

WORD

²⁵And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷And 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." ²⁸And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live. ²⁹But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" **LUKE 10:25-29**

(Read also **LUKE 10:30-37**.)

In this story, Jesus talks about loving God through loving our neighbor. The lawyer raised the question, "Who is my neighbor?" While most of us think that our neighbors are the people closest to us, Jesus points out that a neighbor is anyone we encounter who needs our help. Just as Jesus died for the ungodly and those who rejected Him but needed Him the most, we, too, should reflect the love that He showed on the cross. In this lesson, we will look at three ways we can be a neighbor to others.

1 Show compassion.

³⁰Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³²So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion." **LUKE 10:30-33**

The Priest and the Levite chose to be ignorant. The Samaritan, however, acted upon the compassion he felt for the man in need. In the same way, Jesus calls us to show compassion for our neighbors regardless of ethnicity, social status, culture, or even convenience. Jesus calls us to love without distinction. Why do you think the priest and Levite responded that way? Why do you think the Samaritan responded that way?

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2 Serve your neighbor.

³⁴"He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.'" **LUKE 10:34,35**

More than simply showing compassion. More often than not, we feel compassionate about others but we stay within the limit of our own comfort. Jesus teaches us to not limit ourselves with how we can help—just as He did by giving Himself for our sake, He bore the suffering that was meant for us. Jesus calls us to help without holding back. Recall a time when someone went beyond what was expected to serve you.

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3 Show mercy.

³⁶"Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise." **LUKE 10:36,37**

He chose to show mercy by not doing what any other Samaritan would have done—he stopped to help a man who was different from him and was most unlikely to be considered his neighbor. But just as God showed mercy to sinful people through the death of Jesus, we are called to be neighbors wherever people need us. What was Jesus' command to the lawyer and to everyone who heard Him tell this parable?

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