

[The Best Part] / Gospel of Luke 10:25 – 42

~ There is a segment of the religious world that believes they are the modern authority on the Mosaic System of Levitical Law. Most of the world speaks casually concerning the Mosaic Law in unmitigated and abject ignorance. The man that has religion without Christ can tell you all about the law. What they cannot and will not admit to is being a sinner who needs washing each and every day. They just act as if that part of the law doesn't exist. Well, our Spiritual Safari is not popular - and I presume it never will be - because we teach the sound doctrine of the apostles; and that Scriptural doctrine is very far away from what the church today is presenting. In fact, our safari almost reaches a polar opposite from so-called modern Bible teaching.

Our safari presents the Bible as it is for men as they are. Mark majored in miracles, and Luke majors in parables. Luke gives us some of the most familiar sections of Scripture; passages that most people seem to at least know about in the Bible. Well, friends, the Bible is spiritual, and we have to have a spiritual discernment to understand the reason for the facts as they are presented - and to comprehend Christ as a whole. If the Holy Spirit of God has not opened your mind and heart to these truths, you will never attain to them. If you do not begin in a daily prayer of confession, then the Bible is closed to your understanding.

The parable of the Good Samaritan comprises a third in a trinity of Scripture; along with the twenty-third Psalm and the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of John. The Good Samaritan may be the best-known New Testament account. Everyone seems to have heard this story. However, without the spiritual meaning and application to our life – that's all it is – a story; and not a very interesting one at that. I never understood why everyone knows this parable but not the parable of the virgins. The virgins are a thousand times more interesting than this from a non-spiritual point of view because that "story" borders hard against mythological substance – even if you are absolutely spiritually dead. The literary critic considers the parable of the Good Samaritan the greatest story ever told. It is a story of a man that fell among thieves and the subsequent happenings to that man as he lay there half dead. One point of interest I can surely agree with is that

the Lord Jesus gives this out in a very brief compass. It is the lawyer's questioning first that brings this Samaritan story from the lips of the Lord today....

25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

~ This 'lawyer' was not a lawyer as we think of one today – this man practiced Mosaic Law exclusively; and the Mosaic Law was a legal system in Israel in that day just as our legal system functions today; but they had to have Rome to enforce the sentences. That was the hindrance Israel had to overcome when carrying out punishment. Well, this 'lawyer' was an expert at interpreting the Mosaic Law. The question is what we call a 'stock question' – that is; one that they keep tucked in the back of their mind to trip the unsuspecting and non astute religious person that might dare ask an offensive question. I'm sure this question met MANY of the congregation's questions as rebuttal; answering a question with a question is good form IF we are sincere. However, if we're not sincere, it can make one look very foolish very quickly, indeed. Let me just tell you friends – you CANNOT win an argument against the man that is allowing the Holy Spirit to speak through him, and you certainly will never win one against the Lord Jesus Christ speaking in the Word of God.

The first two Gospels we considered on safari have rather human characteristics. Mark was rough when dealing with the medical issues in his day; we saw that when Mark pointed out the woman with an issue had spent all her money on doctors and was in worse shape than ever! That's the reality of our day, my friends; our medical system – "healthcare" system in this world is nothing but a laughable - crying joke. Luke doesn't say any of that, though – and we don't blame him, because, if you go to the doctor because you are sick but then you will not admit to anyone that you are sick – well, you have a real problem. However, if you come to the Lord Jesus and admit you are already dead in your trespasses and sins, then you will be healed and receive eternal life. Luke admits she couldn't be cured by men, but Luke will be attacking this lawyer – and that's the way it's still done today.

Two lawyers were in court trying a very difficult case many years ago that was causing extreme controversy; well, one lawyer lost it mid-session and stood up and called the other lawyer a liar. The response from the other lawyer was to retort that the first lawyer was a thief! The judge brought the court to order with his gavel and made this announcement: "... now that the lawyers have identified each other, we might be able to reach a truthful verdict!" I think Luke would have appreciated that story very much – but – Luke didn't appreciate Marks comments, you may be sure. There is another story about two preachers, but I digress....

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And the lawyer answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

~ This little exchange has a very sharp barb attached as Jesus says the man will live IF he actually does the things he is professing! Lip service is easy - but no good. I'm sure you can figure out immediately where this is going in relation to the Good Samaritan parable? Well, the lawyer needs to beat around the bush hoping someone will cry ashes and fall down, I guess. Jesus always uses the Socratic Method – that is: answering a question with a question. Naturally, it is named that because Socrates was famous for using that response. Socrates intention was to force an answer to his own questions correctly – well, correctly according to Socrates, of course. When Christ does this it is called "turning the tables!" You don't want to experience it; I promise you that.

We need to remember that Christ has not died on the cross at the time in which we are studying; which means these people were under the full authority of the dispensation of Mosaic Law. Jesus referred the man to the

Mosaic system and gave an answer that was in line with Levitical Law! Of course, the lawyer was not expecting that. Jesus makes it more than clear that the law that was picked out was the chief law. So, a passage was lifted from the Pentateuch in Deuteronomy chapter six verse five and Leviticus chapter nineteen verse eight. Well, Jesus affirms this man had answered correctly and I am just going to make this statement: if you'll keep this, you'll have eternal life. We have to trust Christ, friends. So, many people think I have painted myself into a corner with the Gospel. I smile as I tell them what Jesus said, "it is not the hearers of the law that are justified but the doers of the law."

Romans 2:13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness ~

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified ~

Let's imagine that the lawyer in this passage had been honest. In that case, he would have said something like he had sincerely tried loving God with all his heart and all his soul, strength and mind; and he had tried to love his neighbor as himself, but he would have admitted to Jesus that he didn't measure up to the standard. The lawyer would have had to admit he had failed miserably. This man knew in his heart he had not received eternal life; he was a hard-core legalist! You do NOT have an innate modus operandi by which you can live. Friends, the law has only revealed your failures and your weaknesses, and it hasn't saved anyone from anything.

Modern methods of religious disinformation are designed only to divert attention from the real issue. It's what the squid in the ocean does; when he is losing a battle, he squirts an inky substance into the water. Some people have been married five times and their question is usually, "....

where did Cain get his wife?" They won't answer where they got theirs, though! If you don't have a wife; where are you going to get one? Let's not dirty the waters just because we get in trouble, friends. Christ is getting ready to answer the man in this passage with the parable of the Good Samaritan. This is a simple and familiar story that is, by now, likely redundant to most people. Well, we just happen to be studying the Bible, and here is where we find ourselves, so, let's pray we get something new out of it in this report, shall we? ~

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

~ The Levite in this parable is obviously a scribe; and he would have been one who studied and knew the Mosaic Law. The lawyer that Jesus is answering to was likely also a Levite. So, I'm sure the lawyer squirmed in his seat a little at this response. This little story was very, very personal to this lawyer, you may be sure. Many years ago, Dean Brown from Yale University made the statement that the three classes of men brought before us in this parable represents three philosophies in life. The thieves think that what you have is theirs; it's also called socialism or communism – one in the same. The Levites philosophy is what he has is his; that is named individualism and, may I say, it is a rugged individualism that has gone south. This theory takes the philosophy that says, 'world be damned' - as long as they get what they perceive they "deserve." The end result of individualism is always godless capitalism. The Good Samaritan has the philosophy that what he has is yours! That is the Christian philosophy of life. That is, if someone is in need, and you can help, then you are obligated to do so. How are you doing with that little Bible principle, friends? Some have now termed something called 'Christian Socialism' – but all we have are these two philosophies of life and a Christian value, that's all. We're going to take up whole a lot of type and writing space identifying these two individuals in modern contemporary society.

I think the Lord Jesus intended for us to take His Word and make something new and living with it. The certain man who fell among thieves – let's call that humanity – the race that came from Adam. Mankind is represented as coming down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jerusalem is the place where God is approached and Jericho represents the world, as we will see very definitively in the Book of Joshua. Jericho was the first city in civilization. So, what we have is that humanity fell right from the start. Humanity finds itself helpless and hopeless against the man of the world and unable to save itself. The man on the streets today finds himself dead in trespasses and sin. This man, at this time, was already half dead. The thieves that the man fell to and was attacked by is the devil himself - and his minions. Satan is a lying, stealing murderer from the very beginning. Even Jesus said the only man that ever came before Him were thieves and robbers. Remember, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus asked the mob, "why do you come against Me as a thief?" Jesus had been amongst them just hours before.

They could have taken Him easily at that time but, when they arrested Him, they had their swords and staves.

Then we are told about a certain priest who comes down the road on the other side. This speaks to ritualism and ceremonialism. Religion doesn't save you and it does not help anyone. Someone has made the statement that the reason the priest went on the other side of the road is because the man had already been robbed! Your phony play time you call church is killing you, friends – in Gods eyes. Then, the Levite tribe is specified and that is legalism. So, we have ritualism, ceremonialism and legalism all wrapped up tight together. When you get a hold of all three at the same time, they will suffocate you spiritually. That's the night the seven babies that were named Bible names all get drowned in the bathtub by mother. Satanic? You bet your life it is!

So, what about all of this demonic activity? I'll tell you what about it – a Certain Samaritan. That Certain Samaritan is the Lord Jesus Christ; and He is the One telling us the parable! Jesus gave this like it is, friends – if you are still reading – and even if you're not – this is your reality. Religion is killing mankind and legalism is sweeping away the carcasses. Religion cannot help – only the Lord Jesus Christ can help. Only Jesus is able to bind up the broken hearted! Christ is capable to take the lost sinner who is already hopelessly lost in trespasses and sin, and about to die in said sins, and help that man. I think you can see the practical application of this; any man you help is your neighbor. We live in a world where it is more than easy for most people to help others in all sorts of ways.

I hear a lot of talk about getting out the Gospel today, but I see very little effort being made. A young man was courting a girl way out in the country a long time ago and he wrote her a letter. The letter said he would climb the highest mountain for her and swim the deepest river and all that stuff. Well, they had a date that Friday night, but it was raining, so the fellow broke the date and broke her heart, too! That's about all I see around this forum on which I teach in terms of commitment to Christ today – broken hearts. May I say: God have mercy on us?

Man has fallen among thieves and he needs help – we need Christ. There is no one else who can or will help. You see, friends; Christ can do more than rescue us from drowning – He can furnish the dynamic for an ethic by which we can walk on water! We have three world systems in operation right now – and ONLY three that reach man, at all, on any level. They are all what would be stereotyped as ‘religion.’ Man that is drowning in ritualism and formalism is constantly told to swim harder against the waves! The problem is: he’s already begun drowning! Legalism and liberalism push a cross in your face and they tell you to hang on tight! Well, the man cannot hang on because his own weight is too much to bear.

*~ I was sinking deep in sin
Far from the peaceful shore ~
~ So deeply and darkly stained within
Sinking to rise no more ~
~ But Jesus heard my despairing cry
And from the waters lifted me ~
~ Now, safe
am I ~*

38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

~ Love lifted me – Christ lifted me! That’s the message from the parable of the Good Samaritan. Moving on, our Spiritual Safari will reserve full detail of this house visit by Jesus and Dr. Luke to Mary in the Gospel of John. This is Martha’s house, but the town belonged to Mary. Mary had done her part and that afforded her time to sit at Jesus feet. Martha is a dear soul and let’s thank God for her because there would be no dinner for Jesus without her. The problem was: Martha got so busy and was always in a hurry. That brought her frustration, and we see and hear her in the kitchen reaching for this pan and that dish. Then, she’s clanging the oven door and she discovers she has the wrong pan out and greased. Mary is just sitting around and that’s just too much for her to handle, so she comes out of the kitchen and makes a statement that she never would have made under normal conditions.

Well, Mary chose the best part. My frustrated and confused friends out there – are you at the corner of life today where you don’t know where to turn? Try taking a few minutes at the feet of Jesus. Some of us spend a great deal of time here – and everything gets done around us. Let’s really get into His Word and listen carefully to what God has to say to us now. If you do this, you will notice your floors are just a little bit cleaner. You’ll notice the dishes aren’t so difficult to wash any more. This will even make your ditch digging better and your lawn mowing easier! Your mind will become sharper and your worldly work will improve. Let me conclude by saying your entire life will be better if you’ll just take a little time for the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God in your life each day; just take some time – like Mary did - and sit at Jesus feet. Mary chose the best part ~

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