

Stretching Our Love

Key Verse: *“He answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.”*
—**Luke 10:27**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 10:25-37

the question: “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 10:25) Jesus, knowing the man’s apparent understanding of the Law, directed him in his answer to the Law of God, as it had been given to Moses.—Deut. 6:4-6

The lawyer responded very cleverly to Jesus by avoiding any mention of the first commandment respecting the standard of love that must be our primary obligation toward God. However, he challenged the meaning of the Law concerning his neighbor, perhaps making a distinction between Jews and Gentiles. “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?” (Luke 10:28,29) The fact that the man questioned

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that God gave to his human family may be divided into two separate categories. The first and foremost group relates to those duties, obligations, and responsibilities that man has toward God. The second part teaches what man’s responsibilities are toward his neighbor.

The Key Verse in this lesson records the words which were spoken by our Lord in response to one of the doctors of the Law who had tried to trap him with

whether or not God's law might not include everyone indicates his unwillingness to accept those he thought were less acceptable than others, those he regarded as publicans and sinners.

Jesus proceeded to teach a profound lesson on the subject, 'Who is my neighbour?' In the parable of the good Samaritan a certain priest, a servant of God and the highest representative of the Law, came upon a man who had been robbed and beaten, and left for dead alongside the road. Instead of stopping and offering help to his fellow man, the priest crossed over to the other side of the road while ignoring him, and continued on his way.

In the next instance in the parable, a Levite, who is not as high in rank as a priest, but one who is also dedicated to serving God as an instructor of the people, also came upon the man who was laying near death on the ground. He stopped briefly to look upon the poor man, but went on his way without offering any help.

The parable's third reference was a Gentile, one who was despised by the Jews and had no relationship with God. He found the destitute and dying man and lovingly responded to his need for assistance. "A certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."—Luke 10:33-35

The contrast between the three characters in the parable teaches a powerful lesson. "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."—vss. 36,37 ■