

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: [Luke 10:25-37](#).
- B. "Learning Enough to Care."
- C. The text:

And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" **26** And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" **27** And he answered, "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." **28** And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE." **29** But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30 Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. **31** And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. **32** Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, **34** and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on *them*; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. **35** On 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.' **36** Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' *hands*?" **37** And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

I. EUTHYMIUS' ALLEGORY.

- A. One of the most famous mis-interpretations of this story is by a man named, Euthymius. He allegorized the parable as follows:
 - 1. The wounded man is ourselves, lost and helpless in sin.
 - 2. The descent from Jerusalem to Jericho is the Fall.
 - 3. The thieves are the devil and his servants, who by temptation, persecution, and false religion leave mankind in a spiritual wounded state.
 - 4. The man is half-dead, which means almost dead physically but still alive in his soul.
 - 5. The priest represents the Law given through Moses—it has no power to save.
 - 6. The Levite represents the teachings of the prophets—it has no power to save.
 - 7. The inn is the church, that welcomes lost sinners.
 - 8. The compassion of the Samaritan shows the compassion of X toward those who are lost in sin.
 - 9. The two pence is baptism and the Lord's Supper.
 - 10. Since the Samaritan paid the inn-keeper, X paid for our salvation (on the cross).
- B. This elaborate allegorization of the parable is profitable to some extent, but misses the main point of the story!
- C. Jesus told the story of the good Samaritan to answer the lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?" The point of the parable is that anyone in need, is one to whom I am to show compassion and help.
- D. Notice at the conclusion of the parable, the lawyer answers correctly, and Jesus tells him to "Go and do likewise." The point of the parable is not the scheme of redemption, but that Xians are to show compassion on the needy.

II. TAKING A LOOK AT THE CHARACTERS IN THIS STORY.

- A. The Thieves: *He was a Victim to Exploit*.
 - 1. The thieves did not see a fellow human being or a creature made in the image of God. They saw someone they could exploit.
 - 2. God gave us things to use and people to love. If we start loving things, we will start using people.
 - 3. Jesus Christ never exploited a person. He always gives back more than He asks. He always left

- a person in better shape than when He found them.
- B. The Priest and Levite: *He Was a Nuisance to Avoid*.
 1. I can think of a number of reasons (or excuses) these men could have given to defend their conduct:
 - a. "I've been serving at the temple. I've done my part."
 - b. "I've been away from home and need to hurry."
 - c. "It's not my fault."
 - d. "Let somebody else do it."
 2. Failure to do a good thing is as sinful as doing a bad thing (see Jas. 4:17).
 - C. The Lawyer: *He Was a Problem to Discuss*.
 1. Rather than admit defeat to Jesus, he tried to escape with an academic discussion of definitions, "Who is my neighbor?" Lawyers today do the same by asking for a definition of terms.
 2. It is easy to discuss general topics and hard to get involved in special needs. Let us not substitute law for love, and being a spectator with participation.
 - D. The Inn Host: *He Was a Customer to Serve*.
 1. Although we don't know if this was true of this inn host, many only see a need to do something after they find out "what they will get out of it."
 2. It is possible to do a good thing with a bad motive.
 3. Let us never be guilty of serving the Lord with an opportunistic attitude.
 - E. The Samaritan: *He Was a Neighbor to Serve*.
 1. He had compassion (also Mt. 18:23-25; Lk. 15:11-32).
 2. He made contact. Love does not look for obstacles—only opportunities. Opportunities to serve and do good.
 3. He gave care by doing something practical not just talk.
 4. He was willing to suffer the cost, he gave time, aid, comfort, and help; not thinking of himself or consequences of his actions.

CONCLUSION.

- A. How do you view other people? The great commandment says we are to love God first, and then love our neighbor.
- B. How do you look at others? Are they a:
 1. Victim to Exploit.
 2. Problem to Discuss.
 3. Customer to Serve.
 4. Neighbor to Serve.
- C. Paul Woolard spoke on compassion last month. He challenged us to have the compassion of X in our lives. This parable does the same.
- D. Our window to see God is that we see His compassion for the lost and needy.
- E. Our mirror is that we must inventory how we view others. See 2Cor. 5:16.