

Lessons From The Good Samaritan

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The parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the most well-known accounts in the Bible. You can ask somebody walking down the street. Mention the Good Samaritan and they kind of vaguely have heard about it or may even know about it. With that in mind let's turn to Luke 10:30-32. We will come back and forth to this account. There are so many lessons that we can learn from this account. Notice what Jesus said.

Luke 10:30. And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho ... (KJV)

Let's just stop there and set the stage. Jericho was a city of priests. It is estimated that at that time about twelve thousand priests lived in Jericho. It says that this man that Christ is talking about, who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, was most likely a Levite, certainly a Jew.

This road from Jerusalem to Jericho was the most traveled road in all Judea. It was used by the courses of priests going back and forth serving in the temple. When Luke said "down from Jerusalem" that's exactly what he meant. Remember, we talked in a previous sermon about Luke having little details. He was very detail oriented in his account; these little words. He said "down from." Jerusalem is two thousand eight hundred and fifty feet above sea level. Jericho is eight hundred and forty-five feet below sea level. Jericho is the lowest city in the world. So, that climb or descent from Jerusalem to Jericho would be over thirty-seven hundred feet in about fifteen miles. That is a hike. Going up or down, either way you are going to get a great deal of exercise. In those fifteen miles there were a few inns so people could stop and spend the night and rest, because you are really climbing when you go up from below sea level to two thousand eight hundred and fifty feet. So, Luke was very accurate when he said this Levite, certainly a Jew, went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.

30b) ... and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment ... (KJV)

They even took what was on his back.

30 continued) ... and wounded him ... (KJV)

We don't know exactly how, but it was very severe.

30 continued) ... and departed, leaving him half dead. (KJV)

Now, this is a serious wound or wounds.

31) And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: ... (KJV)

Remember, this is the road between Jerusalem and the city of priests. He was going the same direction as this man; going down.

*31b) ... and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.
32) And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. (KJV)*

He took a gander, but didn't do anything.

Adam Clark's Commentary says this:

Priest and Levite are mentioned here partly because they were the most frequent travelers on this road and partly to show that these were the persons who, from the nature of their office, were most obliged to perform works of mercy, and from whom a person in distress had a right to expect immediate comfort and their inhuman conduct here was a flat breach of the law.

They should have stopped and helped. Priest, Levite should have done it. Now, Clark says it was a breach of the law. What law? Let's go to Deuteronomy 22:1-4. This is the law and we're going to see that this law pertains specifically to animals but then what about human beings?

Deuteronomy 22:1. *Thou shalt not see the brother's ox or his sheep go astray ... (KJV)*

Let's stop here. The Hebrew word for "brother" has a very broad application. It is not just a blood brother. It's not necessarily referring to somebody that you are related to in your family.

1b) ... and hide thyself from them: ... (KJV)

This is what the Levite did and the priest did.

*1 continued) ... thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.
2) And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again.
3) In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself. (KJV)*

The implication is to hide from helping your brother.

4) Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again. (KJV)

This is the law about animals, but what about human beings? It should apply much more to human beings by extension. This was the law that was being referred to. Continue in Luke 10:33-35.

Luke 10:33. *But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, (KJV)*

Clark says this. "He couldn't expect any help from this Samaritan." We'll get into the enmity and how it happened shortly.

34) And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35) And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. (KJV)

Christ ended this parable and it had to be a shock and an insult to the Jews because Christ portrayed a hated Samaritan as fulfilling the commandments while portraying the Jews, the Levites and priests, as circumventing the commandments. With this background let's see why Christ shocked the Jews. The title of this sermon is

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Christ gave this parable for a reason and he wants us to learn from this example.

1. Who were the Samaritans and why did the Jews hate them so much?

The first thing we want to do is answer that question. To grasp the full importance of this story of the Good Samaritan we have to understand the times that existed in first century Judea. We must understand the relationship between the Samaritans and the Jews. It's very important.

Historically, approximately seven hundred and fifty years prior to Christ giving this parable Assyria conquered the northern ten tribes. It was Assyria's policy when they would conquer a nation what they would do is take the residents of that nation captive. They would not leave them in place and they would ship them out and scatter them throughout their empire. The reason being if you scatter the people and don't let them come together, they are less likely to rebel; a few over here, a few over there are less likely to get together and rebel. That was their policy. Guess what happened? They did that but they had to fill the land, because they needed farmers and orchardists and all of that so what they did is to import other captives from other nations that they had conquered and sent them into Samaria. What happened over these seven hundred and fifty years is that these Gentiles that came in intermarried with the Israelites that were still remaining there. They didn't send all of them out. So, you had Gentiles intermarrying with Israelites for several centuries. Therefore, the Samaritans, those that occupied the land of the former ten tribes were a mixed race. They weren't pure, as the

Jews looked at themselves as racially pure. The people shipped in by the Assyrians were pagans. They brought their religious beliefs into Samaria, the area that the northern ten tribes used to populate. So, they had a polluted mixture of religion. They had some truth and some error. Therefore, the Jews despised the Samaritans because of race and religion. They looked down their noses on them as inferior.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary says this (note the vehemence of the hatred):

A Samaritan was one excommunicated by the Jews, a byword among them synonymous with a heretic and a devil.

The Benson Commentary says this:

Favors from a Samaritan had always been represented as an abomination to the Jews, more detestable than eating of swine's flesh.

If you allowed a Samaritan to do you a favor, it was the equivalent of eating pigs.

Matthew Henry's Commentary says this:

They would not put an Israelite to death for killing a Gentile for he was not his neighbor. They indeed say that they ought not to kill a Gentile whom they were not at war with, but if they saw a Gentile in danger of death they thought themselves under no obligation to help to save his life.

We can see how perverted the Jew's religion had become at the time of Jesus Christ.

John Lightfoot's Bible Commentary quotes a Jewish interpretation of scripture.

Where he says you shall love your neighbor he excepts all Gentiles for they are not our neighbors, but those only that are of our own nation and religion.

If you weren't a pure Jew and if you didn't adhere to the Law of Moses, you were not a neighbor and you were under no obligation to help anybody who was not. We have seen that in our lifetime. The Nazis and the Japanese in World War II viewed their enemies as sub-human. The Nazis viewed the Russians as sub-human. The Japanese viewed the white man and the Chinese as sub-human. The Jews did exactly the same thing to the Samaritans. So, we see here in this first point the enmity between the two and this is how it occurred.

2. Christ used this parable to define who our neighbor is.

We have no excuse not knowing who our neighbor is. Let's look at the context of the parable. Turn to Luke 10:25-30. This is how the parable came to be.

Luke 10:25. *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him ... (KJV)*

The Greek word for “tempted” means *tested*.

25b) ... saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? (KJV)

That’s the question for all of us. Notice Christ’s answer.

26) He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27) And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul [being], and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28) And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29) But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? (KJV)

Now we’re getting to the nitty gritty, because Christ defines who a neighbor is.

30) And Jesus answering said ... (KJV)

Clark says the word “answering” can mean *took him up*, meaning he took him up on the fact that this guy was trying to get out of fulfilling his obligations as a neighbor.

30b) ... A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho ... (KJV)

So, this parable, you see, is answering the question, who is my neighbor? The Greek word for “neighbor” here is Strong’s number 4139 and it’s pronounced *plesion*. Zodhiates in his Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament says this about this word, “generally a fellow man, any other member of the human family.” That’s what it means. He cites Luke 10:27, which we just quoted, taken from Leviticus 19:18 which the Jews knew. They should have been obeying it and Christ is taking them to account.

Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words says, “Neighbor is anyone in need whom you can help.” He quotes Luke 10:36-37. Let’s turn there, because Christ is defining who a neighbor is. This is after the parable.

Luke 10:36. *Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?*

37) And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (KJV)

That is a commandment for us today and for them at that time. Now the Good Samaritan was traveling in Judea between Jerusalem and Jericho. That means he was far removed from where he lived. So the people around him were not local neighbors. They were people he probably had never met in his life. With that in mind let’s turn to Ephesians 4:25. What does the New Testament tell us? What does Paul tell us about

members of the human race? He is talking about having a relationship with our neighbor.

Ephesians 4:25. *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. (KJV)*

You see, ultimately all humans that have ever lived are our neighbors and will be our brothers and sisters. The Samaritan viewed a man who despised him and who hated him as a neighbor and provided comfort and help and probably saved his life.

There will come a time when all humans will be neighbors. Let's turn to Micah 4:1 and 3 looking into the future when men will live in peace. Men will be neighbors one to another.

Micah 4:1. *But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord ... (KJV)*

That's God Almighty. That's YHVH. It is His house.

1b) ... shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

3) And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (KJV)

People will be neighbors. Nations will be neighbors and the hate and the enmity between nations and races will go away through the power of God's holy spirit. Let's go to Ephesians 2:19 and see one final scripture about who our neighbors are.

Ephesians 2:19. *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners ... (KJV)*

Once we are converted, once we have God's holy spirit we are no more strangers and foreigners.

19b) ... but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; (KJV)

That tells us that in the future when God's spirit flows to all mankind, all mankind will be fellow citizens. All mankind will be of the household of God.

Now the problem is that even in God's church many back in the Worldwide Church of God days implied only those who were converted were our neighbors. I was told one time by my first minister never ever stop and help somebody by the side of the road. You could get mugged. You could get killed and so on and so forth. If that's the case then how do you reconcile that statement with the parable that we just read? The

Samaritan had every right to go by, because this man lying in the ditch hated him, but he didn't do that. He stopped and provided help.

Obviously, if we stop by the side of the road we have to use wisdom. We have to be very careful and especially if you are a woman by yourself late at night, anything like that. Obviously, wisdom comes into play there. Today some groups of the church of God say that you are a neighbor only if you are a member of their group. Think about that. They are doing the same today as the Jews did back in Christ's day and that is an utter fallacy. It is not supported by scripture one whit.

So this parable proves who our neighbor is and it proves that even an imagined enemy could be a good neighbor in the case of the Samaritan.

3. That being the case how do we manifest our love to our neighbor? Do we have some guiding principles on how that should work?

Let's go to Romans 13:8-10. This is an excellent part of scripture that tells us how we should manifest our love to our neighbor.

Romans 13:8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; ... (KJV)*

This is mimicking the words of Jesus Christ.

8b ... for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. (KJV)

Now in verse 9 we see how that is done.

9) For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery ... (KJV)

That involves your neighbor. That involves harming a neighbor.

9b) ... Thou shalt not kill ... (KJV)

That involves a neighbor.

9 continued) ... Thou shalt not steal ... (KJV)

That also involves a neighbor.

9 continued) ... Thou shalt not bear false witness ... (KJV)

That involves a neighbor.

9 continued) ... Thou shalt not covet; ... (KJV)

All of these involve our neighbor.

9 continued) ... and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (KJV)

To the degree we love ourselves that's the degree we should love our neighbor.

10) Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (KJV)

A couple in the local church group has farmland not far from here. They have neighbors who are also farmers. You could have two attitudes in that situation. You could view your neighbors as competitors. We're farming. They're farming. We're going after the same markets, therefore they are my enemy. They're my competitor. There's only a limited market and we want our share and so we're going to elbow them out of the way and we're not going to help them at all. Or you could say, hey our neighbors are our brothers and sisters and we have the same occupation. Why don't we help each other? That's the exactly what this couple does. They swap labor. They swap equipment. When they are off to the Feast the neighbor comes in and does whatever is necessary. When the neighbor has to go somewhere or do something, they go on his or her land and help them out. That is being a good neighbor.

The question is: Should we help somebody by the side of the road, because I was told you shouldn't? One time I was in my shorts and t-shirt and I was driving down the freeway going to the gym. I took the off-ramp and there was a car stopped about halfway up the off -ramp. It was a Ford as I recall and the hood was up. There were two elderly folks there. I would say they were in their early eighties. There was also a younger woman, who I just assumed would be a daughter. They were all standing outside the car with the hood up. As usual, everybody was scratching their head, looking under the hood waiting for something to happen and it didn't happen. So, I pulled over and asked them what happened. The car died. It was obviously in our home town. I knew where the Ford dealer was, so I had my cell phone and called the Ford dealer. He said, yes, give us five minutes and we'll have a tow truck on the way. They were greatly relieved, because they were very worried. They were going somewhere in Oregon, a long way down the road. They didn't know what to do. You could tell the mom and dad had their stomachs in knots. What are we going to do? Somebody's going to rob us or something like that. So, I waited until the tow truck arrived and then they were on their way and they felt so much better. We feel even better when we see that somebody is safely taken care of.

The question is: Should we stop? As I said earlier, we need to use wisdom, because sometimes it's a scam. They could have somebody lying beside the side of the road and then they have a guy with a gun in the bushes and you could be in trouble. We just have to use wisdom and be careful. One time Dorothy stopped out in the middle of nowhere and picked up a guy that was just walking down the road. She was a young

woman in her twenties. After he got in the car she realized that this is probably not a good idea, because she didn't know who this guy was; didn't know anything about him.

What about those that you see on the street corners with a sign that says hungry, or lost my job or need help or something like that? The fact is that most of those are professional beggars. That is their job. That is what they do. That's how they earn their money. For me they are selling a product and I refuse to buy the product. In many cases it is supplying money for drugs. I can remember one time I stopped and said, hey do you want a meal? No, he didn't want a meal. He wanted money. Okay, we're not going to fall for that.

Dorothy and I watched the news last night. There was a married couple in Houston. She drove past this bridge every day going to work. My guess is that she is in her mid to late thirties. There was a man sitting by the side of the road in the grass. It was in a kind of industrial area. She said I kept my windows rolled up and kept right on going. Every day she would see this guy. He was just sitting there. So, finally it bugged her, she said. She stopped and rolled the window down and said, how are you doing and what's your name? She kept the door locked and all, but she talked to him. They had a one or two minute conversation and then she left. She would come back and talk to him about once a week, she said. Over a few months she felt just a little bit better about the situation. She had never had him in the car; had never taken him anywhere, but she had seen him almost every day. She could see that he lived under a bridge not far away. It was in December and it was cold. She was feeling guilty. She was thinking he's out there freezing to death. She looked at her husband and said what about we go get this guy. The husband had never met him. He said she asked me to go get this guy and bring him into our house and I don't even know this guy. So, he said if my wife felt strongly enough about that we're going to do it. They went and got him, took him into their home, gave him a shower, put him in a bed and guess what? He's still living with them. She teaches at a school on how to cook and she employed him in the school just doing general maintenance. They interviewed the guy and he was a little slow, but he was sweet and kind and nice. You talk about a Good Samaritan. To this day he has two jobs. He still lives in their home and they just love him like a son. He is of a different race than they are. This is an unusual situation, but it is a principle that they applied and they were blessed for it.

We use the same example in some ways in the church, because we have situations where kids are going hungry because the father blows the money. What do you do? If you give them money it's going to be gone and nobody is going to be benefitted. What we have done in the past is to ship fifty pound bags of beans and potatoes; spend the money for that and we know they'll be fed. The fact is that there are various ways of showing love to our neighbor other than just throwing money at a situation. The point is if we see somebody in true need we should do like the Samaritan did. Giving them help solves a real, true need.

4. We can't look down on or condemn other people.

That's what the Jews did in despising the Samaritans. Let's turn to John 8:47-48. Christ here is rebuking the Pharisees. He is getting on them. The whole chapter of Matthew 23 is a good example of Him getting on them.

John 8:47. *He that is of God heareth God's words: ... (KJV)*

We pay attention to what God tells us.

*47b) ... ye therefore hear them [Pharisees] not, because ye are not of God.
48) Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou [Christ] art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? (KJV)*

That was the worst epithet a Jew could hurl at anybody and they're doing this to Jesus Christ. Look at what the apostle James says about this, talking in general, but we can apply it to the Pharisees here in James 4:11. This is something that all of us have to learn. I catch myself every once in a while not doing the right thing.

James 4:11. *Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. (KJV)*

The Greek word here for "judge" or "judges" is Strong's number 2919. It is the Greek word *krino*, which means *to distinguish either mentally or judicial and by implication it means to try* (to put on trial), *to condemn somebody or to punish somebody*. So, what we're reading here in James 4 is not judging between good and evil, or right or wrong. We have to do that every day. It is in the sense of condemning another human being, putting them on trial, punishing them because of who and what they are and today particularly about race or religion or something like that. Look at Christ's example in this area. Let's go to John 4:3-29. This involves again the area of Samaria.

John 4:3. *He [Christ] left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.
4) And he must needs go through Samaria. (KJV)*

Josephus says that going from Jerusalem to Galilee through Samaria was a three day journey.

5) Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar ... (JV)

Sychar is about forty miles north of Jerusalem. I looked up the name "Sychar" and do you know what it means? It means *drunken*. The commentaries say it was named Sychar because of the conduct of the people in the city, so it must have been a pretty wild city. Anciently it had a different name which you will probably recognize, which was Shechem. It is situated at the foot of Mount Gerizim. We will talk about that shortly.

5b) ... near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. (KJV)

If you want to read about that later, that is in Genesis 48. You see Jacob bought a field from the children of Hamor. The father of the children of Hamor was Shechem. He did so for a hundred pieces of silver. You can check that in Genesis 33.

6) Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. (KJV)

It was about noon, starting to get hot probably. This well was apparently dug by Jacob for the family use and for public use.

7) There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8) (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, asketh drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. (KJV)

This is for the reasons we have already discussed. She was shocked.

10) Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11) The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? (KJV)

She is missing his point entirely. She doesn't really know what he is talking about. She is using a term of respect. Then she asks a question.

12) Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? (KJV)

Remember, the Samaritan religion was a mixture of the Pentateuch and paganism. That's why she identified herself with her father Jacob because of that mixture. They read the first five books of the Bible, but it was mixed with all kinds of pagan beliefs.

13) Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14) But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (KJV)

Now all of a sudden he's not talking about the physical water at the bottom of the well.

15) *The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. (KJV)*

Notice what Jesus does just out of the blue.

16) *Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. (KJV)*

You see, Christ knew that she was living in sin. She didn't have a clue that he knew this.

17) *The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:*

18) *For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. (KJV)*

It was true even though she didn't tell him the whole truth. It is not likely that this woman buried five husbands. That's way against the odds. It's not like Christ is showing sympathy for her because she buried five husbands. Most likely she had either left some of the husbands; maybe they were abusive or something like that or she has been divorced by husbands for whatever reason, or separated from five men. The sixth man she was living with outside of marriage. It kind of sounds like what's going on in the world today, particularly in the United States.

19) *The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. (KJV)*

This man she had never met now is telling her he knows everything about her. Now Christ has this woman's attention.

20) *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain ... (KJV)*

Remember, they are at the foot of Mount Gerizim. There was a Samaritan pagan temple on the top of Mount Gerizim. It was built by Sanballat, who was a governor of Samaria after he was unable to stop the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem in Nehemiah's day. What Sanballat did was build a competing temple on the top of Mount Gerizim so that the people from Samaria would not go down to Jerusalem, but they would stay there and they would have control of the people. The woman goes on.

20b) *... and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men [the Jews] ought to worship.*

21) *Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. (KJV)*

Christ is making a point that it is the Father that we are to worship. Christ is the son. He said we should worship the Father. Now he says to the woman.

22) *Ye worship ye know not what ... (KJV)*

This is because of the mixture of paganism into their beliefs.

22b) ... we know what we worship: ... (KJV)

This means we worship the Father.

22 continued) ... for salvation is of the Jews.

23) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth ... (KJV)

You see, Christ is ushering in the coming of the holy spirit and the holy spirit leads us into truth and prevents us from going into error and the Jews' religion of the day was so polluted and so perverted that it was not far off from the Samaritan religion as far as drifting off from the truth, in a different way of course.

23b) ... for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24) God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (KJV)

He has repeated it twice now.

25) The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh ... (KJV)

“Messiah” is a Hebrew word meaning *anointed*.

25b) ... which is called Christ ... (KJV)

That's the Greek word meaning *anointed*.

25 continued) ... when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26) Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

27) And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman ... (KJV)

They marveled that he was even talking to this Samaritan woman. They couldn't get it. Yet, because of their respect for Christ or maybe even a little fear of Christ:

27b) ... yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? (KJV)

You see, this is early in the disciples' calling and I think it's obvious from this comment that they still had prejudice in their hearts towards Samaritans. They hadn't been taught yet, hadn't gotten over it yet.

28) *The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,*
29) *Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? KJV)*

This has to be the Christ, she says. So, the message for us in the context of what we are talking about today is even though this woman was a Samaritan, Christ treated her without prejudice. He did not condemn her even though she was living in sin. You see, her mind was not yet opened and she was not responsible. Christ could have used a rod of iron, ripped into her up one side and down the other, shamed her, made her feel bad. He didn't do that at all. He showed her kindness and gentleness and he understood that she didn't know. She didn't have his holy spirit.

You remember the woman caught in the act of adultery when they were trying to set up Christ. The leaders were trying to trick him. Notice how Christ treated this woman. Turn to John 8:2-11.

John 8:2. *And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.*
3) *And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,*
4) *They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. (KJV)*

This was a plot. It is a terrible coincidence, isn't it? If this just happened to happen when he happened to be in the temple, and happened to be sitting around., and they just happened to find somebody committing adultery, and they drag this woman in front of Jesus Christ. Where is the man? Adultery takes two. Why didn't they bring the man? Well, this was a setup, obviously. Here is how they are trying to trick him.

5) *Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such [this woman] should be stoned: but what sayest thou?*
6) *This they said, tempting [testing] him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.*
7) *So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*
8) *And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. (KJV)*

I think it's obvious that they could see what he wrote. My guess is it was names, dates and places of their sins.

9) *And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience ... (KJV)*

They realized they were sinners probably more so than this woman.

9b) ... went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10) When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?

11) She said, No man, Lord. ... (KJV)

My suspicion is that she was realizing this was not some regular guy. This man was special, maybe even the Messiah. Maybe she was afraid he was going to condemn her, too.

11b) ... And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. (KJV)

He said just don't do it again. Straighten your life up. Follow God. So Christ, you see, set the example. You see, if we condemn people because they're not like us, doing so will leave us lying in the ditch just like this Jew was lying in the ditch, just like in this parable. If we condemn others, we're going to lie in the ditch and we're going to ultimately wind up in a lake of fire.

5. This parable is there to show us how the Jews behaved in Christ's day and to teach us that we can't follow the Jews' example.

We dare not follow that example. You see, when Christ first started telling the example of the Good Samaritan, the listeners would all have expected the Jew to be the hero because of the way that they looked at themselves. They were above everybody. Instead they were really shocked because the hero was the hated Samaritan. He was the one that they looked down on and despised. Today, instead of Samaritan we could say unconverted. The truth is, if we're honest with ourselves, all of us have seen the unconverted behave better than some people in the church. In decades past, scorn was heaped on the unconverted. That was wrong. It was because of their unconverted behavior. Oh, they are doing this and they're doing that. This and that and the other is going on. Well, Christ just said don't sin again. He didn't condemn this woman. You see, unconverted behavior is because, in both of these cases, they weren't called. It wasn't their time. They didn't have God's holy spirit. So, in the past sometimes we were guilty of looking down upon the unconverted. Therefore, if we look down on somebody, we place ourselves above them, just like the Jews placed themselves above the Samaritan.

I have told it once before. I remember at a ministerial conference a minister describing how he flew out of a town in Canada, was flying up over the city and was thinking about God's wrath and retribution, the Day of the Lord. He said, "I said in a low voice 'goodbye suckers.'" Christ wouldn't do that, because they don't know. They are not responsible. Shame on us when we see unconverted people behaving better than us, who are we to condemn them? In this parable God wants us to show mercy to all people.

Remember, the Samaritan, as I said earlier, was far from his home. He was in a land where people hated him. Yet, he showed mercy on the very race of people that hated him.

Let me read from the Benson Commentary.

Because they [referring to the Jews] prayed daily in his temple and offered sacrifices there and carried about his precepts written on their phylacteries and had God and the law always in their mouths, they made no doubt but they worshipped God acceptably notwithstanding they were so enormously wicked that they would not put themselves to the smallest expense or trouble though they could have saved a life by it and therefore had no real love to God or their neighbor.

This is absolutely true. Look at what God says. Let's go to Hosea 6:6. This is what God desires of us. Our Father is telling us two things that are very important in this verse. One applies directly to the subject at hand today.

Hosea 6:6. *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; ... (KJV)*

The Jews were sacrificing all of these animals and yet they would not show mercy to a Samaritan.

6b) ... and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (KJV)

Knowing who God is, who Jesus Christ is that's more important than all of the burnt offerings that somebody can make. The Jews were making offerings and they didn't understand the God they were making offerings to. They didn't know who He was. We know that based on their behavior and their teachings. You see, the Father sent the son to set an example. Let's go to Luke 17:11-18. This is another example involving Samaria.

Luke 17:11. *And it came to pass, as he [Christ] went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.*

12) And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: (KJV)

They were quarantined. They were looked down upon. They were segregated, for medical reasons too.

13) And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. (KJV)

Christ could have said, ah, you are lepers, you are Samaritans, you are this or you are that and I am not going to show you mercy. Notice what he did.

- 14) *And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.*
- 15) *And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,*
- 16) *And fell down on his face at his [Christ's] feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.*
- 17) *And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?*
- 18) *There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*
(KJV)

He was a stranger because he was a leper, but he was even more of a stranger because he was a Samaritan. He was a stranger to the Jews. The Jews say you don't belong to us. We don't want anything to do with you. Christ said this stranger, this Samaritan, glorified God and the other nine did not. You see, Christ showed mercy and this Samaritan was the only one who was thankful. Again, this shows who our neighbor is. Christ is making a further point. The message for us today is when God shows us mercy; boy we should be thankful, because we don't deserve anything. You see, the Jews looked at the Samaritan and said, "You don't deserve anything. You are subhuman." God called the weak of the world and we should be so thankful for our calling and for God's mercy. We see here that a Samaritan did what the Jews refused to do in this example of giving thanks and also in the example of the Good Samaritan. The fact is we are spiritual Jews and we had better follow the example of Christ and not the example of the physical Jews and what they did to the Samaritans. We should follow the example also of the Good Samaritan.

Let's go to James 2:14-17. Here we are talking about works. It's not a matter of just talking. As we read earlier in the Benson's Commentary, the Jews just talked about God all of the time. They had the phylacteries, the little box in front of their forehead with all of the commandments written on it. They had this outward show, but James says:

- James 2:14.** *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?*
- 15) *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,*
- 16) *And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; ...*
(KJV)

What was it? The queen of France right before the revolution said, "Let them eat cake." They were starving. That was how far she was removed from the plight of the common man or woman.

- 16b) *... notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*
- 17) *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. (KJV)*

Let's go to the last scripture under this fifth point in 1 John 3:14-16. As I said before probably fifteen years ago, I read this scripture once and it was as though I read it for the first time. I just had read right over it all of those years.

1 John 3:14. *We know that we have passed from death unto life ... (KJV)*

Boy, we all want to know how.

14b) ... because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. (KJV)

The priest and the Levite that walked past the guy in the ditch didn't love their brother and he was probably a blood brother in the sense he was at least a Jew, probably a Levite. The Samaritan viewed him as a brother and fulfilled that obligation.

15) Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16) Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: ... (KJV)

Christ is God and Christ laid down his life. God he gave his life and the Father surrendered His son to death.

16b) ... and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17) But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? (KJV)

So, this last point is that we have to follow Christ's example and we have to follow the example of the Good Samaritan and not the example of the Jews.

Let's conclude now. The parable of the Good Samaritan is a parable of life, not death. Let's go to Luke 9:51-56. This again involves Samaritans.

Luke 9:51. *And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,*

52) And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53) And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54) And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? (KJV)

Look at the disciples' reaction. They were probably rubbing their hands together because they wanted to see the spectacle and they wanted to have the power and rule with a rod of iron. Notice Christ's reaction.

55) But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. (KJV)

That's Satan's spirit. That's not God's spirit.

56) For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village. (KJV)

That's the attitude all of us should have toward all mankind. Look at what is prophesied for us today. Turn to 2 Timothy 3:1-2 and 5, a very familiar scripture. This is the world we live in. These are the influences that come upon us.

2 Timothy 3:1. *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2) For men shall be lovers of their own selves ... (KJV)*

The Levite and the priest that walked past the man in the ditch were lovers of their own selves. They couldn't be troubled. They didn't want to take the time. They knew it might cost some money and they were lovers of their own selves.

2b) ... covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers ... (KJV)

In a sense we blaspheme God when we know His commandments and do the opposite.

2 continued) ... disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

... 5) having a form of godliness ... (KJV)

You see, the Jews, as Benson's Commentary said, had the phylacteries. They were talking about God. They had the robes, all of this kind of stuff. They had a form of godliness, but they weren't godly. Christ called them out on that.

5b) ... but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (KJV)

What is *the power thereof*? That's the holy spirit, because we know the holy spirit is a spirit of power. They had a form of godliness, but it didn't translate into deeds. With God's holy spirit in us we should have the deeds to demonstrate to God that we want to follow Him. The fact is compassion should have no boundaries, no limits. It shouldn't be limited just to church brethren. It shouldn't be limited if you live in the south to southerners, or Yankees if you live in the northeast or something like that.

Let me read from the author of a commentary and I neglected to get his name, but he says something profound. "He who gives outward things gives something external to

himself.” We can throw money at a problem or something like that. “But he who imparts compassion and tears gives him something from his very self.” When we have compassion and our heart goes out to somebody and we shed tears over somebody, we are giving something from inside ourselves. You see, that’s what God wants. Let’s go to one final scripture in Isaiah 58:6-8. The context is a fast. God is trying to show us what the purpose of a fast should be and what we should be doing with our lives and having a fast to help us along that way.

Isaiah 58:6. *Is not this the fast that I have chosen? ... (KJV)*

Okay, what should the fast be? What should the goal be?

6b) ... to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? (KJV)

Isn’t this the purpose of it, God is saying?

7) Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? ... (KJV)

That’s what that couple did with that young man.

7b) ... when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; ... (KJV)

That’s what the Samaritan did. He took this man to an inn, because he was far from home.

7 continued) ... and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? (KJV)

God is telling us this. It means you don’t hide from your fellow human being in need. If we have this attitude and this approach:

8) Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. (KJV)

What a blessing. What lesson do we learn from the parable of the Good Samaritan? We have to incorporate the lessons into our very being, the lessons of the Good Samaritan and what that teaches us and make it part of our very lives.