Jesus, My Good Samaritan

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Central Text: Luke 10:25–37 (ESV)

Introduction — Encountering the Heart of God

Three foundational realities establish the culture of revival and reformation:

1. The Goodness of God — God's goodness reveals His nature and character, drawing humanity toward repentance and restoration (Romans 2:4).
2. The Mercy of God — God's mercy reaches us in our brokenness, even when we cannot rescue ourselves (Ephesians 2:4–5).
3. The Love of God — God's love transforms us and empowers us to become conduits of His compassion and healing (1 John 4:19).

As believers who are committed to a Spirit-led culture, we must continually pursue the heart of God. The pathway is through personal revelation and encounters with His presence. It is this revelation, where we become increasingly confident in His love for us and for others.

This revelation produces a passionate pursuit of Jesus that compels us to minister in both power and love.

In Luke 10:25–37, Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan. While the central lesson concerns becoming a merciful neighbor, the Samaritan also provides a beautiful theological picture of the restorative ministry of Jesus Christ.

Today, we will explore how Jesus is our Good Samaritan and how His goodness transforms us into people who can reimage the heart of the Father.

I. The Law Reveals Our Need for Mercy (Luke 10:25–29)

Luke 10:25 — The expert in the Law tests Jesus

An expert in the Mosaic Law stands up to test Jesus, asking what he must do to inherit eternal life. This is a great question because it is one that we must all answer.

The Greek word translated test is ekpeirazō (ἐκπειράζω), meaning to put someone to the test or thoroughly examine them.

There is a profound irony in this encounter: a man who considers himself an expert in interpreting God's Law is attempting to examine Jesus Christ, the eternal Word made flesh.

Cross-references:

- John 1:14 — Jesus is the Word made flesh.
- John 5:39–40 — The Scriptures testify concerning Jesus.
- John 17:3 — Eternal life is knowing the Father and Jesus Christ.

The lawyer addresses Jesus as didaskale, from the Greek word didaskalos (διδάσκαλος), meaning teacher or instructor. The title itself is not disrespectful but highlights the confrontational nature of the exchange. The lawyer's heart is revealed through the lawyer's intention to test Jesus.

The lawyer's question concerns eternal life, expressed through the Greek words zōē aiōnios (ζωὴ αἰώνιος). This refers to the life of the age to come, eternal life experienced through relationship with God.

Practical application: The example of the Lawyer teaches us it is possible to possess theological knowledge without experiencing spiritual transformation.

We can know the language of Scripture, understand doctrine, and participate in religious activities while remaining disconnected from the transforming love of God.

The purpose of studying Scripture is not to accumulate information but to encounter Jesus and become transformed into His likeness through His Word.

Luke 10:26–27 — The greatest commandment

Jesus responds by asking the lawyer what is written in the Law and how he interprets it.

The lawyer correctly identifies the two greatest commandments:

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind (Deuteronomy 6:5).
- Love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18).

These commandments reveal the relational foundation of God's Law.

Our love for others flows from our revelation of God's love for us.

Cross-references:

- Matthew 22:37–40 — The Law and Prophets depend upon these commandments.
- Galatians 5:14 — The Law is fulfilled through loving our neighbor.
- 1 John 4:19 — We love because God first loved us.

Practical application: We cannot consistently demonstrate the character of God without continually cultivating intimacy with Him.

One aspect of possessing spiritual maturity is not simply measured by biblical knowledge or ministry accomplishments. It is demonstrated through our growing capacity to love God and others.

Luke 10:28–29 — The danger of self-justification

Jesus affirms the lawyer's answer. However, the lawyer attempts to justify himself by asking, "And who is my neighbor?"

The Greek word for neighbor is plēsion (πλησίον), referring to someone near or another person.

The lawyer wants to establish the boundaries of his responsibility.

Jesus is about to change his entire understanding of what it means to love others.

Cross-references:

- Ephesians 2:8–10 — Salvation is by grace through faith.
- Philippians 3:8–9 — Our righteousness comes through faith in Christ.
- James 2:13 — Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Practical application: Religious performance seeks validation through personal achievement. Genuine spiritual transformation produces humility because our identity and righteousness are grounded in Christ/

The lawyer asks, “who qualifies to receive his love”. Jesus teaches him to become the kind of person who demonstrates mercy without first determining whether someone deserves it.

II. The Broken Condition of Humanity (Luke 10:30)

Luke 10:30 — The traveler is attacked

Jesus describes a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho who is attacked by robbers, stripped of his clothing, beaten, and left half-dead.

The road from Jerusalem to Jericho descended through rugged terrain, providing a realistic setting for robbery and violence.

The traveler is helpless, vulnerable, and unable to rescue himself.

Although Jesus presents an actual journey within the story, we can also recognize a theological illustration of humanity's fallen condition in this narrative.

1. The man was stripped — Humanity's loss of dignity and covering

The robbers removed the man's clothing, leaving him exposed and humiliated.

This provides a picture of humanity's spiritual condition following the Fall.

In Genesis 3:7–10, Adam and Eve became conscious of their nakedness and experienced shame and separation from God.

Sin produces alienation, shame, and the loss of spiritual intimacy.

Cross-reference: Isaiah 61:10 — God clothes His people with salvation and righteousness.

Practical application: Jesus restores our identity and dignity. We are no longer defined by our failures, shame, or past experiences.

2. The man was beaten — The destructive consequences of evil

The robbers violently attacked the traveler.

The Greek word lēstēs (λῃστής) refers to a robber or bandit.

While the robbers are literal characters in the parable, their destructive behavior illustrates the nature of evil in a fallen world.

John 10:10 describes the thief's destructive purpose in contrast with Jesus' mission to bring abundant life.

People today experience wounds through rejection, betrayal, abuse, sin, grief, and broken relationships.

Practical application: Jesus does not ignore the wounds people carry. He sees the brokenhearted and invites them to experience His restorative love.

3. The man was left half-dead — Humanity cannot rescue itself

The traveler was abandoned in a condition where he could not provide for his own recovery.

This illustrates humanity's spiritual helplessness apart from God's grace.

Cross-references:

- Ephesians 2:1–5 — God makes us alive in Christ because of His great mercy.
- Romans 5:6 — Christ died for us while we were still weak.

- Colossians 1:13–14 — God delivers us from darkness and brings us into the kingdom of His Son.

Theological emphasis: The Gospel is not the story of humanity finding its way back to God through religious effort. It is the story of God coming to rescue humanity through Jesus Christ.

Practical application: There are people in our churches who appear healthy externally but carry deep wounds internally.

They may know how to worship, serve, and participate in ministry while silently struggling with shame, rejection, or emotional pain.

Jesus sees beyond their outward appearance. His mercy reaches the places that human observation cannot see.

III. Religion Without Compassion Cannot Restore the Broken (Luke 10:31–32)

Luke 10:31 — The priest passes by

Jesus introduces a priest traveling along the same road.

The priest sees the wounded traveler but passes by on the other side.

The Greek word hiereus (ἱερεύς) refers to a priest, someone responsible for sacred duties and religious service.

The priest represents an individual closely associated with the worship and religious institutions of Israel.

According to Numbers 19:11–13 and Leviticus 21:1–4, contact with a dead body could produce ceremonial uncleanness. However, Jesus does not tell us why the priest refused to help.

The central lesson is that he encountered human suffering but failed to respond with compassion.

Cross-references:

- Hosea 6:6 — God desires steadfast love rather than sacrifice.
- Matthew 9:13 — Jesus emphasizes mercy.
- James 2:14–17 — Genuine faith expresses itself through action.

Practical application: It is possible to become so consumed with religious activity that we neglect the very people God has called us to love.

Churches can have excellent worship, programs, and theological teaching while failing to demonstrate the compassion of Jesus.

Our ministry activity must never become more important than the people we are called to serve.

Luke 10:32 — The Levite passes by

The Levite also encounters the wounded traveler and passes by.

The Levites were members of the tribe of Levi who performed various responsibilities associated with Israel's worship and temple service.

Like the priest, the Levite sees the wounded man but does not intervene.

Jesus is exposing the danger of religious activity that is disconnected from the heart of God.

Cross-reference: 1 Corinthians 13:1–3 – Definition of Love

Paul teaches that even extraordinary spiritual gifts and sacrificial actions have no spiritual value without love.

This is particularly important for the Spirit-filled Church.

We should passionately pursue the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit, but those gifts must operate through the love and character of Jesus.

Practical application: Spiritual maturity is not measured exclusively by how powerfully we minister. It is also revealed by how deeply we love.

A genuine culture of revival must be characterized by both supernatural power and authentic compassion for people because it is the love of God that brings transformation.

IV. Jesus Reveals the Heart of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:33)

Luke 10:33 — The Samaritan was moved with compassion

Jesus introduces a Samaritan who encounters the wounded traveler.

This would have surprised His original audience because of the longstanding religious and cultural tensions between Jews and Samaritans.

The Samaritans traced their heritage to ancient Israel but differed from Judean Jews in matters of religious identity, worship, and sacred tradition.

John 4:9 demonstrates the strained relationship between these communities.

Yet Jesus deliberately makes the Samaritan the hero of His parable.

The person least expected to demonstrate mercy becomes the one who reveals the heart of God in this parable.

The Greek word for compassion

Luke uses the Greek verb splanchnizomai (σπλαγχνίζομαι), describing deep inward compassion.

This word communicates more than intellectual sympathy. It describes compassion that moves someone to respond.

The same Greek verb appears in Gospel accounts describing the compassion of Jesus.

Cross-references:

- Matthew 9:36 — Jesus was moved with compassion for the crowds.
- Matthew 14:14 — Jesus demonstrated compassion by healing the sick.
- Luke 7:13 — Jesus had compassion for the widow of Nain.

Jesus, our Good Samaritan

The Samaritan provides a powerful theological illustration of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Jesus entered a world filled with spiritual darkness, human suffering, and brokenness.

He did not distance Himself from humanity's pain. He entered our world through the Incarnation, identified with our weakness, and ultimately bore our sins through His sacrificial death.

Cross-reference: Hebrews 4:15–16

Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest who understands human weakness and invites us to approach God's throne of grace.

Practical application: Compassion requires more than recognizing another person's suffering. It requires drawing near and demonstrates God’s love in tangible ways.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to see people through the eyes of Jesus rather than through our prejudices, assumptions, or personal discomfort.

The Samaritan did not ask whether the wounded man deserved mercy. He responded to the need before him.

Theological emphasis: God's goodness is not dependent on a person’s worthiness. His mercy flows from His own nature and character.

V. Jesus Is Our Healer, Restorer, and Redeemer (Luke 10:34–35)

Luke 10:34 — The Samaritan bandaged the wounds

The Samaritan approaches the wounded man and begins caring for his injuries.

His compassion produces action.

In the same way, Jesus' earthly ministry reveals the Father's desire to bring healing and restoration to broken humanity.

Cross-references:

- Psalm 147:3 — God heals the brokenhearted and binds their wounds.
- Isaiah 61:1–3 — The anointed servant brings good news, freedom, and restoration.
- Luke 4:18–19 — Jesus announces the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophetic promise.

Practical application: Jesus is not indifferent to our emotional wounds, spiritual struggles, or physical suffering.

We can bring every part of our lives before Him, trusting in His goodness and compassionate care.

The oil — A picture of the Holy Spirit's ministry

The Samaritan applies oil as part of his treatment of the wounded traveler.

Throughout Scripture, oil is also associated with anointing, consecration, and healing.

While the oil in this parable serves a practical purpose, it provides a meaningful illustration of the restorative ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Cross-references:

- Isaiah 61:3 — The oil of gladness replaces mourning.
- James 5:14–15 — The elders pray for the sick and anoint them with oil.
- Acts 10:38 — God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power.

Charismatic application: The Holy Spirit continues to bring comfort, renewal, conviction, empowerment, and transformation to believers.

We are called to minister through dependence on Jesus’ presence and power.

The wine — A picture of cleansing and sanctification

The Samaritan uses wine as part of the treatment of the man's wounds.

Wine had practical uses in ancient wound care.

We can also draw an illustrative connection to the cleansing and sanctifying work of God.

Cross-references:

- Titus 3:5 — The washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.
- 1 John 1:7 — The blood of Jesus cleanses us from sin.
- 1 Corinthians 6:11 — Believers are washed, sanctified, and justified.

Practical application: Jesus does more than forgive our sins. Through the ongoing ministry of the Holy Spirit, He transforms our character, renews our minds, and empowers us to walk in holiness.

The animal — Jesus carries our burdens

The Samaritan places the wounded man upon his own animal and transports him to an inn.

The traveler does not have to complete the journey in his own strength.

This beautifully illustrates the invitation of Jesus.

Cross-reference: Matthew 11:28–30

Jesus invites the weary and burdened to come to Him and receive rest.

Practical application: Many Christians continue carrying emotional, relational, and spiritual burdens that Jesus invites them to surrender.

Restoration begins when we recognize our dependence upon His grace.

Luke 10:35 — The Samaritan pays the price

The Samaritan provides two denarii to the innkeeper and promises to cover any additional expenses.

His compassion costs him something.

Here we discover a profound illustration of the Gospel.

Just as the Samaritan paid for the wounded man's care, Jesus paid the price for our redemption through His sacrificial death.

Cross-references:

- Isaiah 53:4–5 — The suffering servant bears our griefs and carries our sorrows.
- 1 Peter 2:24 — Christ bore our sins in His body on the tree.
- Romans 5:8 — God demonstrates His love through Christ's death for sinners.
- 1 Peter 1:18–19 — We are redeemed through the precious blood of Christ.

The wounded traveler had nothing to offer the Samaritan. His restoration began with the compassion and generosity of another.

Likewise, salvation is not something we purchase through religious performance. It is the gift of God's grace through Jesus Christ.

Theological emphasis: Jesus is our Good Samaritan. He comes near in our brokenness, ministers His mercy to our wounds, carries what we cannot carry, and has paid the price for our redemption.

VI. Becoming a Conduit of God's Mercy (Luke 10:36–37)

Luke 10:36 — Jesus changes the question

The lawyer originally asked Jesus who his neighbor was.

Jesus concludes the parable by asking which of the three men proved to be a neighbor to the wounded traveler.

This is the transformational moment in the narrative.

Jesus shifts the emphasis from identifying who deserves our compassion to becoming someone who demonstrates compassion.

Luke 10:37 — Go and do likewise

The lawyer identifies the neighbor as the one who showed mercy.

Jesus commands him to do likewise.

The entire parable moves toward this practical challenge.

Three characteristics of a revival culture:

1. We encounter the goodness of God. Our identity is grounded in His grace rather than religious performance.
2. We demonstrate the mercy of Jesus. We move toward wounded people instead of avoiding them.

3. We minister through the power of the Holy Spirit. We pray for healing, proclaim the Gospel, and offer practical expressions of love.

Cross-references:

- Micah 6:8 — Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.
- Ephesians 5:1–2 — Imitate God and walk in love.
- 1 John 3:17–18 — Love must be expressed through actions and truth.

Practical application: Every believer has opportunities to demonstrate the heart of the Father.

We may encounter wounded people in our families, workplaces, neighborhoods, and churches.

The question is whether we will pass by or allow the compassion of Jesus to move us toward them.

Conclusion — Encounter His Mercy and Become His Hands (2 minutes)

The Parable of the Good Samaritan reveals the heart of God toward broken humanity and challenges us to become people who demonstrate His compassion.

Jesus is our Good Samaritan.

He came into our broken world, identified with our suffering, paid the price for our redemption, and opened the way for reconciliation with the Father.

His goodness restores our identity. His mercy reaches us in our weakness. His love transforms our hearts.

Yet His restorative work does not end with us.

The same mercy we have received must become the mercy we demonstrate.

Three closing challenges:

1. Receive His mercy. Bring your wounds, failures, and burdens before Jesus. His grace is sufficient, and His love is greater than your brokenness.
2. Reflect His character. Allow the Holy Spirit to transform your attitudes, relationships, and responses to others.
3. Release His compassion. Become someone who brings hope, encouragement, prayer, practical care, and the healing love of Jesus to a hurting world.

A genuine culture of revival is not measured only by supernatural manifestations or spiritual experiences. It is also demonstrated through transformed lives, authentic compassion, and the restoration of broken people.

Closing Prayer