

Whose Neighbor Am I?

Scripture Reading — Luke 10:25-37

The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.” — Luke 10:37

The teacher of the law who came to test Jesus was in for a surprise. Instead of engaging in a theological discussion about inheriting eternal life, the Lord asked a simple question, “What is written in the Law?” Without hesitation the legal expert 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.’” Jesus then said, “You have answered correctly. . . . Do this and you will live.”

It’s that simple. But for some reason the teacher of the law wasn’t satisfied. So he asked, “And who is my neighbor?”

It’s a question worth asking. Are we to love all the people in our lives? Do I really have to love the unlovable people in my life? Do I have to love that disrespectful student in my class or that obnoxious person I work with? And do I have to love people who have made a mess of their lives?

In this parable the Lord points out that the real question is not “Who is my neighbor?” It’s real-ly “Whose neighbor am I?” Am I willing to be a neighbor to whomever the Lord places on my path, and do I practice it by showing compassion and mercy?

That is a question we all need to answer. How do you answer it?

Prayer

Lord our God, open our eyes and help us to know whose neighbors we are to be, and give us the grace to reach out in mercy and love. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.

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