

International Bible Lessons Commentary

Luke 10:25-37

New Revised Standard Version

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, February 8, 2015

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, February 8, 2015**, is from **Luke 10:25-37**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** discusses the questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Luke 10:25-37

(Luke 10:25) Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

The political and religious elite challenged and tested Jesus throughout His ministry, though some may have honestly sought the answers to the questions they asked. This question should be the most important and life-changing question anyone can ask. Only One (God) can give us a high quality of moral and spiritual life leading to perfection that will never end. Too many people give no thought to their future and the reality of life after they die.

(Luke 10:26) He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?”

Jesus replied with a question that directed the “lawyer” to look to the “law.” Today, we might ask someone, “What does the Bible say?” Or “What did Jesus teach?” The questioner asked his question in public, and Jesus’ way of teaching and questioning in public taught those around Him and teach us methods we can use in our teaching too. Today, the most important response we can give to such questions is to point people to the Bible for the answer when we answer them and then pray that the Holy Spirit will help them understand, accept, and apply the truth of God’s Word.

(Luke 10:27) He answered, “You shall 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 your neighbor as yourself.”

The lawyer knew the law, the Word of God as it had been written up to the time of Jesus, well enough to quote the Scriptures to Jesus. A person who truly loves God and others as the law describes is in a right relationship with God and others in so far as it lies within them. This is different from “trying to love God” in obedience to a law of God. A person either loves God or they do not love God. Those saved by grace through faith in Jesus love and appreciate God, rather than “try to love God” because they think they ought to.

(Luke 10:28) And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

Because the lawyer quoted the Bible correctly, Jesus told him that he had given the right answer. Very simply, if you truly love God and others as the Bible teaches us, you will live forever. God and those who love God will want to live with you and you will want to live with them forever.

(Luke 10:29) But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

When the lawyer wanted to “justify himself,” he wanted to show or be able to say, “That is what I do; I obey the law; I am worthy to inherit eternal life.” His focus was on himself and his behavior and not on truly loving God and others in a practical and everyday way. His focus was on what he did to obey God’s law. He wanted to be able to say, “I love my neighbor according to the law; the person the law says is my neighbor.”

(Luke 10:30) Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.

Jesus told a parable to show the lawyer and the crowd how true love motivates people to serve God and others in daily life, even when it is inconvenient. In short, your neighbor is “every person.” In His parable, Jesus did not describe the beaten man’s character (whether he was a good or bad person) or define him according to his race or religion, which were attributes that were very important to His listeners. After he was stripped, he could have been any person, Jew or Gentile. Obviously, the robbers were not being good neighbors to the man they robbed with their sins of commission, which would disqualify them for eternal life based on their behavior and shows their need of a Savior.

(Luke 10:31) Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

The priest had completed his service at the temple because he too was going down the road (not up to Jerusalem). He did not need to worry about becoming ritually unclean and disqualified from temple service as reasons for passing by the injured man. Rather, the priest should have drawn so close to God from his recent worship and service of God in the temple that he should have been motivated to love God and others even more than he had previously. Unhappily, instead of being led by God, he lived “by chance” and did not love and help the battered man when God gave him the opportunity.

(Luke 10:32) So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

The Levite may have been going to or from Jerusalem. He was probably an assistant to the Levitical priests according to the law. He too should have loved God and others according to the law of God because of his many religious activities and privileges. It appears his religion was little more than mere ritualism. Or, perhaps he tried to justify himself by saying to himself that the beaten man was probably suffering from the just and well-deserved punishment by God for his sins and he should not help him.

(Luke 10:33) But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.

The Samaritans were hated by many Jews because they were a mixed race people. They worshiped away from the temple by necessity because of the hatred between many Jews and Samaritans. However, the Samaritans believed and tried to follow the first five books of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Though many Jews during the time of Jesus rightly believed that additional books (such as the prophets) were inspired by God, all religious Jews and Samaritans believed the first five books of Moses were the inspired Word of God. The Samaritan would have known, or would have had the grand opportunity of knowing, the law exactly as the lawyer quoted it. The Samaritan demonstrated unselfish love in Jesus’ parable when he was “moved with pity” and took action to help the injured man. Jesus intentionally said “moved by pity” instead of “moved by love,” because He intended to ask the lawyer a further question about love.

(Luke 10:34) He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

The Samaritan in Jesus’ parable showed no prejudice because of the race or religion or possible moral character of the wounded man; he saw him as a person, another child of God. He saw a person in need and he saw himself as one with the means to help. He did not put himself first or for fear of robbers run away; he took the time to help the man. He did for the man what he would hope and pray others would do for him if he were in a similar situation. He loved his neighbor as he loved himself according to the law of God.

(Luke 10:35) The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’

The Samaritan used wine and oil as medicine that would disinfect wounds and aid healing as well as soothe broken skin. He used the animal he had ridden and he walked with the wounded man on the animal. He took care of him personally. He went out of his way to help the wounded man without any thought of repayment. Notice: Jesus did not say that the Samaritan had come “by chance.” The Samaritan followed the leading of God. The Samaritan loved God and others, so God could inspire him to providentially help the battered man. He also pledged himself to meet the man’s future needs until he was restored to health and he could return to repay the innkeeper for additional care.

(Luke 10:36) Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?”

To strive to “justify yourself” means to think “I am in the right;” sometimes it means to think “I have been wronged unjustly,” and sometimes it means to think, “I deserve the good (eternal life?) that I seek because I obey the law.” Jesus’ parable forced the lawyer to look outside of himself and judge the actions of someone else; people often find it easier to judge and condemn the actions of others rather than themselves.

(Luke 10:37) He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

The lawyer had to judge the behaviors of the priest and the Levite in answer to Jesus’ question. If you ignore completely someone in need, you are not being a neighbor, and the lawyer had to admit that no one could “justify” or say that the priest and the Levite had done the right thing. They had committed sins of omission. The lawyer had to judge rightly that the person who loves shows mercy. The lawyer probably could not make the statement “the Samaritan was the neighbor;” because of his prejudice against Samaritans. Rather, he judged the actions of the man and said the neighbor was “the one who showed him mercy.” To be a good neighbor means showing mercy to others. God is our good neighbor who saw our need and showed us mercy by sending Jesus to save us, not only risking His own life to save us but intentionally dying on a cross so we could inherit eternal life through faith in Him. Therefore, we love, we appreciate, and we give thanks to God in Jesus Christ for our salvation. Furthermore, we are moved by the Holy Spirit to love others as He has loved us. We do not live “by chance,” but by the Scriptures and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is our Savior and our Way to inherit eternal life as well as our example on how we are to love others as He loved us.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. How would you answer the question: “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
2. Why did the lawyer give the right answer?
3. Why do you think the priest and the Levite passed by and refused to help the injured man?
4. What does it mean to live “by chance”?
5. What does it mean to live “by faith”?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

— © Copyright 2015 by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr. Permission Granted for Not for Profit Use.