

February 11th, 2024 – (full sermon notes)
“**God’s Children Should be Merciful**”
Luke 10:30-37

Recap from Luke 10:25-29...

Of all the questions to be asked, this is the most important to hear and understand, because every human soul lives forever; for although our bodies die, our souls live on for eternity, either in heaven or in hell.

What does God require of you in order to inherit eternal life?

Luke 10:27, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”

In **Matthew 22:37-40** Jesus said, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ *On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.*”

In **Mark 12:30-31** Jesus answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ *There is no other commandment greater than these.*”

So, if you want to inherit eternal life, all you have to do is love God totally, with your whole being (heart, soul, mind and strength, and love your neighbor just as you love yourself, with your whole being (heart, soul, mind, and strength).

Notice (**Luke 10:28**), Jesus affirms the man’s response, saying to him “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.” It would seem from the man’s next question that he is not confident he has qualified to inherit eternal life (**Luke 10:29**), “But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’” In other words, the man is asking, exactly who do I have to love in this way, as myself, who specifically is my neighbor?

What a great question! Let’s turn to our text and learn the answer.

Read Luke 10:30-37... By showing our love for God and for other people (defined here as our neighbor), we show that we have received forgiveness for our sins and that we have eternal life from God.

Jesus explains to this lawyer the true meaning of loving your neighbor, and just who your neighbor is, by telling him a parable (Note: a parable is not a story about real people, it is a made up story meant to convey a moral or spiritual truth).

“God’s Children Should be Merciful”

Luke 10:30-37

Ultra-orthodox Jews, e.g., Pharisees, Lawyers, Scribes, Priests and Levites, consider themselves righteous because they are descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and therefore sons of God; members of the Nation of Israel which was established through the twelve sons of Jacob (cf. **Genesis 25:19-26**), whose name means, “heal catcher; one who supplants, usurps, replaces]; but God changed Jacob’s name to Israel (“one who struggles with God,” **Genesis 32:28**, “for you have striven [struggled] with God and with men and have prevailed.”)

Let’s go back to the lawyer’s question in **Luke 10:29**, “who, exactly, is my neighbor,” i.e., “who do I have to love as myself?”

Jesus now uses a parable to express how all those who have received eternal life, those genuinely born of God’s Spirit, will obey the greatest and foremost commandment: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. ”

Look at Luke 10:30-32... A man was going down the road from Jerusalem (2500 ft above sea level) to Jericho (900 ft below sea level). Most likely this man is a Jew, as most of those who would be going from Jerusalem to Jericho would be of the nation of Israel, unless otherwise stated.

This road was very steep and treacherous, and there were caves and rock outcroppings that provided hiding places for robbers. Evidently, this man was attacked by robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and left him half dead.

Along comes a priest (a Jew), a “servant of God” who carried out sacrifices and offerings at the Temple. You would expect a priest to help this man who is in need; for a priest should be of the highest virtue, morally and spiritually, and yet, he passes by on the other side of the road, offering no aide to the man.

Jesus then introduces another traveler who was going down the road, a Levite (also a Jew), another servant of God who assisted the priests in their work at the temple. Surely the Levite would help someone in need; but he doesn’t, he too passes by on the other side of the road, unwilling to help this man.

By failing to help the man, who is clearly in need of mercy, both the priest and the Levite fail to express God’s love to the man (a fellow Jew), who is a neighbor by God’s reckoning, yet they fail to express love, let alone compassion, to the man.

“God’s Children Should be Merciful”

Luke 10:30-37

Look at Luke 10:33-35... Jesus introduces a third traveler, a Samaritan who is on a journey [a long trip]. Going down the road he comes upon the man who has been robbed and beaten. But now we find a totally different response to the man in need of help, and instead of passing by on the other side of the road, he goes to the man and takes care of him. He bandages the man’s wounds, pouring oil and wine on the abrasions and bruises to sooth and disinfect them.

This is amazing, because the Jews had been at enmity with the Samaritans for over 700 years, referring to them as dogs and half-breeds; and yet, this Samaritan tends the man’s wounds (most likely a Jewish man), and then puts the injured man on his own donkey or mule and takes him to an inn, where he takes care of him through the night and (**verse 35**), “the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.’”

Wow! What an example of Godly love; the Samaritan didn’t just tend to the man’s immediate needs, but offered to pay whatever was necessary for the man to receive good care until he returned from completing his journey.

Look at Luke 10:36-37... Jesus now gets to the foremost truth of this parable; answering the original question of the lawyer (**verse 29**), “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus answers the question with a parable about a man who is beaten, robbed, and left half dead along the road. Jesus tells how three different men come upon this man, at different times, and how each one of them responds to him.

Jesus then asks the lawyer (**verse 36**), “Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ *hands*?” The lawyer replied (**verse 37a**), “The one who showed mercy toward him.” To which Jesus said to him (**verse 37b**), “Go and do the same.”

Wow! The sovereign priority truth of this parable is a summation of all of the Law and the writings of the Prophets, i.e., the foremost greatest commandment of God, that fulfills all the requirements of God in order to have eternal life, is to be merciful to those who are in need, no matter who they are, whether they are a one time acquaintance or a life-long friend, whether they are an ally or an enemy, whether they are someone who is good to us or someone who persecutes us — all those who have been born-again by God are God’s children, and they will seek to act accordingly, in love, in all situations, for this sums up the requirements of God. **Luke 10:27**, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind (*cf. Deuteronomy 6:5*); and [you shall love] “your neighbor as yourself” (*cf. Leviticus 19:18*).

“God’s Children Should be Merciful”

Luke 10:30-37

Jesus said (**Matthew 22:40**), “*On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets,*” (**Mark 12:31**), “*There is no other commandment greater than these.*” **James 2:8** records, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” as “the royal law” [lit. The Law of the King], this is the greatest and foremost teaching, fulfilling all of “the Law and the writings of the Prophets,” summed up by Jesus who is the “King of kings and Lord of lords” (cf. **1Timothy 6:15**).

The problem is that no one, by human effort or capacity, can receive or give God’s love [Gk. *agapao*]; although, a person may give or receive brotherly or friendship love [Gk. *philia*], or even familial love [Gk. *storge*]; but in order to love God or to love another person on God’s behalf, with God’s love, you must be born-again by God’s Spirit.

See 1John 4:7-15... God is Love. A person cannot exhibit God’s love [Gk. *agapao*] if they have not been born-again spiritually, as a child of God.

Deoxyribonucleic acid (or DNA) is the organic chemical that contains genetic information and instructions for the development of every cell in your body. DNA is the key part of human reproduction in which genetic heredity (all that makes you human) is passed on from parent to child.

In similar fashion, only God’s children, those born-again by the Spirit of God, can legitimately imitate, let alone demonstrate, God the Father’s unconditional, sacrificial, divine (*agapao*) love.

All true Christians have received God’s Love, God’s DNA (*Agapao love*); we have inherited, through spiritual birth, the very presence of God (**2Peter 1:3-4**), “His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature.”

We have received God’s unconditional and eternal love through Jesus Christ, made effectual by God the Holy Spirit (cf. **2Corinthians 5:17**), “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come,” **21**, “He [God the Father] made Him [God the Son] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

1Corinthians 13:4-8a, “Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.”

February 11th, 2024 – (full sermon notes)

“God’s Children Should be Merciful”

Luke 10:30-37

Genuine belief in Jesus Christ will be exemplified in and through the manner in which we love others, i.e., without partiality or favoritism, just as God mercifully loves us (**Ephesians 5:1-2**), “Be imitators of God, as [dearly] loved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

In **Luke 10:25** Jesus was asked the question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” He answered by telling a parable, about a man who needed to receive mercy, and the responses of three different men who came upon him separately, in his time of great need, and only one of them showed mercy by helping him.

It is not a question of who we must love in order to inherit eternal life; but that we should be gracious, merciful, and loving to all people, without partiality, and especially to those who are in need of mercy, like the man in Jesus’ parable.

Jesus said **Matthew 5:7**, “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.” **Luke 6:31**, “Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.” **36**, “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

All Christians, genuine believers and followers of Jesus Christ, should be merciful toward others, just as God is merciful toward all those who call upon Him for the forgiveness of their sins and eternal life.

John 3:16, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

Romans 10:13, “for ‘Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’” 17, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

John 20:31, “These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have [eternal] life in His name.”

And all of God’s children said, Amen! If you are here today, or listening at home, or if you read or listen to this at a later time, and you are not sure of your salvation — please, contact me, so that I may help you know, in your heart, that you have forgiveness for your sins and eternal life.

Pastor Mike Hale

>'(((><