

Learning From the Enemy

Scripture Reading — Luke 10:25-37

A Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. — Luke 10:33

A religion professor—an expert in the law of Moses and Israel—wanted to test Jesus. He asked, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” And then: “Who is my neighbor?”

Jesus responded by telling a story about a man, robbed and injured, who was ignored by the people’s religious leaders but helped by a Samaritan.

In Jesus’ day, the Jews despised Samaritans. They represented everything the Jewish people never wanted to be. Jews often avoided Samaria by traveling many miles out of the way so they wouldn’t have to come into contact with Samaritans.

In Jesus’ story, however, rather than passing by the injured man, the Samaritan showed compassion. He administered first aid. He brought the man to an inn where he could recuperate. He even paid the bill. Jesus made the despised enemy of the Jews the star in this story.

By this time, Jesus’ listeners—especially the religion expert—were informed of an error in their thinking. Jesus did not give them a mere definition of a neighbor; he showed them how a neighbor acted. Which of the three was a neighbor?

The religion teacher was forced to stop justifying himself by his intellect and degrees. He simply replied, “The one who had mercy.” And Jesus told him to go and act similarly.

Who is my neighbor? And who has been a neighbor to me?

Prayer

Savior Jesus, help us to show your mercy and love to everyone, including the people we have despised as enemies. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Compassion](#), [Mercy](#), [Life](#), [Trials & Challenges](#), [Enemies](#)

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