert what was most important in the law (verses 26 and 27).

But, the trouble with the expert’s plan of obtaining eternal life by obeying the law was that no one in their own strength could ever live up to the spiritual requirements of the law.

So, Jesus told the Parable of the Good Samaritan to try to get the expert to understand that he could never do enough to inherit eternal life.

The parable is an unforgettable story that produces immense conviction. It is designed as an evangelistic parable.

Luke 10:30-37 ³⁰ *Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.*

³¹ *“By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. ³²A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.*

³³ *“Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him.*

³⁴ *Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’*

³⁶ *“Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked.*

³⁷ *The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.”*

Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

This parable is an illustration Jesus shared to dramatize the fact that no one can inherit eternal life without accepting Jesus.

In verse 31, the point is simple. We would expect the priest, who knew the law, to help the man. But, he didn't help, so he obviously failed the love test.

In verse 32, we again have an example of a religious person who knew the law refusing to help the beaten man.

Jesus began the parable by showing that two men who were as tightly connected to the religious system as anyone could possibly be don't pass the test of loving their neighbor as themselves.

In verse 33, we have a man, who by the definition of the expert in religious law would be the blood enemy of the beaten man, showing love.

This parable is about limitless love. Jesus is proclaiming that to inherit eternal life requires the kind of limitless love toward everyone that is beyond our capability.

Conclusion

The religious lawyer had asked Jesus, "What should I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus responded by reminding him that eternal life is not given to men and women based on some religious activity, but eternal life is the fruit of establishing a loving relationship with Jesus. Once that relationship is established by faith, Jesus fills our lives with His love and enables us to not only love Him fully, but to also love our neighbor as ourselves.

What shall we do to inherit eternal life? Accept Jesus as our Savior, and believe He will save us by His grace and mercy and give us the gift of eternal life.

Ephesians 2:8-9 *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*