

Sunday, June 7th, 2009
Luke 10:25-42
All Your Heart

Background Information:

The Parable of the Good Samaritan has its roots in Scripture itself. Consider 2 Chr 28:8-15 where, after Samaria has defeated Judah in battle, the Samaritans, acting on the advice of a prophet, treated their captives with mercy. They clothed the naked, provided them with food and drink, anointed them, carried the feeble on donkeys, and brought them to Jericho (v. 15). (Craig A. Evans, *New International Biblical Commentary: Luke*, p. 178)

- (25) The fact that the “*expert in the law*” stood indicates that he was probably teaching at the time and wanted to use Jesus as an example to his assembled students on how to detect and correct heresy among those who would diminish the Law. Instead, Jesus turns the tables and displays his superior understanding and his higher and more demanding understanding of the Law.
- (27) Jesus was not the first to summarize the entirety of the Law in these two commands. This teaching was pretty much accepted orthodoxy in First Century Judaism.
- (28) “correctly” (NIV) ; “right” (KJV) = Gk ὀρθῶς (orthos - orthodox), Strong’s #3723 = “*straight, upright, right, correct, true, to conform to a recognized norm, to be in accordance with what is right*”.
- (30) According to Josephus and other early Judaism references, Jericho, because of its resort like climate, economy, and relative close proximity to Jerusalem, was a popular residence for priests and Levites
- (30) “The pass of blood” between Jericho and Jerusalem was the nickname of the area most likely referred to here by Jesus.
- (31-32) Commentators try to excuse the Priest and Levite for not helping because of the possibility of becoming ceremonially defiled by touching either a diseased or dead man. I think this is a bunch of hooey. Notice the text, all three of the travelers are doing “down” from Jerusalem to Jericho (Jerusalem elevation 2300’ and Jericho elevation -800’). This means that both the priest and the Levite were done with their temple duties and it did not matter if they became ceremonially defiled as there would be sufficient time to once again become ceremonially pure before they were back on duty again at the temple. The point made here by Jesus is that we simply do not WANT to love our neighbor the way the Samaritan is willing to love.
- (31-32) Priests and Levites were in charge of the temple and the distribution of alms funds collected at the temple. Meaning, it was their professional duty to care for such a man who was laying half-dead along the side of the Jericho Road.
- “Pity” (NIV) = GK splankna “*from the bowels*”
- (39) To be at one’s feet is to submit one’s self under their authority (see: Luke 8:35; Acts 2:35; 4:35-37; 5:1-11; 10:25; 13:51; 22:3 {KJV only})
- (41) Whenever a name is doubled in Scripture, you can pretty much know the speaker is attempting to express the extent of their painful anguish with the audience. (“Absalom, O Absalom” - 2 Sam 18:31-19:5; “Jerusalem, Jerusalem” - Mt 23:37; “My God, My God” - Ps 22:1; Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34)

The question to be answered is . . . What is all the fuss about loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and loving our neighbor as yourself?

Answer: The reason why Jesus, all the religious leaders throughout the Bible and orthodox teaching today fuss about loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and loving your neighbor as yourself, is because this is what God says is the satisfaction and fulfillment of His expectations for mankind and thus what is necessary for eternal life. How ya doin’?

What is Luke teaching through these two stories?:

I. God commands that you Love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and your neighbor as yourself (10:27)(see also: Ex 23:4-5; Lev 19:18, 33-34; Dt 6:5; Hos 6:6; Mch 6:8; Mt 9:13; 12:7; 22:37-39; Mk 12:29-32; Jn 13:34-35; 15:10-12; 1 Jn 4:11)

Bible Memory Verse for the Week: (*The Shema*) Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. — Deuteronomy 6:4-5

In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus commands the love which cannot be commanded. — Tim Keller

By their action—or lack of action—both priest and Levite demonstrated their ignorance of the worth of a person made in God’s image, and the magnitude of their sin in disobeying God’s Word even though they were nominally committed to the service of God and man. (D. Stuart Briscoe, *Patterns for Power*, p. 44)

Deuteronomy 5-6 emphasize the need for “complete devotion to God” (Evans, p. 43), and this is the thrust of Luke 10:25-28. (Evans, p. 176)

II. Loving God with all our heart and loving your neighbor as yourself is the minimum for eternal life (25-28)(see also: Mt 19:16; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jms 2:8)

The expert wants to find a legal loophole that will allow him to **NOT** have to extend mercy and compassion. Jesus' way is completely opposite. Because the way of love is to try and discover ways to **IMPROVE** the life of another with no thought or assessment of personal cost or sacrifice. This is what God does and it is what He commands us to do.

III. Loving your neighbor as yourself appears impossible (29)(see also: Mt ch 5-7; 5:48; 22:38-39; Mk 12:31; Lk 6:20-49; Col 3:23; Jms 2:15-17; 1 Jn 3:16-18)

We should **WANT** to meet the needs of our neighbors with all of the speed, joy, eagerness, creativity, sacrifice and determination that we do for our own needs. — Tim Keller

The words "as yourself" do not indicate how much love, or for that matter that any amount of love, may be withheld; instead, they describe the sort of love Christians should give to others. How exactly do you love yourself? Answer this question and you will know how a Christian should love his neighbor. You naturally love yourself for your own sake. You wish your own good . . . You love yourself more than you love any good qualities or worth you may possess . . . Self-love does not wait on worth. In fact it is the other way around: self-love makes you desire worth for yourself. Regardless of fluctuations in feeling, you love yourself on one day about as much as on any other. And regardless of differences in temperament or capacity for deep emotion, one person probably wishes his own good about as much as another person wishes for his." (Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*, pp. 99-100)

I don't suppose he was carrying a first-aid kit so in all probability the bandages he used were his ripped up garment; the oil and the wine he poured in the wounds were intended for some other more joyous use. Putting the man on his donkey meant either throwing some of his goods away to make room for him, or giving the wounded man his own seat. Either way, it was a costly involvement. Going to the inn—the ruins of which are still to be seen on the roadside—and checking in the stranger, paying his rent, and committing himself to any further expense all pointed to a willingness to be neighborly to the point of hurting. (Briscoe, p. 45)

IV. Loving God with all our heart appears impossible (38-40) (see also: Dt 4:29; 10:12; 11:13; 26:16; 30:2, 10; Jsh 22:5; Pro 3:5-6; Jer 29:13)

No worship is wholly pleasing to God until there is nothing in me displeasing to God. (A. W. Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?*, p. 125)

V. Loving God with all your heart means having no other competing affections, loves, desires, or loyalties (41) (see also: Mt 6:25-34; Mk 12:33; Lk 9:57-62; 1 Cor 7:32-35; Col 3:23)

Another woman, Jeanne Chantal, longed to become a nun so she could devote herself entirely to her faith. Francis was gentle but firm with her, finally saying, "Nothing so impedes our progress in perfection as to be sighing after another way of life." (Gary L. Thomas, *Seeking the Face of God*, p. 212)

Martha certainly meant well, but alas, her too great zeal to entertain the Savior well, caused her to become sulky towards her sister who sat and listened, and also towards the Lord Himself because He did not tell Mary to go and help with the serving. She is so dissatisfied that she wants to instruct the Savior as to what He should do, namely to command Mary to help her. In this way she disturbed the harmony between herself and her sister and between herself and the Lord through her unbalanced zeal to entertain Jesus as lavishly as possible. (Norval Geldenhuys, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Luke*, p. 316)

The verb means "allowed her attention to wander", which strictly implies that Martha had tried to listen but found she could not listen and think about the preparations for the meal at the same time." (Luce, *in loc.*) (Geldenhuys, p. 317)

CONCLUSION/APPLICATION:

What should we do in response to these stories?:

A. Realize the minimum standard of God's expectations for humans - Love God and people with all your heart

If you have to ask who your neighbor is it shows your heart. A person who is motivated by love is looking for anything he can do to help his neighbor to satisfy his needs because love is his MO. The lawyer wants to know the minimum standard of what it means to be neighborly in order to satisfy righteousness. But to even ask such a question reveals that you do not love at all but that you are only wanting to do what is necessary to get God off your case. — Pastor Keith

But she earns a gentle reproof from Jesus because she has not yet learned that unselfishness, service, and even sacrifice can be spoiled by self-concern and a self-pity, that good works which are not self-forgetful can become a misery to the doer and a tyranny to others. (G. B. Caird, *The Pelican New Testament Commentaries, Saint Luke*, p. 150)

Heidelberg Catechism Question # 91 - What do we do that is good? Answer: Only that which arises out of true faith, conforms to God's law, and is done for his glory; and not that which is based on what we think is right or on established human tradition. (Jn 15:5; Heb 11:6; Lev 18:4; 1 Sam 15:22; Eph 2:10; 1 Cor 10:31; Dt 12:32; Isa 29:13; Ez 20:18-19; Mt 15:7-9)

Galatians 6:1-2 implies that it will be a burden for you to bear someone else's suffering and hardships. If you can afford to help

someone else out, this probably implies that you should have been doing a whole lot more before the time the present need is revealed.

B. Realize that only Jesus fulfilled the Law's demands completely (see also: Mt 3:15; 5:17, 48; Jn 15:13; Heb 4:15; 5:9; 7:28; 9:11)

We hasten to add, however, that such perfection is impossible on this sinful earth. Yet, the demand of God's law is not abrogated. The solution of this problem has been furnished by God himself. Jesus Christ, by the substitutionary sacrifice of himself and by his life of *perfect* obedience, has done for us what we ourselves would never have been able to do. See Ro 8:1-3; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13. Therefore:

a. We must sincerely confess that it is forever impossible for us, by our own action, to fulfill the demands of God's law: "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal 2:16).

b. We must, by God's grace and the power of his Spirit, place our trust in Christ (Jn 3:16, 36).

c. *Out of gratitude* for the salvation which, because of Christ's merits, we have received as a free gift, we must now, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, live a life to the glory of God Triune. This means that even *in principle* we will begin to live in accordance with his law. The law of love has not been abrogated. See Ro 13:8-10. (William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Luke*, p. 596)

C. See that the bar of the Law's fulfillment is so high that without God, it is impossible to obey and thus to be saved (Mt 5:48; 19:16-26; 25:31-46; Mk 10:17-27; Lk 18:18-27; Acts 15:10; Gal 3:24)

The expert was wanting to justify himself. That is impossible in God's courtroom. The Law is too lofty and our human ability is too tainted and corrupt to even begin to fully follow the Law. Only through Christ can obedience be obtained and righteousness be given (Ro 1:16-17; ch 3-6; 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:7-11; Gal 3:1-14)

Until you see you can't really love you can't really love. You can only really love when you come to realize you can't really love. — Tim Keller

Our Lord sent the man back to the Law, not because the Law saves us (Gal 2:16, 21; 3:21), but because the Law shows us that we need to be saved. There can be no real conversion without conviction, and the Law is what God uses to convict sinners (Ro 3:20). (Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Compassionate: A New Testament Study—Luke 1-13*, pp. 114-15)

One can and should go beyond the rules (that was the "lack" of the rich ruler; he had not done so); but one cannot go beyond love. This is made clear by the words **with all your heart,...soul,...strength,...mind**. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro 13:10; note also Ro 13:9; cf. on Mt 5:17; Lk 6:27-31). The requirement of love "fulfills" the law in at least three respects: it goes not only beyond the rules, but also between the rules and under the rules. It goes *under* the rules in the sense of being concerned not primarily with acts as such (as rules must be), but with motives (see Mt 5:21-48). It goes *between* the rules in the sense of covering our behavior in the whole wide range of our relationships; rules are perforce specific and leave gaps. The law was computed by the rabbis to contain 613 commandments (365 "thou shalt nots" and 248 "thou shalt"), but even so many rules were not enough to define duty in all the contingencies of existence; and if that was true then, how much more true would it be now in our vastly more complex society. Rules are rough-and-ready, approximate answers; love alone can prescribe precisely for each need and occasion. But the requirement of love also goes *beyond* the rules. To be sure, it asks less that is irrelevant and pointless; but it asks more that is significant. It is less restraining, but more demanding; less irritating and burdensome, but more costly. One who merely obeys rules is trying to save himself; one who loves is trying to serve God. The one obedience is slavery; the other "perfect freedom." And this is true because what we call "freedom" is really our experience of belonging with **heart, soul, strength, and mind** to what we know is worthy to possess us; and what can that be but the God who made us and made us for himself? (Abingdon Press, *The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. VIII*, p. 193)

Jesus explained that people only needed to obey these commands; in doing so, they would fulfill all the rest of them. But with these abrupt words, Jesus was subtly making the point that no one can obey these commands. *Do this and you will live* sounds simple—in reality, however, those commands are impossible to keep in our human strength alone. (Bruce B. Barton, D.Min., *Life Application Bible Commentary: Luke*, p. 279)

D. See the extent of God's love, mercy, forgiveness and grace as salvation comes ONLY by grace (see: Lk 18:9-14, 18-30; Rom 3:20; Gal 2:16-21; 3:21-24; 5:4; Eph 2:8-10)

"If you don't see the absolute holiness of God, the magnitude of your debt, the categorical necessity of God's just punishment of your sin, and therefore the utter hopelessness of your condition, then the knowledge of your pardon and deliverance will not be amazing and electrifying!" — Tim Keller

There was nothing wrong with this high requirement of the law: "The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good" (Ro 7:12). "The man who does these things will live by them" (Gal 3:12). The trouble is not with the divine principle that perfect obedience results in everlasting life. What, then, is wrong? Paul answers in these words, "We know that the law is spiritual; *but I am carnal, sold under sin*" (Ro 7:14). If only the law-expert will now admit this. If only he will cry out, "O God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" If he will do this, Jesus can supply the further answer to the lawyer's question, that answer being, "Come to *me* you

who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” See Mt 11:38. Cf. Jn 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:51; 7:37; 10:27, 28; Rev 22:17. (Hendriksen, p. 592)

Love of neighbor will not be calculating and restrained, as though one were merely doing one’s duty; but will be, one might almost say, foolishly extravagant and lavish. Here is a constant note in Jesus’ ethical teaching and probably the most characteristic. One hears it again and again in the Sermon on the Mount, where we are told to love our enemies, to go the second mile, to give our cloak, too. Many of the parables sound it—as when the employer pays all his laborers the full wage though some have worked only for an hour, and a father rewards with gifts and a great feast an utterly unworthy son. So here again we find the hallmark of Jesus: the fact that the **neighbor** was so completely a stranger, being of all things a Samaritan; the extravagance of his compassion, **pouring on oil and wine**, binding up the man’s **wounds**, setting him **on his own beast**, bringing him **to an inn** and taking **care of him**. He could have stopped so much sooner than this and still have more than fulfilled any possible rule about one’s duty to a wounded stranger. But he did not stop even then—leaving money to pay for the man’s further care, and insisting that if more were needed, he should be allowed to pay the account on his return. The good Samaritan is not trying to do his duty. The point is that he is not aware of *duty* at all—any more than we are aware of duty when we act generously toward ourselves. We act so toward ourselves because we want to; so the Samaritan acts toward the stranger. He loves his neighbor as he loves himself. (*The Interpreter’s Bible*, pp. 196-97)

E. Allow the truth to conceive within you a repentant and grateful heart that endeavors to love God and your neighbor with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. (Romans 2:4; 12:1-2)

You will never be a radical neighbor until you are radically neighborly — Tim Keller

Christians should be promiscuous with their giving to others in need.

The Samaritan had no obligation to help. He helped simply because of *splanxna* (compassion).

You can either be motivated to give by guilt or you can be motivated to give out of gratitude. The first will cause you to burn out the first time anyone deceives you, takes advantage of you or you feel it is not worth it all. The second you do out of compassion and love because you also have received that same compassion and love and want to give to others what you yourself received.

When you see a job to do, go overboard. Do it to show just an ounce of what God’s care for you is like. Do it with all the joy God has put in your heart. (Barton, p. 282)

Only Mary, out of the thousands who listened to Jesus, really paid attention. She alone knew of Jesus’ eminent death and prepared him for burial by the anointing of this body in John 12:1-2. Martha does much better as revealed in the confessions she makes in John 11:21-22, 27 but Mary alone really listened and acted accordingly.

If the disciples didn’t really listen to Jesus in His presence, how much more do we need to be intent on listening to Jesus today?

Quotes to Note:

No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he had only had good intentions. -Margaret Thatcher

Jesus is not saying that loving deeds earn heaven for us but that loving deeds are the marks of a heaven bound person. — Alistair Begg

The Bible is clear here: I am to love my neighbor as myself, in the manner needed, in a practical way, in the midst of the fallen world, at my particular point of history. This is why I am not a pacifist. Pacifism in this poor world in which we live—this lost world—means that we desert the people who need our greatest help.

Let me illustrate. I am walking down the street and I come upon a big, burly man beating a tiny tot to death—beating this little girl—beating her—beating her. I plead with him to stop. Suppose he refuses? What does love mean now? Love means that I stop him in any way I can, including hitting him. To me this is not only necessary for humanitarian reasons: it is loyalty to Christ’s commands concerning Christian love in a fallen world. What about that little girl? If I desert her to the bully, I have deserted the true meaning of Christian love—responsibility to my neighbor. She, as well as he, is my neighbor. (Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, p. 128)

“Don’t let your service to become self-serving” (*NIV Life Application Study Bible*, p. 1824)

For instance, some of them (*experts in the Law*) said that it was illegal to help a Gentile

woman in her sorest time, the time of childbirth, for that would only have been to bring another Gentile into the world. (William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Luke*, p. 143)

So often we want to be kind to people—but we want to be kind to them *in our way*; we sometimes take offense and think that we are not appreciated. If we are trying to be kind the first necessity is to try to see into the heart of the person we desire to help—and then to forget all our own plans and to think only of what he or she needs. (William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Luke*, p. 145)

He tells the story of the good Samaritan, not to answer the question ‘Who is my neighbor?’ but to show that it is the wrong question.

The proper question is, 'To whom can I be a neighbor?'' and the answer is, 'To anyone whose need constitutes a claim on my love.' It is neighborliness, not neighborhood, that makes a neighbor. (G. B. Caird, *The Pelican New Testament Commentaries, Saint Luke*, p. 148)

Of course, the lawyer wanted to make the issue somewhat complex and philosophical, but Jesus made it simple and practical. He moved it from *duty* to *love*, from *debating* to *doing*. To be sure, our Lord was not condemning discussions or debates; He was only warning us not to use these things as excuses for doing nothing. (Wiersbe, p. 117)

Finding God is not finding a Reality strange and new; it is recognizing and responding to Someone whom we have always known, although perhaps we knew it not. It is answering "Yes" to a Voice one has often heard, but to which heretofore one may not have been willing or prepared to listen. But that Voice, though it speaks in our hearts, is not our voice. It comes from heights and depths we cannot scale or fathom. And the words the Voice speaks are not ours. They are the words of the One who is as far as he is near, in whom alone our partial, thwarted lives have meaning and wholeness, and for whose sake alone even the least of these little ones has infinite worth. (*The Interpreter's Bible*, p. 199)