

EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK OF LUKE

Group Bible Study 3

GOOD SAMARITAN (1)

VERSES TO READ:

Luke 10

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?

26 And He said to him, What is written in the law? How do you read it?

27 And he answered and said, "You shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

28 And He said to him, You have answered correctly; do this, and you shall have life.

29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

30 Jesus, taking up the question, said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who having both stripped him and beaten him, went away, leaving him half dead.

31 And by coincidence a certain priest was going down on that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.

32 And likewise also a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, who was journeying, came upon him; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion;

34 And he came to him and bound up his wounds and poured oil and wine on them. And placing him on his own beast, he brought him

to an inn and took care of him.

35 And on the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition to this, when I return, I will repay you.

36 Which of these three, does it seem to you, has become a neighbor to him who fell into the hands of the robbers?

37 And he said, The one who showed mercy to him. And Jesus said to him, Go, and you do likewise.

DISCOVERY PORTION:

Luke 10:25 begins, "And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?" His question was wrong. This man was wrong in his profession, wrong in his motive, wrong in his intention, wrong in his understanding of the Lord, and wrong in the question he asked.

He asked, "What should I do to inherit eternal life?" What did the Lord Jesus say? "And He said to him, What is written in the law?" You are a lawyer. You should know what the law says. "How do you read it?" Something may be written in the law. But man can be wrong in reading it. "And he answered and said." He answered what the law says, and how he read it. "You shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself." This lawyer was well acquainted with the law. He knew that the sum of the law is to love God with our whole

heart, our whole soul, our whole strength, and our whole mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. He could sum up the whole law in one sentence. This was an intelligent man. Some ask because they do not understand; they come humbly to be taught. Some ask because they understand; they want to show you how much they understand. The man could recite it by heart. He knew it long ago. That was why he recited them immediately. When he answered this way, the Lord told him to do it and he would be able to have eternal life.

We need to understand why the Lord Jesus said that we should love God with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole strength, and our whole mind. Thank the Lord that the Bible is indeed the revelation of God. There is absolutely no mistake in it. If this passage beginning from Luke 10:25 ended with verse 28, the truths of the Bible would contradict one another. If that were the case, man would have to love God with his whole heart, his whole soul, his whole strength, and his whole mind. None of these four "whole's" could be missing. But if that were the case, no one could ever be saved.

With nothing else to ask, the lawyer asked who his neighbor was. He seemed to say, "You are saying that I have to love my neighbor as myself, but who is my neighbor?" From verse 30 on, the Lord told him who his neighbor was. He began to tell him a story.

This story is one of the most common and familiar stories in the church. This man went

from the place of peace to the place of a curse. Jerusalem means peace, and Jericho means a curse. This man was in a downhill condition. He met robbers on the way. It was not one robber, but a whole gang of robbers, who took away all he had, stripped him of his garments, and left him with no outward covering at all. They beat him until he was half dead; he was wounded in his very life. The Bible shows us that a man's garments are his deeds, and a man's being is his life. Here the shining deeds are stripped away and gone. The life that remains only has a body that is living; the spirit is dead. This is a man half dead. All readers of the Bible know that this is a description of our person. From the time man was tempted by the serpent in the garden of Eden, and since he began to sin, man has never experienced peace in his life journey. Man is continually tempted by Satan. The result is that all his outward deeds are stripped away. Even more his inward spirit is dead. He is living as far as the body goes, but dead as far as the spirit goes. Man can do nothing about his condition. He can only wait for others to come and save him.

A priest came by. When he saw this man, he passed by on the other side. A Levite also came by. After he saw the man, he also passed by on the other side. The priests and the Levites are the two main groups of people in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, the whole law is in the hands of the priests and the Levites. If you take away the priests and the Levites, there would be no law left. To a half-dead sinner, one who is bound by Satan, waiting to go to

destruction, and having no outward virtue, there was nothing to do except to wait to die. What would the priests tell him? The priests would have said, "Love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole soul, your whole strength, and your whole mind, and you will rise up and walk." The Levite would also come and say, "That is right. But you must also love your neighbor as yourself." These are their messages. This is what a priest and a Levite would say to a dying man. "It is true that you are half dead and that your shining garments have been stripped away. But if you would do good, you can be saved." This is the meaning of loving God with the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole strength, and the whole mind. This is what it means to love God. If you see one who has not been beaten, that one may still have the heart, the soul, the strength, and the mind to do something. It would still be possible for him to love God with his whole heart, his whole soul, his whole strength, and his whole mind. It would have been possible to tell him this if he were still in Jerusalem. But the problem today is that he is no longer in Jerusalem. He is on a journey, and he is dying. These commandments cannot help him. Therefore, please remember that it is not a question of giving our "whole," but of getting some help. Here is a man who is dying of sickness. He is living in sin. He cannot do anything about his condition. If you tell the sinner to love God with all his heart, soul, strength, and mind, he would say that he has never loved God in his life. If you say that he has to love his neighbor, he would tell you that he has been robbing others all his life. What should

you say to a man who is about to step into eternity? At this juncture, the priests and the Levites are of no help. They can only pass by on the other side. When they see this kind of man, they cannot help him.

The word about loving God with our whole heart, soul, strength, and mind, and loving our neighbor as ourself is not to help us to inherit eternal life. It is only to show us the kind of persons we are. Actually, the words in the law such as loving God, loving the neighbors, not coveting or killing, are there only to expose our sinfulness. They show us our condition. The end of the law, as James has said, is simply to serve as a mirror. It shows you who you are. You do not know what your face looks like. But if you look in a mirror, you see what you look like. Formerly, you did not know that you do not love God. Now you know. Not only is there no love with the whole heart, whole soul, whole strength, and whole mind, there is not any love for God at all. Not only is there no love for God, there is not even love for one's neighbor. You have been robbed by the robbers already. Yet you still do not know what has happened. With the law, you know. You were beaten by the robbers, left half dead, and stripped of your garments, and you did not even know it. Now you know. What then did the priests and the Levites do? They came to say: "My friend, do you not know that you have been beaten by the robbers? Do you not know that your garments have been stripped off? Do you not know that you are half dead?"