

Like a Good Neighbor

Luke 10:25-37

INTRODUCTION

- A. We hear the jingle: “Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.”
- B. But, just what is a good neighbor? If you could place an advertisement in the newspaper for a neighbor, what would your advertisement look like?
 - 1. Wanted: A neighbor who keeps his yard neatly trimmed?
 - 2. Wanted: A neighbor who makes pies for his friends?
 - 3. Wanted: A neighbor who never plays loud music or throws wild parties?
- C. You cannot choose your neighbors, but you can choose the type of neighbor you will be.
- D. This morning, we want to examine the type of neighbor Jesus wants us to be. Jesus tells us:

NEIGHBORS LOVE, vv. 25-28

- A. A lawyer stood up to test Jesus, v. 25.
 - 1. A “lawyer” was one well-versed in the OT; this man knew the Hebrew Scriptures forward and backward.
 - 2. Instead of being honestly concerned with truth, this man just wanted to test Jesus. He really wanted to ask a question that would cause Jesus make a fool out of himself.
- B. The lawyer asked, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” v. 26.
 - 1. In this time period, those who taught the Jewish law debated this question · They wanted to boil all God’s commands down to one that they absolutely had to keep.
 - 2. Since Jesus was a fairly new teacher on the scene, this lawyer wanted to know how Jesus would answer that question.
- C. Jesus turns the question around on the lawyer, v. 26.
 - 1. Jesus asked him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?”
 - 2. When we want to know something about Scripture, this is the best question to ask - “What is written in the law? What does Scripture say?”
- D. The lawyer answered that one must love God and his fellow man, v. 26.
 - 1. In other words, one must place God first in his life, and he must also love his neighbor.
 - 2. In that day, many Jews were phylacteries.
 - a. Phylacteries were small leather cases which contained passages of Scripture.
 - b. The phylacteries were attached to the forehead and left arm - The Jews took literally God’s command to bind his law upon their forehead.
 - c. The passages this lawyer quoted were placed in the phylacteries, because they were considered important.
- E. Jesus commended the lawyer; the lawyer had answered correctly; we must love God and our neighbor, v. 28.
- F. By keeping these commands, the lawyer would live, v. 28.
- G. If we want to have eternal life, we must love God and our fellow man.
 - 1. Loving God is not an option.
 - a. We are called up to love God.
 - 1) “Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints!” (Ps. 31:23).
 - 2) Jesus referred to loving God as the “first and great commandment” (Mt. 22:37-38).
 - b. If we really love God, he will be first in our lives.
 - 1) This means that we’ll obey his commands — “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (Jn. 14:15).
 - 2) Can you really say that you love God? Do you obey his commands?
 - 2. Loving our neighbor is not an option.
 - a. Jesus referred to loving our neighbor as ourselves as the second great commandment (Mt. 22:39).
 - b. The commandments are summed up by saying: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Rom. 13:9).
 - c. Loving our neighbor means putting others in front of ourselves, doing what is in the best interest of our neighbor.

NEIGHBORS GIVE, vv. 29-37

- A. Since love is so important, we need to know how to love — Jesus here tells us how to love.
- B. The lawyer wanted to justify himself v. 29.
 - 1. He asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?”

2. The Jews excluded Gentiles and Samaritans as “neighbors;” Gentiles and Samaritans were outcasts and unworthy of a Jew’s concern or attention.
 3. This man really wanted Jesus to say that only those who were like him were his neighbors. He wanted Jesus to say that he didn’t have to love Gentiles and Samaritans.
- C. Jesus answered the lawyer by the parable of the Good Samaritan, vv. 30-35.
1. A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, v. 30.
 - a. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho descended rather sharply.
 - b. The road contained much rugged terrain and caves. Many criminals would hide in the caves and rob passers-by; the road became notorious for criminals.
 - c. The man going from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers A they robbed him and left him half dead.
 2. A priest came down the road and passed by on the other side, v. 31.
 - a. The priest apparently feared ceremonial uncleanness — anyone who touched a corpse was considered unclean for seven days (Num. 19:1 l). So, if the priest touched a dead body, he would not be able to perform his duties at the temple for a full week.
 - b. But, the priest had probably finished his duties and was going back to Jericho; Jericho had a huge population of priests.
 - c. But, this priest refused to help.
 3. A Levite came and saw the man.
 - a. Levites were those from the tribe of Levi who aided the priests in the sacrifices.
 - b. He, too, saw what had happened and passed by on the other side.
 4. A Samaritan came and took pity on the man, vv. 33-35.
 - a. Samaritans and Jews could not stand one another, and the injured man is more than likely a Jew.
 - 1) When Samaria fell to the Assyrians, the Assyrian king placed foreign colonists in Samaria.
 - 2) These foreigners intermarried with the Jews who were left in Samaria, and their offspring became the Samaritan race.
 - 3) Jews looked upon the Samaritans as something like a mixed breed.
 - 4) Jews ordinarily would not even speak to Samaritans.
 - b. When the Samaritan saw the injured man, he had compassion on him, he pitied him, v. 33.
 - c. The Samaritan’s compassion caused him to act. Could we even say the Samaritan had compassion had he not acted?
 - 1) He bandaged the man’s wounds with oil and wine, v. 34.
 - a) The Samaritan probably used his own clothing to bind the wounds of this man.
 - b) Oil and wine were often used for medicinal purposes in this time period.
 - 2) He put the man on his own animal, v. 34.
 - 3) He brought him to an inn and took care of him, v. 34.
 - 4) When he left the inn, he left money with the inn-keeper for the man’s recovery.
 - a) The Samaritan must have been well-known by the inn-keeper.
 - b) The inn-keeper must have known the Samaritan to be an honest man.
 5. Jesus asked the lawyer which of the men was a neighbor to the man who was injured, v. 36.
 - a. The lawyer replied, “The one who cared for the man” — The lawyer’s prejudice against Samaritans wouldn’t even allow him to utter the word “Samaritan.”
 - b. Jesus told this man to go and do likewise.
- D. We must show love for our neighbors.
1. In the great judgment scene, the King rewards those who gave to those in need (Mt. 25:34-40).
 2. We must support the weak (Acts 20:35).
 3. God is well pleased with doing good and sharing (Heb. 13:16).
- E. How will you be a neighbor?
1. You could donate blood at the local blood bank.
 2. You could provide meals for those who have been hospitalized.
 3. You could give clothes to those whose house has burned.
 4. You can act when you see someone in need.
 - a. You don’t have to wait for the church to act.
 - b. You can act yourself.

CONCLUSION

- A. Without Christ in our lives, we can’t be the neighbor we should be.
- B. Will you be a good neighbor?