

A children's bible study on the Good Samaritan – Luke 10:25-37:

Jesus gave us this parable so that we do good things to all people, and not only to those that deserve it. Jesus gave us this parable to demonstrate the magnitude of love.

One day a man went on a journey from Jerusalem, up in the mountains, to Jericho, down in the valley. The road down was a mountain pass, following a windy narrow road boxed in by cliffs, which was a vulnerable setting for travellers. Robbers could easily close in on innocent people and beat them up and take what they could get, something like pirates on the ocean. This man was a victim to such robbers. After they had beaten him and taken all his clothes, they left him half-dead and escaped back to their den or cave.

This man was an innocent Jew and, in today's terms, a good innocent fellow citizen. He was like someone we know, living down the street. He was not the foreigner, the illegal immigrant, taking our jobs. He wasn't even roaming a foreign country, that one could put the guilt back on him. He was travelling in the heartland of his own country. He was travelling on the typical road your mum or dad takes everyday to work or you as a family to church every Sunday. It was not extraordinary.

There the man was lying on the side of the road, desperately needing help. The first person walking by was a priest, but for some reason he didn't see it fit to help his fellow citizen. For some reason he thought that love for his neighbour doesn't go that far. The priest, in today's terms, we would call a pastor or preacher. Isn't that shocking, that a pastor or preacher would think that? On another day the priest would maybe have helped, but this day he maybe had an important meeting and touching this man would have compromised his meeting. If he was on the way to the temple for duty, it would have been like a preacher getting on the pulpit full of blood. Who would listen to him, or even bear to stay in church? Anyway that is what his reasoning could have been.

Jesus condemns this as not practising love. Love is a relational word and relationships are the shoulder-rubbing with all people everyday. Love is the right attitude in every relationship we enter into or are in, even when it is a bad relationship of conflict. Love is the Godlike attitude of 'What would Jesus have done in this situation?'

When the priest came at the needy man, he entered into a relationship with him. This was his immediate relationship, but the love of self (what would other people in other relationships think)

was more important. Jesus teaches us that the relationships, here and now, are the vital ones. We have to be like Jesus, here and now, and not try to live two different lives, to be Jesus with the ones back at home and not Jesus with the ones we don't know that well.

The next person to come by was a Levite. He showed the same loveless attitude as the priest. The Levite we can compare with the normal church goer, sitting in the pews every Sunday. Maybe he was on the heels of the priest and saw him going by and only followed his example. Boys and girls, what others say or illustrate in lifestyle is not always what Jesus would have done. Your pastor, or preacher, or teacher, isn't Jesus. They are also only followers of Jesus and face the same need of obedience as you.

Whatever the case, the Levite also didn't feel like love extends as far as to helping this man. Maybe he felt insecure or not up to it? Maybe he couldn't stand blood or was scared of fainting? Who knows? But whatever the reason, he found a good logical argument to justify it. If he wasn't up to it, he could have waited for someone to come by, or went calling someone, or just prayed, but he rather step by and pushed it out of his mind. Boys and girls, Jesus wouldn't expect of you to change the world, but would expect of you to pray in that direction. Do as much as you can, and pray for the rest. If someone can help, call for assistance.

The last person to come by was the foreigner, the Samaritan. The least likely to help, but the one who didn't care to mess up his clothes with blood and to sacrifice his time for the new relationship he entered into. He didn't care to put his money where his mouth was and take him to a place where people could care for him. In today's terms, it would be like someone travelling in foreign country, between people that dislike his or her country of origin, and still this person would do what Jesus would have done - to love the needy, even when the needy would have passed by him or herself, were it the other way around.

Jesus left heaven to come to a foreign country, earth. Jesus was not loved by the politicians and religious leaders and even the people of His own home town. Irrespective of this, Jesus healed the sick and fed the hungry, even while He knew, without doubt, that many of them would also be in the crowd that shouted "Crucify Him, Crucify Him" before Pilot.