

Lesson Overview

Biblical Passage Luke 10:25-37

Supporting Passage Leviticus 19:18-19,33-34

Memory Verse Luke 10:27

Table Talk Question Should Christians always be kind?

Biblical Truth God calls believers to treat others with compassion, respect, and concern.

Context Jesus continued His teachings about how to treat others when He encountered a Jewish leader. The leader attempted to test Jesus' interpretation of the Law. As a part of His response, Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan to emphasize that people should have compassion and concern for others, regardless of background or ethnicity.

Learning Goals

- Learners will identify Jesus' requirements for the way we treat others.
- Learners will examine their relational habits against that of Christ's expectations of loving others as one's self.

Prayer Suggestions

As you prepare to teach this lesson, pray for those in your group:

- Pray that students will examine Jesus' requirements for the way believers are to treat others.
- Pray that students will examine their relational habits against that of Christ's expectations of loving others as one's self.
- Pray that students will know God's heart concerning His love for all people.

Biblical Commentary

Investigation

The hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans was well established when this Jewish leader approached Jesus. In trying to test Him, the leader never anticipated Jesus' response. Jesus used parables and hyperboles in order to state the obvious in not-so-obvious ways. This time, however, Jesus' illustration was pointed and obvious and would have even stung the typical Jew of that day. Because of old and deep prejudices, Jews went out of their way to avoid Samaria and Samaritans. Jesus' use of a Jewish enemy as the story's hero would have been difficult for His audience to accept. Nevertheless, the point would have been undeniable—even for the Jewish lawyer.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan is specific to Luke because of His **Gentile** background. A parallel to the introductory conversation with the lawyer is found in Mark 12:28-31.

Importance

This passage teaches that **Jesus is God and Savior**. When asked what the greatest commandment is, Jesus spoke with authority to confirm it. He also spoke with authority on the definition of who one's neighbor is. Because Jesus is God, His authority in faith and in relationships is entirely sufficient.

Interpretation

Luke 10:25 While Jesus was teaching, a lawyer approached Him. In the New Testament, the designation of lawyer was used to identify an expert on the details of the Jewish religion. Numerous commentaries and several other Bible translations are in agreement that the lawyer was, in fact, an expert in the Mosaic Law, probably in addition to knowing the pharisaical law which Jesus frequently condemned. This man, therefore, had excellent religious credentials. His life had been spent studying the Law and teaching people to obey it. The lawyer attempted to test Jesus, possibly to see what kind of teacher He was. His question was not necessarily meant to be hostile. How to obtain eternal life and how the Law was to be interpreted were often discussed among the Jewish religious leaders.

Luke 10:26-27 Since the man had studied the Law, Jesus asked him to answer the question from his interpretation of it. The lawyer knew the answer from Scripture: Eternal life was found by loving God completely and loving your neighbor as yourself (Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18).

In the Old Testament the word *neighbor* was used to describe people who lived in the same area. The word included those for whom one would take responsibility. By Jesus' time, however, rabbis had interpreted the word

more strictly to include only those who were Jews and who followed the Law. The lawyer's response to Jesus was based on this understanding of a neighbor.

Luke 10:28 Jesus affirmed that if the lawyer kept these commandments, the man would find eternal life. Jesus' response was based on the true understanding of loving God completely and loving others as God loved them. His response was not meant to tell the lawyer his understanding of his neighbor was correct, but rather, that God's law was more demanding.

Luke 10:29 The lawyer responded, "And who is my neighbor?" With this question, he wanted to know how far love for people had to extend. Jews thought that only Jews were their neighbors. Jesus wanted people to understand that even their enemies were their neighbors. Loving God has no limits.

Luke 10:30 Jesus helped the lawyer define who his neighbor was by telling him a story. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was extremely dangerous. A traveler would face a little more than 20 miles of steep, rocky terrain. The road was narrow with sudden turns and dropped 3,600 feet in elevation—all of which made for prime conditions for robbers and bandits. The first character that Jesus introduced was a man who had been robbed, beaten, stripped of his clothes, and left half dead while traveling this road.

Luke 10:31 Next, Jesus introduced a priest. The priest saw the wounded man while he was traveling down the same road. The priest was carrying out his religious duties because he was returning ("going down") from the holy city of Jerusalem. Jesus' story gave no explanation of the priest's thoughts. He may have considered what it would cost him to help the man, but he probably would not have been able to tell whether the man was dead or alive. He might have been concerned since he would have been **ceremonially defiled** if he touched a dead person (Lev. 21:1). Some scholars suggest, however, that since the priest was returning from the Temple it would not have mattered if he became defiled. He also may have been thinking about the possibility of the robbers returning or how helping the man would affect the business he was tending to. Ultimately, he thought the price was too high. Not only did he decide not to help; he crossed to the other side of the road.

Luke 10:32 Jesus next described a Levite. **Levites** were also religious men whose job was to assist in maintaining the Temple services. He too would have been risking ceremonial defilement to touch the man if he were dead. Since Levites traveled to Jerusalem in groups, the fact that he was alone showed that he, too, was traveling back from Jerusalem. Ceremonial defilement should not have been a concern. As a Jew and a religious man, the lawyer would have identified with the priest and the Levite. He would have expected a priest and a Levite to be the most likely people to help the man. In the actions of both the priest and the Levite, Jesus drew pictures of men who were more concerned with their own wellbeing than with the needs of another.

Luke 10:33-34 Jesus then introduced a man whom the lawyer would have least expected to help the hurting man—a **Samaritan**. Longstanding racial and religious issues created tension between the Jews and the Samaritans. In contrast to the priest and Levite, however, the Samaritan "took pity" (felt deeply) on the injured traveler. He cleaned the beaten man's wounds with wine and used oil to soothe his pain. He probably would have used pieces of his own clothing to bind the man's wounds. The Samaritan then put the man on his own donkey. This meant that the Samaritan had to walk. He took the man to an inn and spent all night caring for him. With each example of the Samaritan's compassionate care, Jesus constructed a picture of sacrificially caring for others.

Luke 10:35 The Samaritan not only covered the bill that night, but he also left enough money to take care of the man for one to two more months. Plus he also promised the innkeeper to cover any other expenses the man might need. Jesus presented a classic reversal: The hated Samaritan had become the story's hero, showing the

kind of love that those desiring to please God should imitate.

Luke 10:36-37 Jesus concluded His story by leading the lawyer to answer his own question about the identity of his neighbor. Jesus asked, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The obvious answer was the Samaritan. But the lawyer could only bring himself to say, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus then answered the lawyer's first question. To receive eternal life, Jesus answered, "Go and do likewise." God's requirement was to love others. To do less would be unacceptable.

Implications

How many times have we made excuses not to love people we don't like? In asking Jesus to define *neighbor*, the lawyer was really asking, "Whom do I have to love?" and "Whom can I ignore?" In this story, Jesus revealed that the better question would be, "Whose neighbor can I be?" Christian love should have no limits. Our neighbor is anyone in need. How can you encourage your students to get involved in helping their neighbors? Specifically, who in your community is in need?

Christian love comes with a cost. In essence, the priest and the Levite each asked, "If I help the man, what is it going to cost *me*?" The Samaritan looked at the hurting man and asked, "If I *don't* help him, what is it going to cost *him*?" Christians should act for the good of other people regardless of who they are or what it may cost. What ways can you and your students actively focus on putting the needs of others above your own?

The story accuses those who are proud of their religion yet limit their love for those who are different from them. Christian love goes the extra mile. It does not settle for the minimum. How often are we guilty of only doing enough to make ourselves feel better? Such things as race, politics, religion, money, time, or energy should not limit Christian love. We should love others as Christ has loved us: lavishly. Christians are identified by their ability to love each other and their enemies (Jn. 13:34-35; Lk. 6:27). How do your students show God's love to each other and to outsiders?

Teaching Plan

Connect

Review Questions

(5–8 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will answer five review questions from the previous lesson.

Print one copy of the “Review Questions” activity sheet for your use.

After greeting students, use the review questions to test what they can recall from the previous lesson as well as to provide context for today’s lesson.

Master Teacher Option: Concentric Neighborhoods

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will identify how they relate to people in different geographical regions.

Provide a marker and dry erase board and marker.

On the board, draw five concentric circles so it looks like a target. In the small inner circle, write **Your Street**. Then, moving from the center outward, label the circles as follows: **Your Town**; **Your State**; **Your Country**; **The World**. Divide students into groups of four or five and give each group a sheet of paper and a pen. Explain that students will be working together to come up with a number of people for each category based on specific criteria. For each of the following, allow 30 seconds for students to work together before moving to the next category:

- **Your Street**: How many people do you know WELL on the street where you live (that means you know their names, what they do for a living)? Get a total for the entire group.
- **Your Town**: How many people do you know WELL in the town in which you live (that means you know their names, hang out with them)? Get a total for the entire group.
- **Your State**: How many people do you know WELL in the state in which you live (that means you know their names, spend time with them)? Get a total for the entire group.
- **Your Country**: How many people do you know WELL in the country in which you live (that means you know them, spend time with them, pray for them)? Get a total for the entire group.
- **The World**: How many people do you know WELL in the world in which you live (that means you know them, spend time with them, pray for them)? Get a total for the entire group.

After students have responded to each category, call for totals for each from all groups, writing the total sums in the corresponding circles. Ask: **What does this suggest about who you know best? According to these responses, who would you include as your neighbors?** After responses, explain that Jesus widened the definition of a neighbor to include all people.

Explore

Interactive Core Study: The Parable of the Good Samaritan

(15-20 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will study Luke 10:25-37 to examine Jesus' requirements for how to treat others with compassion and care.

Provide a copy of the Student Worksheet and a pen for each student. Also provide a dry erase board and markers.

Learning Goal: Students will examine Jesus' requirements for the way believers are to treat others.

Pass out pens and copies of the Student Worksheet. Point out that the term "Good Samaritan" is probably one of the most widely recognized biblical phrases in the United States. Share that this term, when used in newscasts, usually involves a story about acts of kindness. Explain that Jesus was approached by a Jewish leader and asked about His interpretation of the Law. Point out that He used a parable to define neighbors. Say: **Was Jesus really trying to teach us to do random acts of kindness? What was His point? That's what we are going to look at today.**

1. We can find correct answers through seeking Scripture (Luke 10:25-28).

Invite students to name some sources from which our culture seeks answers and direction. (*Possible answers: friends, Internet, family, Oprah, self-help books, horoscopes, prayer*) List answers on the board. After discussing multiple sources, encourage students to evaluate the answers on the board with where they look for answers. Ask: **Why do people not turn to the Bible for answers all the time?**

Enlist a volunteer to read Luke 10:25-28. Explain that the title "lawyer" indicates that the man was an expert in the study of the Law. Ask: **Why did Jesus instruct the lawyer to look to the Law for his answer?** (*He had spent his life searching the Law for answers.*) Emphasize that Jesus' response indicated a deeper meaning to the man's interpretation of the Law. Ask: **Why do you think Jesus used this method with the man?** (*He wanted to hear the man's understanding of what the Law said about eternal life, not just quiz his memory and recall skills.*) Encourage students to write *answers* and *Scripture* in the first blanks on their worksheets.

2. We can jump to the wrong assumptions when we believe prejudices (Luke 10:29-35).

Read Luke 10:29-35. Point out that the lawyer was not asking for a literal definition of the word "neighbor." Ask: **What was the lawyer really asking?** (*"Who deserves to receive my kindness?"*) Remind students that the lawyer was a member of the religious community as well as a Jew. Lead students to discuss the following:

- **Why might the lawyer have understood the actions of the law community, the priest, and the Levites?** (*They were religious leaders and worried about how their actions would impact their ability to serve.*)
- **Why might the lawyer have struggled to understand the actions of the Samaritan?** (*Jews*

had a blind hatred for Samaritans, so he would not have expected them to do anything good.)

Point out that the lawyer had assumed religious and social obligations would limit who he should show love, but that his incorrect assumption led to a misinterpretation of God's Word.

Ask: **What was Jesus's point for intentionally including these different types of people in the parable?** (*No one has an excuse not to take care of a neighbor; neighbors can be people that we do not know.*) Say: **According to this passage, there should be no boundaries in showing love.** Encourage students to complete the second statement on the worksheets with *assumptions* and *prejudices*.

3. We can imitate Christ by loving others (Luke 10:36-37).

Read Luke 10:36-37. Ask: **How did Jesus' question encourage the lawyer to reconsider his beliefs?** (*It forced him to compare the actions of those considered righteous, who did not demonstrate this, with those who were considered unrighteous and demonstrated righteousness.*) Emphasize that Jesus used the parable to show how far Jewish interpretation of the Law had moved from the Law's true meaning.

Ask: **What was remarkable about the Samaritan's compassion?** (*He was selfless and generous with his resources and time, willing to sacrifice his own possessions for someone he did not know.*) Direct students to the "Love your Neighbor" section of their student worksheets. Encourage students to record ways they can show love and kindness to others. Point out that the Samaritan's sacrificial actions mirrored Jesus' compassionate love. Encourage students to complete the final blank on their worksheets with *imitate*.

Share that **Jesus is God and Savior**, He died for *all people*, He loves *all people*, and He desires to save *all people*. Emphasize that, since God's love always seeks to benefit others, the command to love our neighbor as ourselves is the command to seek the benefit of our neighbor, throwing all selfishness aside. Say: **Jesus is concerned that we express the verb of being a good neighbor to our neighbors across the street and across the globe because He desires for others to see Him through us.**

Master Teacher Key Study: The Parable of the Good Samaritan

(15-20 minutes, easy set-up) □

Students will study Luke 10:25-37 to examine Jesus' requirements for the way believers are to treat others.

Print one copy of the Master Teacher Key Study for your use. Provide a copy of the Student Worksheet and a pen for each student.

Learning Goal: Students will examine Jesus' requirements for the way believers are to treat others.

Pass out pens and copies of the Student Worksheet. Then, use the Master Teacher Key Study to teach Luke 10:25-37.

Transform

Deeper Discussion

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will examine their relational habits against that of Christ's expectations of loving others as one's self.

Provide index card and pens.

Learning Goal: Students will examine their relational habits against that of Christ's expectations of loving others as one's self.

Distribute index cards and pens to students. Instruct students to write the name of one person they know who is kind to everyone. After several minutes, encourage students to share who they wrote and why. Lead students to discuss their own treatment of their neighbors by asking:

- **How can our search for answers be dangerous if we do not search Scripture?**
- **What boundaries do we tend to use as excuses to avoid caring for people?**
- **If we consider someone who lives in Africa to be our neighbor just as much as the person who lives next door, how should that affect how we relate to Africa?**
- **If the way you love people is the only evidence of how much you love God, how much would people think you love Him?**

Point out that the world may have a difficult time believing in our God, if we don't act in a way that shows His influence. If you can think of a time when you failed to be a Good Samaritan, share it. Challenge students to commit to radically living out Jesus' call. Close by praying that students would allow themselves to love others especially those who are hard to love.

Master Teacher Option: Character Witness

(10 minutes, easy setup)

Students will discuss how they would rate themselves from the standpoint of their neighbor.

Provide paper and pens. Also provide a dry erase board and marker.

Learning Goal: Students will examine their relational habits against that of Christ's expectations of loving others as one's self.

Pass out paper and pens. Say: **People watch us every day, whether we know it or not.** Encourage students to imagine that they are their own next-door neighbors. Instruct students to write down examples of how they would favorably or unfavorably observe themselves from the viewpoint of their neighbors. After a couple of minutes, ask: **Would your neighbor have enough testimony that a court would find you neighborly? What if the character witness was your worst enemy? Would he or she be able to provide evidence of your indifference or love extended to him or her?**

After discussion, remind students that our lives are a testimony of how Christ impacts the way we live.

Draw a circle on the dry erase board, and encourage students to silently pray on ways that they can be better neighbors to those who live near them. Next, draw a larger circle around the first and encourage students to prayerfully consider how to be a better neighbor to those who live in their community and throughout their state. Draw a third circle around the other two and encourage students to prayerfully consider how to be better neighbors to the world. Close by voicing a prayer of thanksgiving aloud, thanking Jesus for loving us without boundaries or requirements.

Take Home Activity

Family Devotion

(10-15 minutes at home, easy set-up)

Distribute copies of the Family Devotion to students and encourage them to share the devotion with their family.

A copy of the Family Devotion will be included in your lesson PDF download.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

(5-8 minutes, easy set-up)

Use these questions to review the content from Lesson 24: "The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant"
The correct answer for each question is printed in bold, italic font.

1. Who asked Jesus how many times he should forgive his brother who sins against him?
 - a. John
 - b. James
 - c. Peter**
 - d. Matthew
2. How did Jesus respond to Peter's question of how many times to forgive his brother?
 - a. 1 extra time
 - b. 7 times
 - c. 77 times**
 - d. Never again
3. What was meant by Jesus' response to Peter, stating he should forgive his brother not 7 times, but 77 times?
 - a. That there is no set number, but as many times as it takes**
 - b. That we should take the number 77 as literal
 - c. That 77 times is a perfect number
 - d. That our brother will have stopped sinning by the 77th time
4. How did the master respond to his servant's plea for mercy by begging him to be patient in paying back his debt?
 - a. He had him thrown in prison.
 - b. He sold his family into slavery.
 - c. He left in anger.
 - d. He canceled the debt.**
5. How did the servant, who had received forgiveness from his master, treat his fellow servant who owed him a debt?
 - a. He was merciful, forgiving his debt.
 - b. He left in anger.
 - c. He had the fellow servant thrown into prison.**
 - d. He informed the master of this servant's debt.

LESSON 25

CHRISTOS
STUDENT EDITION

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Biblical Passage: Luke 10:25–37

Memory Verse: Luke 10:27

And he answered, “You shall 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 your neighbor as yourself.”

1. We can find correct _____ through seeking _____ (Luke 10:25–28).
2. We can jump to the wrong _____ when we believe _____ (Luke 10:29–35).
3. We can _____ Christ by loving others (Luke 10:36–37).

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can our search for answers be dangerous if we do not search Scripture?
- What boundaries do we tend to use as excuses to avoid caring for people?
- If we consider someone who lives in Africa to be our neighbor just as much as the person who lives next door, how should that affect how we relate to Africa?
- If the way you love people is the only evidence of how much you love God, how much would people think you love Him?

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORS

What are ways you can show love and kindness to the following:

- Teacher _____
- Friend _____
- Family _____
- Bully _____
- Person you dislike _____
- Stranger _____
- Odd kid at school _____
- Coach _____

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT . . .

“If we cannot show love for others, both for our neighbors and for our brothers and sisters in the Lord, it is a red flag that something is very wrong in our relationship with Christ.”—Dee Brestin and Kathy Toccoli

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

(15-20 minutes, easy set-up)

Use this outline and any of the corresponding activities to share the Biblical Truth with students.

Introduction: “Good Samaritan” is probably one of the most widely recognized biblical phrases in the United States. When we hear it used in newscasts, the stories surrounding it usually involves acts of kindness. Jesus was approached by a Jewish leader and asked about His interpretation of the Law. He used a parable to define neighbors and to show love. But was Jesus really trying to teach us to do random acts of kindness? What was His point?

1. We can find correct answers through seeking Scripture (Luke 10:25–28).

Biblical Background: Jesus affirmed the Law (God’s Word) as the guidebook for living out our faith (vv. 25–26). Jesus brought a new and deeper understanding to the interpretation of God’s Word (vv. 27–28).

Illustration: In his book *Falling in Love with the Bible*, Mike Macintosh wrote, “We may read other books that are exciting or insightful or helpful—but only the Bible is the Holy Spirit–inspired, life giving, joy-producing revelation from heaven.”

Application: One can pretty much find the answer to anything online. Just type in a subject and thousands of sites offer answers all your questions and fix all your problems. While you can find any opinion you want online, Scripture is the only place where you will find truth for every situation.

2. We can jump to the wrong assumptions when we believe prejudices (Luke 10:29–35).

Biblical Background: Jesus used the Samaritan to illustrate that boundaries do not exist with neighbors (vv. 30–33). Jesus also used the Samaritan to illustrate that neighbors demonstrate concern for other neighbors (vv. 34–35).

Illustration: While addressing Jesus’ love, Stephen Mosley wrote, “When it comes to racial and cultural and ideological boundaries, Jesus just doesn’t get it. And His perspective is what matters. No dividing lines we draw can be significant after Christ shed his priceless blood for every human being on the planet” (*Secrets of Jesus’ Touch*).

Application: The Samaritan, someone from a race of people that the Jews didn’t like, was the hero of this story. Just because someone is different than you doesn’t mean they are not good. When we make judgments based on prejudices they are inevitably wrong.

3. We can imitate Christ by loving others (Luke 10:36–37).

Biblical Background: Jesus used the Samaritan as an unlikely contrast before the religious leaders to illustrate God's expectations for loving people (v. 36). Jesus affirmed the command to love people as a continuation of loving God (v. 37).

Illustration: Neighbors are more than just the two families who live next door to you. Neighbors are everyone you come across in your community, schools, or even online. It is your responsibility to show your love for others through acts of kindness and goodwill.

Application: Because of our relationship with Christ, we are called to love others. He commands us to love everyone, not just those easy to love. When we show love to others, we show our love for Christ.

Conclusion: Jesus led the lawyer to consider that loving your neighbor is more about how you can love than to whom you show that love. He eliminated any boundaries so that people across the world are as much our neighbors as the people who live next door. The expectation is that we will show love to all people in a manner worthy of being called a neighbor.

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THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

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LESSON 25

CHRISTOS
STUDENT EDITION

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Biblical Passage: Luke 10:25–37

They aren't inconspicuous. They line up along the south wall of the high school, cigarettes in hand, blowing smoke, dark circles around their eyes either by make-up or because of the mark life has already left on them. This is the "rough crowd." They're to be left alone, untouchables not to be messed with. How do we want our kids to deal with them? Are they our neighbors? If so, can we afford to just pass by on the other side and ignore them day after day as though they don't even exist?

Read Luke 10:25–37. Jesus' parable presented to the teacher of the Law had deep cultural implications. Jews hated Samaritans and looked down on them as the refuse of society. Jesus' words, therefore, must have been totally unexpected in response to the teacher's question. Yet Jesus was not going to let this major issue go untouched. It had to be addressed.

Every day, we pass by those we wish we could somehow ignore. They are different, dirty, homeless, of a different color or race. Can we ignore them? Jesus said no. He has gone so far as to declare that they are our neighbors. Through Him, we have been given the power and ability to love those the world has forsaken. How can our family commit to showing love to all people as if they were our neighbors? Why does Jesus call us to show love to those who are the most unlikely to receive love from the world?

CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

- How do nations and cultures define our understanding of the word *neighbor*? How does Jesus define the word *neighbor*?
- Who are the people in our personal world who are seen as untouchables? Why do we feel that way?
- Who are our neighbors? How do we as a family interact with our neighbors?