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Ministers of God's Compassion

LUKE 10:30-37

Introduction

1. What is it that God wants us to do more than anything else in the world?
2. Jesus gives us the answer in Mark 12:30.
 - a. An expert in the law asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" (Mark 12:28, ESV).
 - b. Jesus responded with these words, "The most important is 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord Your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'" (Mark 12:30, ESV)
 - b. Our love for Him is to exceed our love for anyone or anything else.
3. Now, what is the second most important thing that God calls us to do?
4. The next verse in Mark's gospel reveals that answer. "The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no greater commandment than these." (Mark 12:31).
5. Why this is true — the Kingdom of God is about people, because God is all about people.
 - a. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him" (John 3:16–17, NASB95).
 - b. "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.'" (Luke 19:10, NASB95).

- c. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8, NASB95).
- d. “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (Ephesians 2:4–5, NASB95).
6. This is why, as we noticed last week, the compassion of Jesus is singled out again and again by the gospel writers — Jesus, who is God in the flesh, is concerned about us.
7. You and I, as disciples, followers of Jesus are to be messengers of that compassion to those around us.
8. How do we do that? How do we share the message of God’s compassion with those we encounter every day?
9. Let’s look at a parable which Jesus told about compassion and seek to learn what Jesus was teaching on that day, all those years ago.

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I. Jesus’ Interchange With A Lawyer

A. THE TEST

1. Go back to verse 17 here in Luke 10 and notice what is happening.
2. Jesus had appointed seventy men and sent them out in pairs on what has been called the limited commission.
3. In verse 17, Luke tells us, “The seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name’” (Luke 10:17, NASB95).
4. Over the next few verses, Jesus . . .
 - a. Speaks about how He “saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (v. 18, ESV).
 - b. Encourages them to “rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven” (v. 20).

- c. Says privately to the twelve, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see . . ." (v. 23).
5. It was in the midst of all this that a lawyer stood up to ask Jesus a question — he was testing Him — "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (v. 25).
6. Jesus responded to the lawyer's question with a question of His own — "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" (v. 26).
7. The lawyer answered Jesus by referring to the two greatest commandments — "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" (v. 27).
8. Jesus said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live" (v. 28).
9. However, the lawyer wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" (v. 29) — in other words, who am I required to love?

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B. THE PARABLE

1. Jesus does not give the lawyer a direct answer, but tells him a parable about compassion.
2. A man was making the dangerous 17 mile journey from Jerusalem down to Jericho.
3. Along the way, he was attacked by robbers, who "stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead" (v. 30, NIV84).
4. It just so happened that a priest, possibly having finished his assignment in the temple at Jerusalem, was returning to his home in Jericho.
5. When he saw the injured traveler, he chose not to get involved, but went around him on the other side of the road.
6. A Levite, coming along behind the priest, when he saw the injured man, did the same thing.

7. However, a man from Samaria, someone hated by the Jews, happened to come by — “when he saw the man, he had compassion” (v. 33, HCSB).
8. “He went over to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him” (v. 34, HCSB).
9. The Samaritan’s compassion did not end there — “The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him. When I come back I’ll reimburse you for whatever extra you spend.’”(v. 35, HCSB).

Slide 4**C. THE TRUE TEST**

1. When Jesus finished the parable, He asked the lawyer, “Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” (v. 36, HCSB).
2. The lawyer answered, “The man who showed mercy to him” (v. 37a, HCSB).
3. Jesus told the man, “Go and do the same” (v. 37b).

Slide 5**II. Compassion Made All The Difference****A. THE SAMARITAN CHOSE TO SEE THE NEED**

1. The priest and the Levite saw an issue of ceremonial purity, and questioned their duty under the law.
2. If the priest approached the man, touched him, and found that he was dead, he would have become ceremonially defiled.
3. The law stipulated, “No one shall defile himself for a dead person among his people” (Leviticus 21:1).
4. If he became defiled, he would need to return to Jerusalem and undergo a week-long purification process.
5. If the man was not dead, but died soon after the priest touched him, he

would need to tear his robes.

6. He decided it was easier not to get involved, but to go around the man on the opposite side of the road.
7. For many of the same reasons, the Levite chose to do likewise.
8. The Samaritan, however, saw a fellow human being, who, dead or alive, needed his attention.
9. When Jesus told the lawyer to “go and do the same,” He called us not to close our eyes, or turn a deaf ear, but to see the needs of those around us.
10. Why? Because this is what Jesus did, and if we are going to be the hands of Jesus, we must do the same.

5a

B. THE SAMARITAN CHOSE TO RESPOND TO THE NEED

1. It wasn't enough, however, for the Samaritan to see the need and feel pity, he must respond to that need.
2. This is what makes compassion so important:
 - a. It motivates us to relieve the suffering of another.
 - b. It results in our “wanting to approach and care for other people.”
3. The Samaritan was fully aware of the danger and the inconvenience of helping the injured man, but he responded anyway.
4. He knew that he must render first aid before moving the injured man.
 - a. Thus he bandaged his wounds.
 - b. He poured oil and wine onto the bandages to disinfect the wounds and aid the healing process.
5. He put him on his own beast of burden and took him to an inn, most likely in Jericho.
6. He stayed with him through the night, continuing to take care of him.
7. When he had to leave the next day, he left money with the innkeeper, asked him to take care of the injured man, and promised to pay any additional costs on his return.
8. It would have been easier for the Samaritan not to get involved, it cost him in time, money and energy.

9. However, his compassion for the injured traveler would not allow him to do otherwise.
10. In the same way, Jesus calls us to respond to the needs we encounter out of compassion.
11. Why? Because Jesus fed the hungry, healed the sick, and brought peace to tormented souls.
12. As Peter said to those in Cornelius' house, "He went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Dare we do any less?

5b**C. THE SAMARITAN LOOKED BEYOND THE BARRIERS**

1. He crossed political, racial, cultural and social barriers.
2. He risked prejudices and the fear of the unknown because he saw someone with a need and he had the resources to help.
3. Though Jesus did not state the nationality of the injured traveler, His listeners and everyone down through history has assumed him to be a Jew.
4. The Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans because they were a mixed race.
 - a. This arose from the fact that the Jews of North Israel intermarried with the peoples which the king of Assyria resettled there, from other nations, following the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C.
 - b. Though the Samaritans offered to help the Jews who had returned from exile in Babylon with the rebuilding of the temple, they were refused.
 - c. Many of the Jews in Jesus' day avoided going through Samaria as they traveled between Jerusalem and Galilee.
5. The Samaritan risked his own life by transporting the wounded Jew on his own animal to a Jewish town.
6. The townspeople could have acted out in vengeance against the Samaritan, assuming him to be responsible for the man's injuries.
7. The fact that the Samaritan stayed the night with the injured man further added to the danger in which he placed himself.
8. People would begin to talk and questions would be asked? The next morning a group of angry men could have been waiting for him as he left

the inn.

9. The Samaritan didn't allow the fact that he was different from the man in need prevent him from doing what compassion dictated was necessary.
10. Jesus calls us to look beyond the barriers, to show compassion for those who are different from us.
11. Why? Because it was what He did.
 - a. Of the ten lepers whom Jesus healed as He was passing between Samaria and Galilee, only one returned to thank Him. That man, according to Luke 17:16 was a Samaritan.
 - b. On another occasion, when Jesus was in the region of Tyre, a woman came to Him and pleaded that He heal her daughter who "had an unclean spirit" (Mark 7:25). Jesus healed her. She was a Gentile.

Conclusion

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1. The question for each of us is simple: To whom will you prove to be a neighbor?
2. Will you be the hands of Jesus by being a messenger of His compassion to a world that is lost and in great need.
3. Let us ask God to open our eyes and our ears to those around us who need the compassion of our Lord in their lives.
4. If you are not a Christian today, please know that no greater compassion has been extended to you than that of our Lord who came to this earth to die on your behalf.
5. Will you surrender your life to Him today?