

THE LOOKOUT

MAY 2022

Unit: LUKE (Part 2) Theme: Jesus the Storyteller

Overview: Bible scholar Kenneth Bailey described Jesus as a metaphoric theologian. Beyond that, Jesus was a storyteller without equal. In this second month of lessons from Luke, we focus on Jesus’ parables from the travel narrative section of the Gospel (chapters 9–19). Jesus’ stories begin in reality but move to fictional analogy as they subvert our ideas of neighbors, riches, God, and prayer.

HOW TO USE

Each week has a **lesson aim**, **lesson text**, and **supplemental text**.

LESSON AIM: Go and show mercy.

TEXT: Luke 10:1-6

LESSON TEXT: Luke 10:21-25

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: Leviticus 19:8, James 2:1-5, Romans 12:8-10

STORY

THE STORY OF THE NEIGHBORS
BY MARK SCOTT

The first night back before the others, "Mark" is...
The parable of the Good Samaritan is probably...
The parable of the fig tree is probably...
The parable of the speck and the log is probably...
The parable of the mustard seed is probably...
The parable of the yeast is probably...
The parable of the sower is probably...
The parable of the wheat and tares is probably...
The parable of the leaven is probably...
The parable of the speck and the log is probably...
The parable of the mustard seed is probably...
The parable of the yeast is probably...
The parable of the sower is probably...
The parable of the wheat and tares is probably...
The parable of the leaven is probably...

Vertical tabs indicate the week of each lesson.

Each week features three sections: **Study**, **Application**, and **Discovery**.

APPLICATION

THE BAD SAMARITAN
BY DAVID JAGT

There are good people and there are bad...
The parable of the Good Samaritan is probably...
The parable of the fig tree is probably...
The parable of the speck and the log is probably...
The parable of the mustard seed is probably...
The parable of the yeast is probably...
The parable of the sower is probably...
The parable of the wheat and tares is probably...
The parable of the leaven is probably...

DISCOVERY

BY MICHAEL C. PECK

1. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the Samaritan is the enemy. Why is that?
2. What does the Samaritan do that is good? How does that change your view of Samaritans?
3. What does the Samaritan do that is bad? How does that change your view of Samaritans?
4. What is the Samaritan's motivation?
5. How does the Samaritan's motivation change your view of Samaritans?
6. How does the Samaritan's motivation change your view of Samaritans?
7. How does the Samaritan's motivation change your view of Samaritans?
8. How does the Samaritan's motivation change your view of Samaritans?
9. How does the Samaritan's motivation change your view of Samaritans?
10. How does the Samaritan's motivation change your view of Samaritans?

THE GOOD SAMARITAN
BY MICHAEL C. PECK

The parable of the Good Samaritan is probably...
The parable of the fig tree is probably...
The parable of the speck and the log is probably...
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The parable of the yeast is probably...
The parable of the sower is probably...
The parable of the wheat and tares is probably...
The parable of the leaven is probably...

Use the **Discovery** questions to study, discuss, and apply the Scripture passages in a group or class.

WEEK OF MAY 1, 2022

LESSON AIM: **Go and show mercy.**

UNIT: Luke (Part 2)

THEME: Jesus the Storyteller

LESSON TEXT: Luke 10:25-37

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT: Leviticus 19:9-8, James 2:1-11, Romans 13:8-10

STUDY

THE STORY OF THE NEIGHBORS

BY MARK SCOTT

TV's Fred Rogers made famous the refrain, "Won't you be my neighbor?" This warm and endearing ordained minister made us feel neighborly toward one another. But it was Jesus who blew the doors off any definition that would limit the scope and intensity of loving one's neighbor.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is probably Jesus' second or third most popular parable. But it is the first parable in the travel narrative of Luke 9–19, a section of Scripture that contains 18 such stories.

The Neighbor in Question

Luke 10:25-29

After Jesus had set his face to go to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), he multiplied his ministry by sending out the seventy-two on a short-term mission trip (Luke 10). Later, after the seventy-two had returned, Jesus had an encounter with *an expert in the law* (Jewish law, at least, and perhaps even Roman law).

The law expert wanted to *test Jesus*, and later he wanted to *justify himself*. When we want to test Jesus, we are doing what the devil did with Jesus in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). When we want to justify ourselves, we will remain stagnant in our faith and ultimately become idolatrous.

His question was not bad (i.e., it dealt with eternal life), but how he framed it up (*What must I do . . . ?*) might be indicative of his pride and legalism. The Master Teacher asked the lawyer a question. Jesus is interested in how we read his word. The lawyer knew the answer to the most important part of the law, love God and love neighbor (Deuteronomy 6:1-4 and Leviticus 19:18). For the moment, all sounded good. Jesus challenged him by saying, "*Do this and you will live.*" But the lawyer had a question about who should be classified as his neighbor.

The Neighbor in the Ditch

Luke 10:30-32

Jesus answered the lawyer's question with a story rather than a dictionary definition. This parable began in reality, for there really was a road that went from Jerusalem to Jericho referred to as "The Bloody Way." But for a Samaritan to help a Jew on that road? That was the point at which the true-to-life parable veered into fictional analogy.

The people listening to Jesus might have been only slightly interested in a story of a man being stripped, beaten, and left for dead on that famous road that descends 3,700 feet in 17 miles. Was it nighttime? Was the man alone? Jesus said religious leaders (a *priest* and a *Levite*) came *down* that road, saw the needy man, and passed by on the other side. Since they were coming "down," helping the man would not endanger their ability to worship, unlike if they were going "up" to the temple. The title of the lesson is "The Story of the Neighbors." Notice that "neighbors" is plural. There are two neighbors in the text. This first one is in the ditch.

Q. Who is our neighbor? A. Anyone in need.

The Neighbor with a Strange Face

Luke 10:33-37

The whole parable turns on the phrase, "*But a Samaritan. . .*" And, for effect, Jesus used the same verbs. He came, he saw, and . . . oops . . . he *took pity on him* (he had compassion in his gut for the injured man). This Samaritan was from the wrong race, the wrong place, and certainly had a strange face. We might wonder, *How did the neighbor in the ditch feel about this particular neighbor helping him?* The injured neighbor's thinking probably underwent a metamorphosis.

The Samaritan's compassion moved him to action. Sympathy was not sufficient. He went to the injured man and cared for him with the goods he had (oil and wine). He relieved suffering as best he could. The bloody man on the bloody way was . . . bloody. Mercy can be so messy at times. The Samaritan transported him to the nearest *inn and took care of him*. *The next day* means the Samaritan spent the night with the man—now that was extravagant care! It might have been terribly inconvenient to the Samaritan's schedule. Before leaving, the Samaritan put up the funds for the man's long-term rehab.

This is an interrogative parable. It ends with a question: "Which man *was a neighbor* to the man in the ditch? Notice the turn. The first neighbor in the text was the man in the ditch—he had the needs. The second neighbor in the text was the Samaritan—he showed mercy. The lawyer could not bring himself to say, "The Samaritan," so he said, "*The one who had mercy.*" As the conversation ended, the interrogative parable turned into an imperative parable—"Go and do likewise." ■

APPLICATION

THE BAD SAMARITAN

BY DAVID FAUST

There are good Samaritans and there are bad ones. Which kind are you?

On one occasion Jesus healed 10 men who had leprosy, but only one of them came back to thank him (Luke 17:11-17). That man was a Samaritan—a good one.

Sanballat, however, was a bad Samaritan. He ridiculed the Jews when they tried to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem (Nehemiah 4:1-2). One day a Samaritan woman came to draw water from a well near the town of Sychar. Her neighbors probably considered her a bad Samaritan, for she had been married five times and was then living with a sixth man who wasn't her husband. After a life-changing conversation with Jesus, though, she became a good-news ambassador who introduced her neighbors to the Savior.

Bad Samaritans evidently can become good ones. That's why Jesus wanted the gospel to be preached in Samaria (Acts 1:8), and when it was, many Samaritans accepted Christ and were baptized (Acts 8:5-11).

Do the Opposite

My wife, Candy, received her clinical training to be a registered nurse at Cincinnati's Good Samaritan Hospital, which draws its name from Jesus' story in Luke 10 about a kindhearted traveler from Samaria who modeled good neighboring. No healthcare facility has ever been called Bad Samaritan Hospital. We know what good Samaritans do, but what about bad Samaritans? Their actions are the opposite of good neighboring.

If you want to be a bad Samaritan, *skip the good deeds you know you ought to do.*

Never take a risk. Don't get involved. After all, you might get hurt. Prioritize your personal safety above all other goals. Stay away from strangers, even those who obviously need your help.

If you want to be a bad Samaritan, *see others as bothers rather than brothers and sisters.*

Do what everybody else does. If others don't step in, why should you? If the other side of the road is good enough for the priest and the Levite, why not walk there yourself?

Look away. "When he saw him" (Luke 10:33)—when the good Samaritan noticed the wounded traveler lying there half-dead—he got involved. Loving deeds start with observant eyes. Bad Samaritans look away and stay away from needy neighbors in hospitals, nursing homes, jails, and homeless shelters.

Allow no cracks in your emotional armor. For the good Samaritan, seeing led to caring. He "took pity on him" (v. 33). Bad Samaritans, though, have lost their capacity to care. They don't have healthy boundaries; they build thick relational walls no one can penetrate.

Never get your hands dirty. Love was a hands-on experience for the good Samaritan. He bandaged the victim's wounds, poured on oil and wine, and transported the beaten man to safety—in the process soiling his own clothes and getting blood and grime on his own donkey. Bad Samaritans may drive cleaner cars, but are their hands really clean?

Be stingy with your financial resources. The good Samaritan used his own money to pay the innkeeper and promised to follow up later and spend more if further assistance was needed. Bad Samaritans keep all their money to themselves.

Jesus' story teaches us a lot about neighboring. Do you want to be a good Samaritan? "Go and do likewise" (v. 37). To be a bad one, just stay put and do nothing.

Personal Challenge: Think of a neighbor in need—someone you know who needs encouragement, financial assistance, or some other kind of practical help. This week, what will you do to assist them? ■

DISCOVERY

BY MICHAEL C. MACK

1. In the course of obeying God over the past week, did anyone comment (favorably or negatively) on your Christlike behavior? Would you share what happened?
2. With whom did you share or show that “love is greater than laws” and/or “people are more important than procedures” over the past week? Tell us about that.

Ask two people to read aloud **Luke 10:25-37** one after the other, preferably from different Bible versions. Then ask a third person to retell the passages in their own words in a minute or less.

3. What stands out in this famous “parable of the good Samaritan” passage, perhaps for the first time?
4. Let’s dig deeper:
 - The expert in the law tried to justify himself before Jesus. Why is that a bad idea?
 - What elements in this parable are real? What elements might be classified as fictional?
 - The priest and the Levite would both be considered “religious.” How does this parable show us that being religious is not enough in God’s eyes?
 - Based on this parable, who is your neighbor?
 - In what specific ways did the Samaritan show compassion to the man who was robbed?
 - In what ways can taking “pity” and taking “care” of someone in need be a form of loving God “with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind” and loving “your neighbor as yourself”?
5. What do you learn about God from this passage?
6. What do you learn about people?
7. Jesus gave a simple command: “Go and do likewise.” How will you obey that command?
8. With whom will you share the messages from this passage this week?
9. Based on our study and discussion, complete this sentence: “This week, I will . . .”
10. How do you need mercy or care this week?

For Next Week: Read and reflect on **Luke 12:13-34** as we continue studying some of Jesus’ parables. You can also read next week’s supplemental texts as well as the Study and Application sections as part of your personal study. ■