

Connecting with Others Like Jesus Did

Session 3

June 21, 2026

*Showing Love*

**The Point:** We are called to love God and love others.

**Session Passages:** Luke 10:25-37

### **Luke 10:25-28**

**Connection to the Point:** Jesus's conversation with an expert of the law highlighted the importance of loving God and loving others.

**Then** (v. 25). Luke gives no time setting for the expert in the law's question. However, because the events surrounding the question match similar events in Matthew (Matt. 22:34-40) and Mark (Mark 12:28-34), we can infer that this event likely occurred during the days preceding Jesus's betrayal and crucifixion.

**Expert in the law** (v. 25). The Greek word for "expert in the law" points to one educated in the law, a lawyer. In Judaism, this would have been someone with the authority and training to interpret the law of Moses, also known as a scribe. Luke mentions these experts several times in his Gospel, always in a negative light (Luke 7:30; 11:45-46, 52-53).

**Test him** (v. 25). The question from this expert in the law was designed to put Jesus to the test. The law expert asked for Jesus's take on a popular question that the religious leaders loved to debate among themselves. Two possible viewpoints exist concerning the motive behind this question. The parallel passage in Matthew 22:35 indicated that the law expert asked this question to trap Jesus so it could lead to condemnation. Luke's account and Jesus's concluding comment in the parallel passage in Mark's Gospel (Mark 12:28) suggest that the lawyer was at least mildly sincere concerning this issue of how to obtain eternal life.

**Teacher** (v. 25). As mentioned in a previous session, only those who approached Jesus who were not among His regular followers normally used the term teacher to speak to Him or of Him. His followers most often referred to Him as "master." This lawyer stood up out of respect as he addressed Jesus.

**Inherit eternal life** (v. 25). Eternal life is a never-ending life for disciples of Jesus Christ in the presence of God. Notice the personal nature of this man's question—"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" The question implies that this expert in the law believed in the immortality of the soul. This belief stood in stark contrast to that of the Sadducees, who rejected the concept of life and death. Inheriting eternal life was equivalent to asking how one can receive salvation or how one can enter the kingdom of God.

**Written in the law** (v. 26). Jesus responded to the question as He often did by asking a question. Such a technique of answering a question with a question places the burden on the inquirer to answer his own question. Jesus's response was to thrust the lawyer back into the law, for the man was an expert in the law. However, the fundamental nature of the law was to show humans our sinfulness and pressing need for a Savior.

**Love the Lord your God** (v. 27). When Jesus asked, "What is written in the law?" "How do you read it?" He was being precise. He was not interested in the human speculation of the religious leaders of Israel. Instead, He was interested in what God said in the law. The lawyer responded by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:5. This verse is part of the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num. 15:37-41), a Jewish declaration of faith in God. The term *Shema* comes from the first Hebrew word of Deuteronomy 6:4. The verse calls upon the Israelites to hear the

truth that their God is the only God. Because He is the one and only God, He commanded Israel to love Him wholeheartedly. As Jesus stated, this was “the greatest and most important command” (Matt. 22:38).

**Your neighbor** (v. 27). Perceptively, the lawyer added Leviticus 19:18 to speak of the second dimension of the love that God’s people are to exhibit. We do not know if, before Jesus, the Jews connected these two verses, which indicate both the vertical relationship of love between the believer and the Lord and the horizontal relationship of love between human beings. However, the two commands encompass the entirety of our relationships and were an integral part of Jesus’s teachings, where He emphasized love for God and the right treatment of others. For Jesus, our love for God must shape the way we interact with those around us.

**Do this and you will live** (v. 28). Jesus said this by way of a command—if you want to inherit eternal life, you must carry out these two commandments to perfection. Jesus, of course, knew that this was an impossibility for this lawyer, as it is for everyone. Each person sins and is incapable of being perfectly righteous on their own. With “do this, and you will live,” Jesus was pointing out that all are dependent on God’s mercy—not giving us what we deserve—and on God’s grace—doing for us that which we cannot do for ourselves. Only through our dependence on the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins we receive eternal life.

## **Luke 10:29-32**

**Connection to the Point:** Jesus told a parable to show what love for others looks like.

**Wanting to justify himself** (v. 29). Because this lawyer’s initial question came from mixed motives, he now needed to explain himself before Jesus. The lawyer may have felt convicted that he did not love God wholeheartedly and his neighbor unselfishly. Or, he also could have felt that Jesus had backed him into a corner, so he tried to hide behind another question. He tried to avoid the problem that he did not love all people alike. As a Jew, he held any non-Jew in contempt. Perhaps, he hoped that Jesus would agree with him that Samaritans and Gentiles were outside the scope of the command to love as a neighbor.

**Neighbor** (v. 29). The Greek term for “neighbor” designates someone near or close by. For the typical Jew, this term applied to just Jewish people. For this lawyer, he probably felt like he loved his neighbor. The problem was that he had a narrow definition of who his neighbor was. Jews in the first century AD frequently debated what defined a neighbor. For most Jews, the answer was to love their friends but hate their enemies (Matt. 5:43). In this case, friends were fellow Jews, while enemies were non-Jews.

**Took up the question** (v. 30). In response to the question, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus entered the debate. To define a neighbor, He presented the story of the good Samaritan. This story may have been a parable, although some scholars think it may detail an actual incident that occurred in Judea.

**Going down** (v. 30). The highway between Jerusalem and Jericho was an arduous journey, even without the danger of thieves lying in wait. The highway ran approximately seventeen miles as it descended from Jerusalem down into the Jordan Valley to the city of Jericho. Furthermore, the highway descended about 3000 feet over those seventeen miles. This highway was a heavily traveled route for those en route to Jerusalem. For those living in Galilee, rather than going through the territory of the Samaritans, Galileans would go the long way and cross over to the east side of the Jordan River and then cross the river again opposite the city of Jericho to ascend to Jerusalem.

**Robbers** (v. 30). Throughout the centuries, the rocks and caves along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho have been the haunts of thieves and robbers. Jesus’s listeners would all have known stories of people who were attacked along that highway. For this lawyer, this was a present reality that he was well aware of.

**Stripped him, beat him, and fled** (v. 30). This was no ordinary robbery, for the thieves stole his clothing, beat him senseless, and fled, leaving him half-dead. He needed immediate medical attention.

**Priest** (v. 31). Priests had served in Judaism since the time of Moses and Aaron. Their job entailed offering animal sacrifices, blessing the people, interpreting God's will as expressed in the law, and making pronouncements on various health issues among the people, categorizing them as clean or unclean. While we have no idea regarding the priest's reasoning for bypassing the wounded man, this detail is unimportant to the truth Jesus portrayed in the story. What is essential is the fact that he did not stop to help, not the reason why he did not help.

**Levite** (v. 32). The Levites were from the ancient tribe of Levi and were those who assisted in temple worship. The priests also came from the tribe of Levi, but were direct descendants of Aaron, a descendant of Levi. Both priests and the Levites were familiar with the requirements of the Mosaic law, which stipulated that God's people were to show mercy to those in need. For some unknown reason, they chose not to assist this wounded man.

**Other side** (v. 32) means to pass by opposite to. It is a picture of intentionally skirting around something in the road to avoid it. In reality, the priest and Levite simply marginalized this wounded man, avoiding him as they continued on about their own business.

## **Luke 10:33-37**

**Connection to the Point:** Jesus used a surprising "twist" in His story to show that love for others is seen in our actions.

**Samaritan** (v. 33). The origin of the Samaritans dates back to the days following King Solomon's death when ten of the tribes of Israel broke away from the two southern tribes. The capital city of these northern tribes was Samaria; thus, the entire region came to be known as Samaria. A little over two hundred years later, the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Samaria and deported most of the Israelites. In their place, captives from other nations were brought in and settled in the land. The intermarriage between these non-Israelites and some remaining Israelites in the land produced the people known as the Samaritans. The people of the Southern Kingdom of Judah were conquered and taken into exile in 586 BC by the Babylonians. The Samaritans were considered half-breeds by the Jews. Animosity grew between the Samaritans and Jews of Jerusalem when the Jewish people who returned from exile in Babylonia started rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple. The Jews refused the help of the Samaritans. From that time onward, the Jews and Samaritans hated one another. In Jesus's time, these groups typically had very little interaction with one another. They were quite vocal about their hatred for one another.

**Compassion** (v. 33). The Greek term for "compassion" means feeling emotion in the inward parts. Being moved inwardly means that the Samaritan felt pity and compassion for the wounded man. Rather than being repulsed by the man or reacting with fear or hatred, he reached out to extend aid.

**Went to him** (v. 34). Contrast this action with the actions of the priest and Levite, who went to the opposite side of the road to avoid having to tend to the man. Instead of turning away, the Samaritan stopped amid his journey to render aid.

**Bandaged his wounds** (v. 34). The Samaritan immediately recognized that this man needed medical attention. Using what he had with him, he tended to the man's wounds. The bandages for the wounds were likely pieces of the Samaritan's clothing since the robbers had stripped the wounded man. Being involved in this man's life came at a cost to the Samaritan.

**Olive oil and wine** (v. 34). The Samaritan made use of his resources to tend to the man. The wine, with its alcoholic content, would have served as a disinfectant for the wounds, while the olive oil would have moistened the skin and eased some of the pain. These were common remedies of the day.

**Put him on his own animal** (v. 34). Once more, the Samaritan sacrificed to meet the needs of this stranger. Either this man had been walking, or the robbers had taken his animal. The Samaritan put the man on his animal and walked the distance to an inn.

**Inn** (v. 34). Over time, a place of shelter or hospitality evolved from simply a sheltered area for sleeping outdoors to more formal structures for a resting place for travelers. First-century inns might have been walled compounds where travelers and their animals could rest, find food, and seek shelter. While some inns were open areas for sleeping, others had small rooms or cubicles where the travelers and their animals might stay. The reference here was to a more formal resting place where the wounded could be nursed back to health by an innkeeper.

**Two denarii** (v. 35) was the equivalent of two days' wages for a common laborer. This money would have covered expenses for this injured man for around a month or two.

**When I come back** (v. 35). One more reference is made to the unselfish nature of this despised Samaritan. Not only did he give of his time and resources, but he also made plans to return and complete the act of compassion. The Samaritan recognized his obligation to care for the wounded man, even if the inn was not along his regularly traveled route.

**Proved to be a neighbor** (v. 36). The lawyer had asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus's reply addressed a different question: which one acted like a true neighbor? The Samaritan's actions demonstrated he was the neighbor. His actions showed his obedience to the command, "Love you neighbor."

**Showed mercy** (v. 37) indicates a display of compassion or pity. The lawyer could not bring himself to say the name Samaritan. Instead, he used a generic reference to the one who showed mercy. Mercy was demonstrated by doing whatever was necessary to help the one in need.

**Go and do the same** (v. 37). For Jesus, it is not enough to talk in generalities. The lawyer wanted to speak in the abstract—who generally might be considered a neighbor. Jesus zoomed in on specifics with a story about a particular person in need. Now came the application: "Go and do the same." Don't debate; don't generalize; instead, show mercy to those in need.