

Who Alone can Love as the Samaritan Loves

July 10, 2016

Luke 10:25-29; 36-37 -- "On one occasion an expert in the law (lawyer) stood up to **test** Jesus. "Teacher", he asked, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' (We do nothing to inherit something. An inheritance is a free gift from our loving parents) *What is written in the Law? He replied (Jesus replied) How do you read it?* (Lawyers are looking for loop holes to find someone innocent or guilty depending upon whether they are a defending or prosecuting attorney)

He answered. 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 Love your neighbor as yourself.' (A quote from Deuteronomy 6:5 & Lev. 19:18) *You have answered correctly, Jesus replied. Do this and you will live. But he wanted to justify (acquit) himself, so he asked Jesus, And who is my neighbor? (fellow man) Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers? The expert in the law replied, 'The One Who had mercy on him.*

Jesus told him. Go and do likewise. (Jews did not like Samaritans)

America is asking the questions: Where do we go from here? How do we solve the problem of anger and hate and violence? [The shootings in MN. & Alabama & Texas.]

In the book of **Matthew 15:19** – Jesus gives some hard words concerning the heart of every human being. "**Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man "unclean".** Sin starts in the HEART!

At the seminary, one of the professors pointed out something that is clear, "*To change the person, we need to change the heart.*" But how is it possible to change the heart?

Peter gives insight in Acts 15:8-9 – "**God Who knows the heart, showed that He accepted them (The Gentiles) by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for He purified their hearts by faith.**"

And how is faith in Jesus created? **Romans 10:17** – "**Consequently Faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the Word of Christ.**"

It is as Ezekiel has written for us in **Ezekiel 36:25ff** – "**I (The LORD) will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 – I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you: I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 – I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. 29 – I will save you from all your uncleanness.**"

This morning we hear about an expert in the Law who wants to TEST Jesus with some questions. {In the Greek the word of expert in the law can also be translated as "Lawyer".} This lawyer's heart is not pure in his questioning of Jesus, instead of wanting to LEARN FROM Jesus, this Lawyer in reality is Testing Jesus. The Lawyer is being a wise guy.

Vs. 25 – **On one occasion an expert in the law (lawyer) stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher", he asked, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?'**

Regardless of how intelligent this lawyer thinks he is, do you notice the contradiction in his question?

When we inherit something, it is for free, yet the lawyer wants to do something to earn eternal life.

Jesus did not fall into the man's trap. Because Jesus is God and He reads hearts and minds. Jesus comes back with two questions.

Vs. 26 – *What is written in the Law? He replied (Jesus replied) How do you read it?*

The Expert in the Law / Lawyer knew what the Bible said, but he did not really know what it meant. He answered Jesus by quoting. Deut. 6:5 & Lev. 19:18

Vs. 27 – *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 Love your neighbor as yourself.*

To this response Jesus responded:

Vs. 28 – *You have answered correctly, Jesus replied. Do this and you will live.*

In other words, if a human being can keep the entire law of God perfectly we can obtain Eternal Life in Heaven. There is of course the other problem which goes much deeper. That deeper problem is that each individual human being must also get rid of the sinful heart and nature.

Unfortunately this Expert in the Law is blinded by his pride. Instead of humbling himself to Jesus and saying, I cannot live a perfect life, and I have not. Instead of asking for forgiveness, the Expert in the Law replies.

Vs. 29 – *But he wanted to justify (acquit) himself, so he asked Jesus, And who is my neighbor?* (fellow man)

It is to this that Jesus gives a plain, clear and simple message in the form of the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

The One Who ends up helping the man on the road after being beaten by thieves and left for dead is a Samaritan.

The fact that Jesus uses the example of the Samaritan is to emphasize a point.

The Jews and the Samaritans did not like one another. They actually hated one another, Yet it is not the Priest or the Levite, the religious leaders who help the man beaten, instead it is the Samaritan, the historic enemies of the Jews. The Samaritans were a mixed race, they were Jews who had intermarried with people of other nations. So the Jews would have considered the Samaritans half breeds.

And so Jesus emphasizes to the Expert in the Law (and to us) that we are to help anyone, even our enemy. As Jesus had pointed out in His Sermon on the Mountain recorded in **Matthew 5:44** – ***“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”***

How many of us would be willing to help someone who claims to belong to the group called ISIS?

My friends we hear of Christians who cannot even forgive fellow Christians, or family members who cannot even forgive fellow family members for what are perceived as wrongs. How then can they forgive someone considered an enemy? No wonder there are so many ruthless killings in our society!

Because this Expert in the Law demonstrated that he thought he could justify himself, Jesus did not give him the clear gospel for the Lawyer to trample.

Instead Jesus first asked the Lawyer:

Vs. 36 – *Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?*

Vs. 37 – *The expert in the law replied, ‘The One Who had mercy on him. Jesus told him. Go and do likewise.*

Since the Lawyer thought he could justify himself, Jesus put it right back on the man and said, Go at it! Give it your best shot. Keep on fooling yourself.

But this morning I ask You, Who is it that HAS Loved you and Loves You UNCONDITIONALLY?

The Jews and Samaritans were long-time enemies.

When Adam and Eve Fell into sin in the Garden of Eden, mankind became enemies of God. Yet God, in His Love, Promised a Savior. And He sent that Savior – His One and Only Son Jesus. Jesus Who left heaven, to come to earth to live the perfect life we cannot live and died the death that we deserve. Jesus came and suffered for us, that we can look forward to enjoying heaven where there is no more sin or death or sorrow.

As we are told in **Romans 5:8** – ***“God demonstrated His Own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”***

So Who is the Only True Good Samaritan? – Jesus.

Luke 10:33-35 – ***But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was, who was beaten: when He saw him, He took pity on him. The Samaritan went to the man who was beaten and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then He put the man on His Own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day the Samaritan took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. Look after him, the Samaritan said, and when I return I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.”***

What great Love God has poured out on us in Christ Jesus our Living and Loving Savior! AMEN