

Luke Ch10v25-37 - Mercy Has No Favourites

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[0:00] Turn to the Word. Frederick is going to preach from Luke chapter 10.

That's on page 1041 in the Red Church Bible. So we're going to read a little bit of context. So we're going to read some of the verses in chapter 10. Our main reading is from verse 25 and onwards. But I'm going to read some of the verses from verse 1 onwards, and I'll lead you through that.

So we'll start at Luke chapter 10 and verse 1. After this, the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

He told them, The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

[1:35] Verse 16. Jesus says, Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me.

But whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me. And verse 21. At that time, Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and have revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for this is what you are pleased to do. And 23. Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see.

For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it. On one occasion, an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus.

Teacher, he asked, What must I do to inherit eternal life? What is written in the law? He replied, How do you read it?

[2:50] 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.

You have answered correctly, Jesus replied. Do this and you will live. But he wanted to justify himself. So he asked Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

In reply, Jesus said, A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.

A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was, and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.

[4:02] Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day, he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. Look after him, he said, and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.

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. Thank you.

Thank you, Sam. Good morning, everyone. It's wonderful, isn't it? I'm actually happy that it's cooler because, yeah, my name is Frederick Sandberg, and I'm Swedish, so I like it cooler, not hotter.

I am married to Gemma. She's an Irish girl, and we have three kids, and we live over in Balancholic, and are members of Douglas Baptist. It is a privilege to be with you here today to share God's word.

[5:15] Today, we're going to jump from your regular series, John's Gospel, here into Luke's, but it's quite beautiful because in God's sovereign timing, last week, you heard from Ralph on loving one another, and today, the message has some correlations, which is quite beautiful.

Today, we'll focus more closely at looking at helping people in need, but more importantly, that mercy has no favorites, and we're doing this from this very famous parable of the Good Samaritan, and Ross kindly, sorry, Sam kindly read those for us, and I'm not going to go through the entire parable again because it's a very long parable, but I'm going to go through the chunks because it teaches us much more than what you may have heard in your regular school or in other times. It is a parable that is so well known, yet quite often not taught correctly. So first, let's pray and ask God for his help as we look at this together.

Father God, we rejoice that we can gather here together. Thank you for this place that we can meet in. Lord, would you help me speak clearly with your spirit to convict us all to be good neighbors to one another, but to know that we can do so because of your mercy first.

we ask this in your name, Jesus. Amen. So I'm not sure if you've heard many Scandinavian jokes, but as closely neighboring countries, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, we used to fight a lot and more recently we have replaced war with war of words and we make fun of each other all the time.

[7:04] And for example, one time there was a Danish man, a Swedish man, and a Norwegian man, stranded on a desert island. And by the time the Finnish man came on his boat to rescue them, the Dane had built a Lego theme park.

The Norwegian man had built an oil rig and the Swedish man, this poor Swedish man, was still trying to figure out his IKEA instructions without any help from his neighbors.

This is not exactly a good picture of being good neighbors, right? We see someone in need, we should help them. So today we have this privilege of looking at a very well-known parable, the parable of the Good Samaritan, and like the story of Adam and Eve, David and Goliath, this is a biblical story that the general masses will know.

Charities are named after it, Samaritan's Purse, a major charity in the U.S., and closer to home, Samaritans, which provides suicide prevention. In fact, quite recently, myself and a friend were walking through Regional Park, I do that a lot, and right there by the river was a sign stuck to the tree saying, Samaritans, their phone number and call if you need help.

This is a story and what it stands for that has permeated our society. Being a Samaritan is even a noun in the dictionary. Someone from Samaria and someone who else helps someone else who is in distress or need.

[8:44] And as our title says, mercy has no favorites, today you are going to think about what mercy really means. When you show mercy to someone, you show pity and compassion and love to someone in need.

However, you and me have a great obstacle to being good Samaritans. Our first response, just like my Danish and Norwegian friends, is first to care about me and do what I'm interested in or what I want.

And further, when you have to help someone, there's often a cost and there sometimes can be danger to help someone else. I have many times in my work driven long journeys, driven by in darkness of night seeing a car pulled over at the side of the road, probably a tire blown out, and I've driven straight past them because I was either not wanting to be inconvenienced or I was afraid to stop.

Only to 30 minutes down the road sitting there thinking, are they okay? Was that a woman? Was that a pregnant woman on her own? Was that a man on his own? Should I have stopped to help? So the question is, do you ever go past someone in need and not stop and help them? And finally, it's very easy when we do show mercy that we show it to our favorite people.

[10:22] Danes helping Danes, Norwegians helping Norwegians. you help your people but not others. And this is really like, we all have our default setting.

It's like when you buy a new TV and you have the excitement and then you see your wonderful welcome screen show up on the TV only to know that you're going to spend the next hour reprogramming the thing.

we have a default setting of wanting to serve ourselves that we have to reprogram. And the parable of the Good Samaritan brings this face-to-face for us in a way that is unmistakable.

So Jesus will challenge you to consider the pride of man. Jesus will appeal to you to consider the pity of man.

Jesus will show you that the true mercy is in the pardon of man. Jesus will teach you that love and mercy are two sides of the same coin.

[11 : 29] And that living a life of a good neighbor is accepting your own pride growing in pity and loving your pardon.

Jesus will teach you that mercy has no favorites. So let's look at the first point the pride of man which is verses 24 to 28 25 to 28.

And it's important that we think about this and I asked Sam to read the context of these verses because Luke chapter 10 is about people being on mission going to reach people for Jesus. He's sending people out. So when we think about that context this is about how we interact with others that we meet.

So the conversation we're about to kind of jump into and see is likely taking place in a synagogue or some other place of meeting including where disciples of Jesus was.

[12 : 37] And this context is very important as you think about and listen to the conversation. So please look with me at verse 25. On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus.

Teacher he asked what must I do to inherit eternal life? This single expert of the law stood up to test Jesus the prophet.

in other places we see groups of Pharisees or Pharisees and lawyers stand up to try and trick Jesus. And if you remember 18 years earlier when Jesus was 12 sitting in the temple and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

We're now 18 years later from that point. Jesus had done many miracles he had huge followings he was very much a local celebrity.

So there's little doubt that this expert of the Mosaic law knew that he was standing up and challenging the prophet. So think about that and keep that in context.

[13 : 53] And to give you a picture of that it is like you or me we're in a court of law with a judge jury defending barrister and a prosecuting barrister barrister but the prosecuting barrister i.e.

the expert in the law is a primary school child and the defending barrister is a university professor. Yet pride arrogance and self righteousness of this man makes him stand up to challenge Jesus and it should make us cringe to think about that because we probably do the same thing.

Yet the response of Jesus should make you be in all. So the lawyer does ask a great question. What must I do to inherit eternal life?

This is a question that the world has wrestled with from the beginning of time because the question really is what happens to us when we die? But rather than being a joyful disciple sitting at the feet of Jesus to learn from his teacher we see that this lawyer is self-righteous and he wants to test Jesus the prophet.

And in some ways there are parables to Luke chapter 4 when Satan tries to tempt Jesus in the wilderness. Satan tests or tempts Jesus, the word in Greek is actually the same, and Satan tests Jesus with the scriptures, and in the final test of Jesus, Jesus responds with the scriptures, it is said you shall not put the Lord your God to the test, which is quoting Deuteronomy 6.16.

[15 : 38] Jesus answers the lawyer like he answered Satan with the scriptures. Through this interaction, Jesus is teaching his disciples how to answer even the most forcible challenge with the truth of the word.

It is also a powerful lesson for us. As a good defense lawyer, Jesus answers the question with a question. What is written in the law?

He replied. How do you read it? Jesus puts the weight back on the lawyer. What is written in the Mosaic Law, and how do you interpret it?

This is like you and me. We can read the scriptures, but then we actually need to think about what they mean. The lawyer, in his prideful and self-righteous way, pulls out the big guns of the Mosaic Law, only for them to greatly backfire right in his face.

He answers with Deuteronomy 6.5, with an addition from Leviticus 19, verse 18. I'll read them for us. 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, Deuteronomy 6.5, and love your neighbor as yourself, which is Leviticus 19.18.

[17 : 01] The lawyer, who is an expert in the Old Testament Law, was probably thinking, let's see how he answers this. I've given a textbook answer, there's no way he can come back on this.

And it is ironic that the lawyer chooses this very part of the law of Deuteronomy 6, which is why I mentioned the story about Jesus and Satan in the wilderness, because only a few lines later it says you should not test the Lord your God.

But then Jesus answers with an unexpected counter-argument. You have answered correctly, Jesus replied. Do this and you will live.

And if at this point the lawyer thought he had won the case, the conversation would have been done. He would have sat back down, the conversation would have been over, but it was not. The lawyer who was an expert in the law, someone who knew the Mosaic law inside and out, was forced to consider the words of Jesus, but not only the words of Jesus, the law itself, and how it applied to him.

[18:09] It is like the prosecuting lawyer brought a motion of appeal for the judge to give an answer on, and only as he is presenting the motion himself he is realizing that the motion itself is about to get his case thrown out of court.

The motion of appeal was, you must surely be able to inherit eternal life. It only says you should love the Lord your God. And then he presents the points of the appeal with all your heart, like all the time, like really all the time, not one moment of fear, anxiety, jealousy, or anger.

And the judge says, motion denied. With all your soul, with your complete inner being, with not one trace of darkness, motion denied.

With all your strength, not any strength used for anything else, motion denied. With all your mind, not even one wrong thought, not one thought of lust, not one thought of anger, not one sinful thought.

Motion denied. And finally, always love your neighbor as yourself. You have to willingly give your neighbor everything you have, never ignoring their needs, always putting your neighbor first.

[19:43] Motion denied. This is not a good day in court for this lawyer. His case is about to be thrown out. If doing things, fulfilling the law, which in today's context is doing religious rituals like baptism, communion, confirmation, attending church, just to check boxes to get into eternal life, to be with God in heaven, then, I'm sorry, but your motion for appeal for eternal life is also denied.

Jesus has just shown us that there is no way we can earn our way to heaven. Yet your hearts have a default setting that you believe that you are righteous.

So will you react like the lawyer, even when you know you're wrong, to try and change the law so that you are right. Let's look at the next part of this conversation and how we look at the pity of man. The lawyer realizes his case is about to be thrown out of court, so he tries to justify himself. Look with me at verse 29. But he, the lawyer, wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, and who is my neighbor.

The lawyer realized that he could not fulfill the law, so he moves to try and defend himself and change the law. It's like you and I, we have our own inner eternal barrister.

[21:22] Our hearts instantly try and defend ourselves when someone challenges us. Or when we read scripture and we read perfectly well what we can see, but then it's challenging us and we immediately start to defend ourselves or we start trying to change what that really means.

This question is actually a second test that is a lot more subtle. Let me read you the full verse from Leviticus 19:18. It actually says, you shall not take a vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

I am the Lord. If the words the expert of the law was quoting back to Jesus actually specified already who the neighbor is, why ask this question of Jesus?

Because it was another test. Even when Jesus has presented overwhelming evidence that the lawyer's case was going to be rejected, he still tried to bend and weasel himself out of where he was.

But Jesus, who knows the law inside out and knows the heart and mind of the expert of the law just like he knows every single thought of yours, instead answers with this famous parable that Sam read for us.

[22:51] And because it's very long, I'm not going to go through it line by line because we would be here for a long time. But I want to bring it closer to them would have been absolutely shocking.

It is like a movie when the barrister gets up and all of a sudden he brings in four brand new key witnesses. To help me illustrate this, I want to bring the location and the main characters closer to home here in character line.

We have four characters. The man beaten within an inch of his life lying on the ground. We have the priest, the Levite, the Samaritan.

We have a location, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. This is a notoriously dangerous road, big mountain sides going way, way down and was a very easy place for robbers to attack people. What would be a place closer to home that would be very similar to this? Let's say we're walking down St. Patrick Street in Cork City and we have to go down one of those very dark side streets. [24:04] I'm 6'3 and 202 many pounds. I'm scared to go down those side streets. Let's say that the man lying on the floor in one of those side streets off St.

Patrick Street is a teacher from here in one of the schools in Carragoline who's been set about by a group of thugs. So who would the priest would be a Catholic priest for example walking home from a day's work.

The Levite who were servants in the temples could be a deacon from a Baptist church also walking on his way home. Both men saw the injured man.

They didn't just walk by and not see him. They saw him. And they didn't just walk by him. They walked to the other side of the road and kept on going. Just picture this in your mind for a moment. Now let us consider who would the Samaritan be today. The Samaritan could be someone like an immigrant from another part of the world simply traveling through Cork.

[25:23] The priest and deacon saw and rejected this man in need. The immigrant saw and had pity on this man by acting. By doing something about it.

The immigrant took care of him, put this injured teacher in his own car, brought him down to the Mater private hospital and gave them two days worth of wages.

One denarii is a day's wage. So two days wages! is a lot of money. But he doesn't just say that. He says, please take care of him. Anything else it costs, I will pay when I come back.

This parable is very uncomfortable when you look at it from the equivalent perspective that Jesus was teaching it. I always wondered if there would be outrage or complete silence after Jesus spoke to us.

But we have other places when Jesus did get chased out of town. On this occasion the conversation went on, so I think you could have heard a needle drop on the ground.

[26:30] The lawyer tried to test and catch Jesus just like we try and do far too often. Jesus responded by bringing in four new witnesses.

The expert of the law brought law and self righteousness but rather than bringing down a sledge hammer Jesus answers with pity just like he has answered you and me with pity.

Even pity when we try to test Jesus. So let's look at the final part the pardon of man verses 36 to 37 Jesus asked the lawyer which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers the expert in the law replied the one who had mercy on him Jesus told him go and do likewise the case was closed Jesus let the lawyer and those listening see that mercy not law is what gives you access to eternal life that the pardon of man the pardon of us all being put into the prison of hell comes from mercy not law and we are not told how this lawyer responded but I really hope that his eyes were opened or maybe even that he would be alive when the crucifixion and resurrection took place and that he would come to have a saving faith mercy always conquers law and religious practice love always conquers law and religious practice the mercy of God has no favorites his mercy is available to all of us and if Father God had favorites your motion of appeal for eternal life would be a big problem we can never earn or justify our way to eternal life yet through the love and mercy of Father God in Christ Jesus we're given a path to be pardoned from our sin a pardon from mercy not law and it always blows my mind when we think about the New Testament and how we have all the epistles Paul's letters Peter's letters and we have the gospels and how they're all over linking in terms of chronological time so let's say let's hear from the apostle Peter 1 Peter 1:3 I'll read it for us blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ according to his great mercy he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead the apostle Paul in Titus explains it even further Titus 3 verses 4 and 5 but when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared he saved us not because of righteous things we had done but because of his mercy he saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit God truly demonstrates that mercy has no favorites to save sinners like you and me to be given the gift of eternal life and not only that the gift of the

[30:29] Holy Spirit in us God when you confess Jesus as Lord and accept that he died for you and your sins are nailed to that cross with him God comes to live in you will you accept this gift of mercy and if you are a believer will you remind yourself of this mercy because you will know that

when we live and when we apply this now we don't do it in our own strength it's the Holy Spirit working in us it's God working in us that is why this matters that is why gathering here matters a heart that knows God shows great mercy to others and we don't want a heart that says

I will do good so God will show me mercy not how it works and our love is seen by other people 1 John 4 11 to 12 dear friends since God so loved us we also ought to love one another no one has ever seen God but if we love one another God lives in us and his love is made complete in us and as we kind of bring full circle connecting with your message from last week as disciples on mission here at Karageline Baptist Church the love of God in us demonstrated through a living faith an active faith empowered by the Holy Spirit not by our own strength this is faith in action and it's beautiful and it's real and this is a faith demonstrated in love to point people to

God even when they attack you ignore you or they try and test you it is very striking when you take a step back and you think about how Jesus the son of man answered this lawyer did Jesus tell him to sit down and be quiet!

no did Jesus tell him you just need to believe no did Jesus patiently defend his case with a lawyer he did did Jesus answer with facts and witnesses yes he did the disciples that were likely present would have gained a precious lesson from Jesus in how to defend their own faith and so are we Jesus says that we are to show mercy to everyone Jesus says that we are to show mercy to the household of faith Jesus says that we are to show mercy to unbelievers Jesus says we are to show mercy to all showing mercy means that we also need to show people that they can never be obedient enough themselves and that it's only one man that has ever shown perfect obedience to the law the man

Christ Jesus it is his perfect obedience that we gain for believing in him so I just want to take three ways of applying this text to our lives today first don't be the prideful lawyer in your hearts and mine when challenged either by someone else or by the word of God or by our conscience that God has placed there our first response is to defend ourselves would you consider being more aware of your own inner barrister and whoever that female barrister that male barrister that old barrister the young barrister when he or she shows up in your heart will you throw him out of court would you pray that you are more aware when you are defending rather than listening defending rather than accepting facts one of the dangers of age is that you think you know more than you do typically the younger you are the more you think you know the older you are the bruises of life teaches us we don't know very much with one exception we can obviously get stubborn and set in our old ways and always think we're right but in general as a church we can learn a lot from speaking to one another and [35:55] I would encourage you older Christians and younger Christians older members and younger members of the church in sensible ways like at your groups meet outs talk across the age divides because we can gain so much wisdom of how to show love from one another and I would also say that for those of you here who my daughter Linnea she's beautiful the best thing ever having a daughter instead of older boys is amazing she says that I have sparkles sparkles is my gray hair and my beard for those of you here who have sparkles in your hair would you take time to show love to those who are younger than you are because the Bible says older men teach younger men older women teach younger women would you take the time to do that none of us has the wisdom of

God but together working together we can live with great joy and doing so it's much easier to fight that inner barrister when we actually do it together with others second do be a good Samaritan if you are a follower of Christ and his mercy has been shown to you we are commanded to show mercy to others and I think this one hit me personally when I prepared this message because if you're someone like me who actually observes and sees the need I watch things I watch people I see things but then do you think about it do you talk about it or do you actually do something about it this is something where I personally had to repent and confess this to the Lord that I don't act enough the big take home message of this is that through

God's mercy we can act to show mercy it's action it's a living faith and I would say to be very practical if there is people here which there is who are naturally gifted for mercy you instantly see someone and you run to them and help them that's just the way you're wired thank the Lord for you come and rub off on me please when you see someone in need would you grab another brother or sister to say hey would you come with me let's go and help them let's go and do this together because we really can work and help each other when we have strengths to help others growing strength alongside us and after a time or two that person who naturally wasn't gifted towards mercy

who you kind of dragged along you said hey let's go two or three times later they might be the very person who grabbed someone else let's say let's go this parable also makes us look outside the church community there are many pieces of scripture that says first look to the household of God and scripture never contradicts itself so we always first look at the body of Christ but this is also very directly telling us don't ignore those outside so we want to show mercy to the people of Cork and one area that is a special case and if you're interested in this whether younger or older talk to me afterwards because I can't go into as much as I want but we have a unique place of being a good neighbor or a very bad neighbor a very good testament for Christ and a very bad testament for Christ and that's being online online witness for Jesus great but do it with kindness gentleness and respect point people to this church of course but we don't want to allow the digital space to become our new neighborhood and in some countries people are governments which are not driven by

Christ they're controlling social media for 16 year olds and below and there's reasons for it because of the damage to their courses you can only be a good neighbor to a very limited extent online the way that God has ordained fellowship is face to face people being together people being gathered here today people being gathered in homes over a coffee finally share the mercy of being pardoned with knowledge kindness gentleness and respect you were dead in your sins and you were born again through Christ if you have been pardoned if you're a Christian your sin atoned for the perfect life of Jesus his death on this cross and his resurrection will you be on mission for him what is more important to share with the world than a path to being pardoned for eternal life if you saw someone walking up towards a prison and you knew that this prison was a prison that once they go in that prison they will never return and you had the opportunity to walk up to them and say no

[41 : 53] I have a different place to show you would you not want to do that I want to finish with praying back the words of Paul in Ephesians chapter 2 because they are so beautifully summarizing from God and in the voice of God to us please would you bow your heads with me and let's pray this together Father God to conclude this message I pray back to you the words of the apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter 2 verses 4 to 9 but because of his great love for us God who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions it is by grace you have been saved and God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms!

in order that in coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus for it is by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not from yourselves it is the gift of God not by works so that no one can boast for we are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do Holy Spirit would you make these words alive in us today Father save people here for your glory Father send people on mission we ask this in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Amen so we'll stand to sing the song and I would just ask you all to raise your voices so the people outside would hear it