

Who's My Neighbor?

Luke 10:25-37

Pastor John Miller

Today we want to look together at the well-known parable of The Good Samaritan. It's a popular parable; I think most people know it.

I think the happenings that we see in this parable we also see going on in our culture today, sad to say. The story involves violence—we see that, crime. We see religious and racial discrimination, hatred, neglect and a loss of concern. When I look at and study the parable of The Good Samaritan, I almost think I'm watching the evening news. This man is traveling on a road, he gets mugged, he gets robbed, he's left for dead and the religious community, because of the racial prejudice of a different religion, walk by on the other side of the street. But the hero of the story is this good Samaritan.

How appropriate for our times. I meet people who say, "The Bible is irrelevant. The Bible doesn't speak to our culture." I think, What Bible are you reading? You obviously haven't read the story of The Good Samaritan. If ever a story was relevant, this story is relevant for us today.

This is a story that teaches us that we need to show compassion. We need to love our neighbor. That is very much needed in the world today. We need to show more compassion. We need a culture that is more compassionate, more loving and certainly showing more care.

It shows us that we cannot separate our relationship with God from our relationship with our fellow man. That is important to understand: you cannot separate your relationship with God from your relationship with other people. If I am right with people, I must first be right with God. In order to be right with others, I must be right with God.

There are three main points or three divisions to this parable about the good Samaritan. The first main point is about the priority of love, verses 25-29. Luke says, "And behold, a certain lawyer stood up..."—that's significant—"...and tested Him, saying, 'Teacher...'—he's talking to Jesus—"...what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?' So he answered and said, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.' And He said to him, 'You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.' But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'"

I want you to note in this section that there are four questions; actually four questions that form the foundation of this whole story we call The Good Samaritan. In verse 25: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" That's a great question. The second question is in verse 29: "Who is my neighbor?" That's the reason the parable is given. Question number three is in verse 26: "What is written in the law?" Jesus asked that question. Then, again, verse 26: "What is your reading of it?" Four questions.

Who asked the questions, to whom were the questions asked and why were they asked? Verse 25 says, "A certain lawyer stood up and tested Him" or "tempted Him." A lawyer was a theologian of the time. They were people who were completely committed to, devoted to, set apart for studying, interpreting and keeping the law. They were the students of the law. They were called "lawyers." But this was not a civil lawyer, like we would think of today; this was a Biblical lawyer. They studied the Old Testament, the law of God.

When this lawyer comes to Jesus to ask his question, he stands up. That is significant. It indicates that everyone else, including Jesus, was sitting down. Picture this scene: In those days, they would actually sit and teach, so everyone is seated and Jesus is teaching. Then this lawyer stands up. The fact that he stood up is an indication that he was an antagonist; he wasn't coming in friendly terms, and he didn't want to know the answer to his question. It says that he was trying to "test" Jesus or "tempt" Jesus. Later, it is going to say that he wanted to "justify himself" or save face.

So this man is antagonistic. His motive isn't pure. His question is a good question: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" But he already knew the answer according to the law; he was a lawyer and theologian. But what he was trying to do—and this happened to Jesus quite often—was to try to embroil Jesus in a controversy. He's trying to get Jesus to say something that he can attack, come against or say that it's wrong; he's trying to find some fault with Jesus. He doesn't really want to know the answer to the question.

Do you know that you can't trap the Son of God? They came to Jesus and asked Him, "Is it okay to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" No one likes to pay taxes; right? But in those days they were paying taxes to Rome, so if Jesus said, "Yes," they would go to the people and say, "He's pro Rome." If Jesus said, "No," they would go to Rome and say that He was speaking against the Roman government. They thought, "We've got Him! We've trapped Him! No matter which way He answers, we've got Him!"

So Jesus said, "Show me a coin." He didn't have one on Him, so they gave Him a coin. Then Jesus holds up the coin and says, "Whose image is on the coin?" They said, "Caesar's." It's not in the Bible, but I can just see Jesus flickin' it back. He said, "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's and render unto God what is God's." When they heard that they thought, Rats! We thought we had 'im! You just can't trap the Son of God.

So this lawyer is really in for it. He's the hunter, but Jesus turns the table, and the lawyer becomes the hunted, as he realizes that he should never have started this questioning of the Master.

He said, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" This is an important question. Notice Jesus' answer. Jesus said, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" Notice that Jesus refers questions to the Scriptures. So should we. Jesus didn't say, "What do the rabbis think? What do you think? What is the popular view? What does the culture say?" Instead, Jesus said, "What does the Scriptures say? What sayeth the law?"

Let me give you a word of advice: Whenever you have a question, the first thing you ask yourself is, "What does the Bible say?" What does the Bible say about marriage? What does the Bible say about sex before or outside of marriage? What does the Bible say about the cultural problems and the issues and the things we talk about? "What sayeth the Scriptures?" For us as Christians, all our authority and practice lies in the Bible. Not in our history. Not in our culture. Not in our religious system. Not in our denomination. Not in a person. But in the book, the Bible.

The B-i-b-l-e.

Yes, that's the book for me.

I stand alone on the Word of God,

The B-i-b-l-e.

So I want to know what the Bible says about these issues. That's the authority. When God speaks, we need to take our stand there.

So the lawyer answers the Lord's questions by quoting from the Old Testament, first from Deuteronomy 6:5: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength." This is the portion the Jews called the great Shema, where they would say, "Hear O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind." Then the lawyer adds another verse: Leviticus 19:18: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Did you know that was from the Old Testament? To "love your neighbor as yourself" is from the Old Testament. Jesus was also asked the same question: "What is the greatest commandment?" He said, "Love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength and all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself." Then Jesus said, "On these two hang all the law and the prophets."

If you take the Ten Commandments, the first five deal with our relationship to God. If you love God with "all your heart, all your soul, all your strength and all your mind," it takes care of those first five commandments. If you take the second set of tablets of stone, the commandments that deal with my relationship to man—"Thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not covet"—If you and I are "loving our neighbor as ourselves," we are not going to murder, commit adultery, steal, lie or covet. So "On these two hang all the law and the prophets."

Jesus said to the lawyer, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." Now please track with me right here. At this point, if the lawyer was honest, if the lawyer was sincere, if the lawyer was a man of true integrity—as if we were in his shoes—then he would have said, "But I have not loved God with all my heart, all my soul and all my strength. And I have not loved my neighbor as myself." Technically, I don't think anyone loves God with all their heart, with all their

soul and with all their strength. And living in Southern California and driving the freeways of Southern California, I don't know any Christians who love their neighbor as themselves. Go out on the freeway and say, "Lord, I just love every one of these drivers." Yeah; right!

So if the lawyer was sincere—and I want to drive home this point, because I don't think he was; he was trying to trap Jesus—he would have said, "I haven't done that. What do I lack? What do I need to do? How do I get to heaven? How am I saved?" He wasn't really sincere; he didn't really want to know the answer.

Sometimes when you're sharing the Gospel with unbelievers, all of a sudden, they divert the attention of their sin and their need of a Savior by saying, "Well, what about babies dying? What about people in Africa who haven't heard the good news?" What? All of a sudden you have a burden for people in Africa? They want to divert with another question, which is what this lawyer is trying to do.

Instead of this lawyer confessing his sin at this point, he tries to avoid the real issue of his failure to keep the law by proposing a theological debate, verse 29. "But he, wanting to justify himself...." He's trying to save face. He knows good and well that he hasn't loved his neighbor as himself. He knew the law. He could quote the law. He studied the law. He could quote it in Hebrew if necessary. But he knew that he hadn't kept the law. So he wanted to divert the issue from his disobedience to a theological discussion. So the lawyer "said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'" "Let's define 'neighbor' here. If I'm supposed to 'love my neighbor as myself,' let's define 'neighbor'."

The Jews defined "neighbor" as only fellow Jews. If you were a Gentile, I wouldn't have to love you. The Jews believed that Gentiles were created by God as fuel for the fires of hell. Can you imagine that? Go up to somebody and say, "Hey, did you know that God created you to keep the fires of hell burning? That's the only reason God created you." The Jews would wake up every morning and say, "God, I thank you that I am not a Gentile." So there was this great prejudice and hatred.

So he didn't love Gentiles. He didn't love people outside the Jewish family. When he asked, "Who is my neighbor?" he wanted to defend himself by having a theological debate.

A lot of Christians do the same thing. Many times I've had men come to me and they want to debate or discuss minute details of eschatology, which is the study of last things, such as the Second Coming, the tribulation, heaven, hell, who the Antichrist is, et cetera. But sometimes I know that they haven't really loved their wife "as Christ loved the church." They have problems in their marriage. So I don't buy into it; I'm not going to discuss eschatology or last things or the fine points of theology. I'm first going to ask, "How are you doing in your marriage?"

"Well, let's get back to the book of Revelation for a minute." They want to avoid the issues of "Are you loving your wife? Are you caring for her? Are you committed to her? How are you doing in parenting? Are you praying? Are you reading your Bible?"

"I just want to debate these theological issues."

Sometimes we don't want to obey the Word; we just want to study the Word. We want to debate and discuss the deep things of the Scriptures. But to put it in shoe leather? "No, no." We don't want to do that.

It reminds me of a pastor who was talking to a farmer in his congregation. He asked the farmer, "If you had two pigs, would you give one to God?"

The farmer said, "Yeah, if I had a couple of pigs, I'd give one to God. That's no problem."

The pastor asked him, "What if you had a couple of horses? Would you give one to God?"

"Oh, yeah. I'd give at least one to God. That's no problem."

Then the pastor asked him, "What about a cow?"

Then the farmer said, "Now wait a minute, pastor! You know I have two cows. That's not fair."

You see, we're willing, theoretically, to give to God when it doesn't hit home. But when it comes to loving my neighbor, it's like, "That was written before this guy moved in next door to me. That doesn't apply to that jerk who lives next door, who bugs me and whose dog comes into my yard, and the guy plays music late. Oh, man."

Some of you who don't like your neighbor, you're going to be bummed out that you're in church here this morning, because this is a very convicting story Jesus gives. You want to know who your neighbor is? Jesus is going to say, "Anybody who has a need is your neighbor."

So the lawyer saw the neighbor as just a problem to debate. Make sure to ask yourself, "Am I trying to sidestep the real issue of me being obedient to God by having all these questions rather than doing what God says for me to do in His Word?"

Now we move to the second division, verses 30-35, to a picture of love, as seen in The Good Samaritan. But we first see the loveless picture of the priest and the Levite. Starting in verse 35: "Then Jesus answered and said...." So the man asked, "Who is my neighbor?" And Jesus is going to show him who his neighbor is.

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii..."—some translations have "two silver coins," which was two

day's wage—"...gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'"

Jesus was giving this parable in answer to the lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus tells about a man who leaves Jerusalem and goes down the long, steep, narrow road, heading east, down to the city of Jericho.

Just a few months ago when we were in Israel, we took that drive two or three times. It's a 17-mile trip from Jerusalem to Jericho, down by the Dead Sea, the lowest spot on earth. You drop in elevation from Jerusalem to Jericho about 3,000 feet. You go from above sea level to below sea level. At that time, the road was narrow, dark and dangerous, and a lot of thieves hung out along the way and attacked and robbed people.

The story says that he "fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing." Clothes were of great value at that time. People didn't have wallets and iPhones. They didn't steal their credit cards or their cash. They "stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead."

Now there comes by a priest, verse 31. The priests were those who did all the service in the temple. They were separated to God to do the temple rites. So they were very religious, very holy and set apart unto God. The priest sees the man, but he crosses to the other side of the street. It doesn't say why; it just tells us that he didn't help the man, even though he saw him.

Then a Levite came by. You would think, listening to this story, that if anyone is going to help the man, it would be a holy guy. It's going to be a religious person. You know, if you broke down on the highway, you would want a man of the cloth to stop to help you, not a Hell's Angel; right? (Forgive me. I'm not trying to label Hell's Angels, but you know what I'm talking about: somebody who kind of looks like they might beat you up and rob you. It's kind of like you want a clergyman to stop; not somebody who's going to hurt you.)

So maybe this man who is laying in this pool of blood looks up and sees the priest and says, "Oh, thank God, there's help!" But the priest walks away. The man is waiting and praying and a Levite comes his way. Now a Levite is just below a priest. They would help and assist the priests in the temple. They were part of the Levitical order, the tribe of Levi. They were also very religious and committed to God. Maybe the man thinks, "Oh, maybe the Levite will help me!" But the Levite also passes by.

I remember years ago that my son had an old, beat up, '68 VW bus. He was off somewhere at school, so I was taking care of it for him. It would start and stop, but I finally got it running. I took it to a mechanic to get it worked on. I forgot to take my cell phone with me. So I'm right here in Menifee and I break down in this VW bus. I'm on the roadside for hours. I'm thinking, Certainly someone in Menifee is going to recognize that it's Pastor Miller. This is a true story. So I kind of stood out on the roadside trying to get someone's attention. "Hey, you know me?! Pastor Miller, the preacher?!" The people just kept going by. I even had some people wave at

me and say, "Hi, Pastor Miller. How ya doin'?" and went right by. I was there for hours and hours until finally a "Samaritan" came by and helped me. Where were you folks? If that was you who came by, I'll pray for you after service today. I didn't have a phone; I didn't have any way to call for help, but someone finally saw me and helped me.

This guy sees the priest go by, and he sees the Levite go by. This is a picture of lovelessness and indifference. The story doesn't say why they passed on the other side, but maybe they thought, when they saw the man, This isn't my fault; I didn't do this. I don't want to get involved. Maybe the criminal is still lurking around, and I'd be robbed myself. Am I my brother's keeper? The answer is "Yes."

Or maybe they were in a hurry to get home. Have you ever had that happen? It's been a long day, and you're tired. As for me, as a pastor, I'm serving the Lord, I'm preaching, I'm teaching, I'm counseling, so when I'm going home it's like, "Lord, don't let me see anybody who needs anything right now. I just want to get home." But sure enough, someone's broken down on the side of the road, and they have a Revival sticker on their car. The Lord says, "You need to stop."

"Oh, someone else will stop. Someone else will help, certainly." We just want to commit it to someone else, or we're in a hurry and we don't want to give up the time. Or they might have said, "I've been serving in the temple, and it's not my job. I've done my part."

Jesus said in Matthew 9:13, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Just because you come to church and put money in the offering doesn't mean you shouldn't help somebody when you go out after church and see somebody in need. Just because you are serving the Lord doesn't mean you shouldn't have a heart of compassion.

In Micah 6:8, it says, "He has shown you O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Do justly, love mercy and walk in humility with your God.

Maybe they dismissed this man saying, "Somebody else will do it." In James 4:17, it says, "To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin."

So to the lawyer, we see that the man was a problem to discuss, but to the priest and the Levite, the neighbor was a nuisance to avoid.

But now we see the picture of love and compassion in verses 33-35. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'"

I want you to think about how shocked the crowd would be. By the way, the Bible doesn't say, but most Bible students believe—and I do, too—that the man who was robbed and beaten and

left half dead was a Jew. It seems to imply he was a Jew. You would think a Levite would help him. You would think a priest would help him. Now Jesus has a Samaritan showing up, and he becomes the hero of the story. They're thinking Ai, yai, yai! That can't be!

The Jews hated Samaritans. The Samaritans were half Jew and half Gentile. They had intermarried with the Assyrians who had conquered them in the land. They also had their own religion. They worshipped on Mount Gerizim. They weren't part of the Jewish religion. So there was a racial problem, and there was a religious problem. The divide was very great.

Again, if a man lying there in the street half dead would look up and see a Samaritan, he would think, Oh, man! I'm really dead now! Certainly this Samaritan is going to take anything I have left. He's going to kick me and beat me and spit on me. But the Bible says that the Samaritan had compassion and that he came to him and he ministered to him.

Let me drive home the point right now that our Christian love is to transcend race, religion and nationality. Don't we need that in our world right now? We've never seen our nation more divided than it is today. As Christians, we can go out and change the world, one person at a time, by showing love, by showing compassion, by showing kindness, in spite of the race, religion or nationality.

Jesus said that we should love even our enemies. Ouch! That hurts. Even our enemies? All men are not children of God by regeneration, but all men are created by God in His image. This parable isn't teaching the universal fatherhood of God, that everyone is a child of God, but as Christians, we are to love the family of God, we are to take care of our own biological families, and we are also to love even our enemies who are outside of Christianity. We are to care for them, because they are human beings created in the image of God. It doesn't matter what race they are, what religion or what ethnicity they are. The love for others is evidence of my salvation, that I am truly a child of God.

Let me put this in shoe leather for you. What were the things that made this Samaritan a good neighbor? Number one, he had compassion. We need to have compassion. Notice it in verse 33. It said that the Samaritan "had compassion" on him. The word "compassion" means to be "moved inwardly, to care for someone, to feel their pain and their hurt."

The priest and the Levite saw the man, just like the Samaritan, but the Samaritan went beyond seeing to feeling. He felt. He had a heart from God.

So not only are we to care for people, but we have to connect with people. Notice secondly, that he connected with him, verse 34. "So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn."

So the first was compassion. By the way, the word translated "compassion" there is sometimes "pity." In the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—it's only used of Jesus Christ. The only time it's not used of Jesus in the Gospels it's used in a parable of a person depicting God and His compassion—the Father having compassion on the prodigal son. So this is a God-like

quality.

Then the Samaritan connected. As Christians, we want to live in isolation. We go to a restaurant after church. “Do you have a sanctified section? Can we have a Spirit-filled waitress or waiter?” We don’t want to interact with unbelievers. “Ooh. Cooties!” We don’t want to touch them. Jesus was a friend to publicans and prostitutes. So He was labeled as a horrible person. “You hang out with prostitutes and wine bibbers and publicans!” That’s because Jesus loved them. He went to eat with Zacchaeus, the tax collector, and everyone freaked out. “He’s gone to the house of a sinner!” they said. “How disgusting!”

I do believe that as Christians we should pray, “God, help me to connect with unbelievers. Help me to reach out.” Put yourself in a place where you’ll meet unbelievers and connect with unbelievers. You don’t want to partake of their sin, but you want to reach them with the love of Jesus Christ.

So number one, we have to have compassion to be a neighbor; number two, we have to make contact to be a neighbor—we can’t live in isolation; and number three, we have to care. Notice in verse 34 it says he “took care of him.” He actually took care of this man.

1 John 3:17-18 says, “Whoever has this world’s good, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?” If you have the means to help somebody in need and you don’t do it, how does the love of God dwell in you?

Fourthly, he was a neighbor because it cost him something. Notice verse 35 says, “Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.” So the Samaritan gave him two denarii. One denarii is a day’s wage. So it was two day’s salary.

Sometimes we don’t help people out because we say, “Oh, it’s going to cost too much. It’s going to take too much time.” That’s what it means to be a neighbor. If I’m going to be a neighbor, it’s going to take time. It’s going to take compassion. It’s going to take contact. It’s going to cost me something.

Then fifthly, and lastly, this man had courage. This was courageous for the Samaritan to do that. I want you to imagine what it must have looked like. Remember that Samaritans and Jews hated each other. It wasn’t uncommon for a Samaritan to rob a Jewish person, and vis versa. So imagine what it looked like when he came walking into the inn on the Jericho road with a beat-up, robbed, bloodied Jew on his donkey. That didn’t look good. If you have a Samaritan with a Jew over his donkey all beat up and bloodied, people would be asking, “Did you do that? Are you guilty of this crime?” One commentary I read said it was like an Indian riding into Dodge City with a scalped cowboy over his saddle. It’s like, “Get him!”

How frightening it must have been to think, “I don’t want to be around this. I don’t want to have anything to do with it!”

Years ago I was on a surf trip to Mexico. We had surfed and then we went into a restaurant and

were eating breakfast. A man came in with a rope. I can't speak any Spanish, but he talked to a fellow in the restaurant who then said to us, "This guy's found a dead body floating in the ocean. He wants to know if you surfers can go out there and tie a rope to it so he can pull it in." I can remember thinking to myself, I don't want to be around a dead body in Mexico. I don't want any connection with that. But being the good Christian boys that we were, we said, "Okay." So I swam out, I found this guy, who was pretty stiff, and I tied the rope to his leg. I backed off and they pulled this guy out of the ocean. The minute we did, I looked up, and here come the Federales. I'm thinking, Uh, let's get outta here. This is no place to be hangin' around.

So I think of how courageous it was for this Samaritan to do this. I'd think, I'm not going to hang out with this guy. Someone might accuse me of committing this crime. It takes courage to not worry about what people think or what people may say. It takes courage to put your reputation on the line and help people who are in need.

There is one last movement to this story; it's not over yet. Verses 36-37, in closing. It's the practice of love. So we have the priority of love, we have the picture of love and now we have the practice of love. Now Jesus finishes the story, turns back to the lawyer and said, "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" Pay close attention to the way Jesus phrased His question in verse 36. Jesus didn't ask, "Who is my neighbor"; He asked, "Who was he a neighbor to?" Big difference. Verse 37: "And he said, 'He who showed mercy...'—The lawyer doesn't even want to say the word "Samaritan"—"...on him.' Then Jesus said to him..."—the lawyer—"...Go and do likewise."

Now Jesus drives home the point of the parable. Jesus asked the lawyer a question. It could be phrased like this: "Who was a neighbor to the man?" Remember in verse 29 the lawyer asked the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus now turns it around. (If you miss this, you miss the whole parable.) The lawyer asked the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus said, "No. Who can you be a neighbor to?" It's not a debate. It's not a nuisance. It's a neighbor. It's a human being made in the image of God. So the question is not, "Who is my neighbor?" The question is, "Who can I be a neighbor to?" Jesus turns it around. Then Jesus drives home the point in closing: "Go and do likewise."

If the lawyer were sincere, if he really wanted help, if he really wanted to know the answers to these questions, he would have now seen and understood that "I have not loved God with all my heart, soul, strength and mind. And I have not loved my neighbor as myself." And when Jesus said, "Go and do likewise," he would have been convicted and said, "I can't."

We rightfully should feel the same way right now. When we read the story, we'll just go, "Oh, man. Lord, help me." And that's the right response. It's not going to help for you to try to muster up the strength to do it on your own.

I think that in closing Jesus was driving home the answer to his first question, "What do I need to do to inherit eternal life?" I think what Jesus was doing all the time was to show the man that there was nothing he could do to inherit eternal life, because he hadn't loved God with all his

heart, mind, soul and strength, and he hadn't loved his neighbor as himself.

You need to be forgiven of your sin. You need to see your need for Jesus Christ, Who died on the Cross and rose from the dead. The law will condemn us every time. The law cannot save us. You can't do anything to get to heaven. Jesus did it for you on the Cross.

If you are here today and you think that I've heard the story of The Good Samaritan, and I just need to go out and love my neighbor and I'll get to go to heaven, then you're deceived, because no one can do that. We've "all sinned." "We've all fallen short of the glory of God." "There is no one righteous; no, not one."

I don't know about you, but when I read this story of The Good Samaritan, I'm humbled. I'm broken. I realize that I need a Savior, that there is nothing I can do to save myself. But Jesus died on the Cross and paid for my sins. He was buried and rose from the dead. Whoever believes in Him and trusts Him will have everlasting life. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." That's how you get saved. That's how you get to heaven. That's how you have eternal life: by trusting in and believing in Jesus Christ. Amen.