

A God-Lived Life – Month #2
Text Study: Luke 10:25-37



Month 2 - The God-Lived Life is a Life Lived for Others

Key Concept: Stewardship of Talent - Service

In today's worship, the particular emphasis of the God-lived life is a life lived for others. In our Gospel, Jesus answers "Who is my neighbor?" God allows us opportunity to serve and love one another. We get to show his love by sacrificing and serving all those around us.

Gospel - Luke 10:25-37⁺ - Parable of the Good Samaritan

There are two temptations when it comes to serving others in our community. One is not to do it because you consider your time and sacrifice more important than them. The other is to do it because you consider yourself better than them, so they need your help. The Good Samaritan and the teller of the parable don't show judgment, but the love of God. May we show the same.

First Reading - Acts 9:36-42[#] - Dorcas

Dorcas demonstrates what a God-lived life looks like. She lived for others and the people saw God's love in her. They showed the apostles the "robes and other clothing" she had made for them. What are your "robes and other clothing" —the ways that show you are living Jesus' love?

Second Reading - 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12* - Daily life wins the respect of outsiders

God teaches you to love each other and encourages you to live the God-lived life more and more.

Psalm 41^{##}

Gospel Acclamation –

Proverbs 14:21 - It is a sin to despise one's neighbor, but blessed is the one who is kind to the needy.

Note: If doing a full-length service, use the readings as appointed. If following the suggestion for in-service Bible Study, see below:

**This lesson is read during shortened service*

+This lesson serves as sermon text

#This lesson is the basis for 19-minute Bible Study

##This is dropped.

Hymns

Opening Gathering Rite (CW467)

Hymn of the Day - CW 486 – Lord of Glory, You have Brought Us

Closing Hymn - CW 484 – Brothers, Sisters, Let us Gladly

Alternates/Hymns for daily devotions:

CW 490 - Love in Christ is Strong and Living

CWS 732 - We are Singing for the Lord is our Light

CW 459 – O God, My Faithful God

Related readings:

Matthew 20:25-28

Philippians 2:1-11

CONTEXT OF THE READING:

After Luke records Jesus sending out the 72 disciples, we see Jesus as he teaches. His conversation with this expert in the law helps us understand God’s law, something we struggle with by nature. The legal expert tests Jesus, and Jesus turns the question on him. What does it mean to keep God’s law? Love. In the story of the Good Samaritan, we see love of neighbor explained. In the verses following our text, the account of Jesus’ visit to Mary and Martha helps teach love of God as well.

TEXT STUDY: LUKE 10:25-37

For each verse, a hyper-literal translation has been provided in italics to help communicate some of the thoughts hidden in the Greek vocables and grammar.

Luke 10:25 -

Καὶ ἰδοὺ νομικὸς τις ἀνέστη ἐκπειράζων αὐτὸν λέγων· διδάσκαλε, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω;

And behold a certain lawyer stood up testing him saying, “Teacher, doing what will I inherit eternal life?”

The lawyer’s purpose was to “test” —not a genuine question, according to Franzmann. He wanted to see whether Jesus and his teaching met his own standards. His question shows where he is coming from. “What do I have to do?” He’s focusing on his work instead of God’s. So, Jesus wants to show him where that line of thinking leads.

Luke 10:26 -

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν· ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τί γέγραπται; πῶς ἀναγινώσκεις;

And he said to him, “what stands written in the law? How do you read it?”

Γέγραπται – perfect tense, it was written and stands written as God’s Word.

ἀναγινώσκεις – This is term for reading aloud for public use. Is Jesus asking him what their liturgy says? He’s asking for the Shema, recited 2x a day by pious Jews.

Luke 10:27 -

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης [τῆς] καρδίας σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ἰσχύϊ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ διανοίᾳ σου, καὶ τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν.

And answering he said, “You shall love the Lord your God out of your whole heart and in your whole spirit and in your whole strength and in your whole understanding (mind), and your neighbor as yourself.”

Immediately following the Shema is this “love the Lord your God” stuff from Deuteronomy 6:5. But “love your neighbor as yourself” isn’t there. It’s from Leviticus 19:8. In Matthew 22 and Mark 12, Jesus brings those two “commandments” together as the most and second most important laws. Maybe this lawyer has heard Jesus on the topic? Either way he gives a good answer.

“The Biblical conception of the leb, *καρδία*, “heart, “makes it the very center of our being and personality; here also dwells the *ψυχῇ*, “the life” or “soul”; here resides the “strength,” and here functions the “mind.” The *nephesh* or *ψυχῇ* is the life which animates the body, the consciousness of which is in the “heart”; and the *διανοία* is the reason together with all its functions, namely its thoughts, ideas, convictions, according to which the heart and the personality act” (Lenski, 852-853).

Luke 10:28 -

εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ· ὀρθῶς ἀπεκρίθης· τοῦτο ποίει καὶ ζήσῃ.

And he said to him, “Correctly you answered (aor. Passive – deponent).” Be doing this and you will live.

Notice the present active imperative—do this as a *continuous* thing.

The man who was supposed to know the law correctly summarized the law. To do the law is to love God and neighbor. Of course, that’s easier said than done.

Luke 10:29 -

ὁ δὲ θέλων δικαιῶσαι ἑαυτὸν εἶπεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν· καὶ τίς ἐστίν μου πλησίον;

But wishing to justify himself he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

The lawyer was trying to "justify himself." Either he wanted to justify why he asked such a basic question that he already knew the answer to by pointing to the debatable part of it—or he knew he failed to keep the law he just summarized and wanted to find a bar he could jump by eliminating from "neighbor" those he didn't want to love. Consider how often we try to justify ourselves when we know what God's law says but have our excuses for not doing it. "But he had it coming," "she made me angry," "at least I'm not that bad."

In Leviticus 19:18, neighbor refers to those who are "the sons of your own people."

There was debate about the sojourner, since God does care for the fatherless, widow and sojourner. But a Samaritan would have been an easy answer for the experts in the law. "Jews have no dealings with Samaritans" (John 4:9).

Luke 10:30 -

Ἐπολαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· ἄνθρωπός τις κατέβαινεν ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἰεριχὰ καὶ λησταῖς περιέπεσεν, οἱ καὶ ἐκδύσαντες αὐτὸν καὶ πληγὰς ἐπιθέντες ἀπήλθον ἀφέντες ἡμιθανῆ.

Replying Jesus said, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into (the hands of) robbers, and they stripping him and laying blows on him went away leaving him half dead.

The grammar and vocabulary are pretty straight-forward as Luke records this simple-to-understand story Jesus tells.

Luke 10:31 -

κατὰ συγκυρίαν δὲ ἱερεὺς τις κατέβαινεν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκείνῃ καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἀντιπαρήλθεν·

By chance a certain priest went down on that road and seeing him, passed by opposite.

The priest was bound by strict purity laws. Likely, he crossed over and passed by to make sure he wouldn't become unclean by coming in contact with a dead body. He was guided by a legalistic law code, basing his actions on a set of rules that had been implemented to help people better fulfill God's law. Clearly, it didn't work here. Of course, we see the same problem in our own hearts. Consider the times we either take pride in our obedience by looking down on others or do things going through the motions because that is what we are supposed to do.

In Concordia Commentary, Arthur Just has helpful comments and the reasons for their actions, quoting K. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*. To sum up, the priest may have been concerned about purity laws, not wanting to become unclean by touching a dead body.

The purity code the priest lived by locked them in to certain behaviors. The Levite wouldn't have been held to the same purity law standards, but probably wanted to follow the example of the priest. He was guided by a desire to please human representatives of authority.

Luke 10:32 -

ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Λευίτης [γενόμενος] κατὰ τὸν τόπον ἔλθων καὶ ἰδὼν ἀντιπαρήλθεν.

Likewise also a Levite (being there), coming to the place also seeing, passed by opposite.

Luke 10:33 -

Σαμαρίτης δὲ τις ὁδεύων ἦλθεν κατ' αὐτὸν καὶ ἰδὼν ἐσπλαγχνίσθη,

And a certain Samaritan travelling came to him and seeing, had compassion.

Σαμαρίτης – Not much explaining needs to be done about the animosity between Jews and Samaritans. Made up of half-breeds who had adulterated the Jewish religion, a pious Jew did all he could to avoid the Samaritans. They had nothing but the lowest esteem for one another.

ἐσπλαγχνίσθη – The **σπλάγγων** are the innards, the insides, guts of a person. This is the same verb used when Jesus saw the people who followed him to his secluded place where he wanted quiet time with his disciples (Mark 6:34). Jesus saw them and they were like sheep without a shepherd, so he had this same “compassion” on them and taught them. This Samaritan was moved by the man's need and did something about it.

Luke 10:34 -

καὶ προσελθὼν κατέδησεν τὰ τραύματα αὐτοῦ ἐπιχέων ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον, ἐπιβιβάσας δὲ αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον κτήνος ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς πανδοχεῖον καὶ ἐπεμελήθη αὐτοῦ.

And coming, he bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine, and having placed him upon his own donkey he led it to the inn and he cared for him.

Notice the sacrifice, putting the man on his own beast and leading it so the man could ride. He used every means at his disposal to help this man—bandages, oil, wine, donkey, etc.

Luke 10:35 -

καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν αὔριον ἐκβαλὼν ἔδωκεν δύο δηνάρια τῷ πανδοχεῖ καὶ εἶπεν· ἐπιμελήθητι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὅ τι ἂν προσδαπανήσης ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανέρχεσθαί με ἀποδώσω σοι.

And on the next day, leaving, he gave two denarii to the innkeeper and said, “Take care of him and whatever you spend in addition, I, in my returning, will repay you.”

Luke 10:36 -

τίς τούτων τῶν τριῶν πλησίον δοκεῖ σοι γεγονέναι τοῦ ἔμπεσόντος εἰς τοὺς ληστάς;

Which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbor of the one who fell into the (hands of) the robbers

Luke 10:37 -

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ' αὐτοῦ. εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· πορεύου καὶ σὺ ποίει ὁμοίως.

And he said, "the one who did the mercy with him," and Jesus said to him, "Go and you do (pres. Act. Impv) likewise."

Notice the progression (Concordia Commentary, 448) —the priest goes down the road. The Levite goes to the place. The Samaritan goes to the man. The priest was living by the law. The Levite was following his leader. The Samaritan was led by compassion, by love.

Commentators argue about whether we see Jesus in the Samaritan or the injured man. The Samaritan clearly displays Christ's sacrificial love and compassion. The injured man gives us opportunity to show love of God by loving others, and you can hear Jesus' words "whatever you have done for the least of these, you have done for me."

Certainly, we see Jesus in the teller of the story, wanting us to understand that the fulfillment of the law is *love*—the love he has first shown to us and then motivates in us for others.

HOMILETICAL NOTES:

Malady: Not loving my neighbor, coming up with excuses for not acting on love. Reducing the law to some commands that must be kept.

Consider quote by Miroslav Volf (found in a google search on quotes on forgiveness, quoted by Tim Keller in a sermon from his "Generosity" series):

"Forgiveness flounders because I exclude the enemy from the community of humans even as I exclude myself from the community of sinners. But no one can be in the presence of the God of the crucified Messiah for long without overcoming this double exclusion—without transposing the enemy from the sphere of the monstrous... into the sphere of shared humanity and herself from the sphere of proud innocence into the sphere of common sinfulness. When one knows [as the cross demonstrates] that the torturer will not eternally triumph over the victim, one is free to rediscover that person's humanity and imitate God's love for him. And when one knows [as the cross demonstrates] that God's love is greater than all sin, one is free to see oneself in the light of God's justice and so rediscover one's own sinfulness."

Caricature – He’s a liar, I just adjust the truth a little, little white lie—but he’s a liar. I can’t let myself be taken advantage of—but he’s selfish, that’s just who he is.

Telic note: Jesus sees us injured and wounded and doesn’t pass by on the other side. He came to us, healed our wounds and leads us to safety, to a place where we are taken care of until he comes back.

OUTLINE IDEAS:

Jesus makes us loving neighbors

1. Jesus teaches that love fulfills the law (he teaches what a loving neighbor is)
 - a. We have all our work-arounds and excuses
 - b. We make keeping the law about ourselves—God shows is it about others—not self-centered love that looks at my doing (what I get out of it or what a good person it makes me) —but others-serving love that looks at their needs
 - i. Lawyer was struggling—what good thing gets me reward?
 - ii. Forgiveness thing from Volf
2. Jesus demonstrated that love fulfilled the law (he shows what a loving neighbor is)
 - a. In story—it’s easy to see
 - b. In life—God so loved the world
 - c. When we see it, it’s obvious
 - d. God so loved the world...
3. Jesus commands law-fulfilling love
 - a. We love because he first loved us
 - b. Commitment cards—ways to show love—not always easy, not always handy, it’s love—opposite of what works for me—how can I serve...

INTRODUCTION:

Ok, word association game. First thing that pops into your head when I say “Good Neighbor.” I’m gonna go out on a limb and say 85% of you or better thought “State Farm” or Jake, from State Farm,” or had a particular jingle going through your head, “Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.” If you believe the seemingly ubiquitous commercials, your State Farm rep is the neighbor you want. Jake is there. When something goes wrong, he’s there to help. When there’s a risk, he’s there to warn. When you need him, day or night, he’s just a phone call away in his khakis and polo ready to help.

But, this is not a State Farm commercial. This is real life. By the end of this sermon, I hope your picture of a good neighbor is a little different. Instead of seeing khakis and a red polo attached to a voice on a phone, I hope you’ll be seeing someone a little closer to home—you. Today, Jesus makes us good neighbors. In fact, let’s go a step farther and help define what a good neighbor is. Today, Jesus makes us loving neighbors.

He does that first by teaching what a loving neighbor is. Then he shows us what a loving neighbor is.

CHILDREN'S SERMON IDEA:

Today I want to tell you a story Jesus told. It's called "The Good Samaritan." There was a man who was traveling, and some robbers got him and beat him up and took all his money and even his clothes and they hurt him and left him by the side of the road bleeding, so beat up he couldn't get up and find help. He just had to lie there, thinking he was going to die.

But then a priest came by—kind of like a pastor—so what do you think the man thought? "Surely the priest will help me, right?"

But the priest didn't want to get any blood on his nice robe, so he went to the other side of the road and passed by, leaving that man there bleeding.

But then, a little later a Levite came by. That's a guy who works at the church—so he should be a good guy, right? He should help. Nope, he did just what the priest did and walked on by.

But then, a Samaritan came by—and the Jews were kind of like at war with the Samaritans, they hated one another—so the man probably would've figured there's no way he would help. But he did. That Samaritan went to him and cleaned out his cuts and put bandages on, gave him some water, helped him up onto his donkey, and led the donkey all the way to town, where he gave money to the innkeeper to let him stay and recover and promised if there were any other expenses, he'd take care of them.

So—now you tell me. Who was the good guy in the story? Was it the priest with all his learning in God's Word and importance in the church? Nope. Was it the Levite? That was a pretty respectable job. Nope. What about that bad Samaritan, the enemy? He helped him. He loved and sacrificed.

So, now, here is the real question. Which of those do you want to be like?

Samaritan—not because of his background or race or job—but because he showed love. And today we're going to hear about how Jesus helps us to be a good neighbor like that. He gives us opportunities to show love for our neighbors. And he showed you love first to make you want to. How did Jesus show you love? Yes, he died on the cross for you. He did what you didn't deserve, because he wanted to help you.

And he did.

Let's pray and thank God for being the best neighbor to us and ask him to help us be good neighbors.

Dear Jesus, thanks for telling us this story to remind us how important it is to love people and help them. You loved us when we didn't deserve it, and now we ask that you use us to show that love to others. In your name we pray. Amen.

NIV TEXT

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

²⁷ He answered: “‘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, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”