

# BACK TO SUNDAY SCHOOL: THE ONE WHO HAD COMPASSION

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## Luke 10: 25-37

25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' 26 He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' 27 He answered, 'You shall 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 your neighbor as yourself.' 28 And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' 30 Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw

him, he was moved with pity. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." 36 Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' 37 He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

## REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. What is this story about?
3. Why might the religious people have overlooked, avoided, or ignored the wounded man? How might this be a challenge to people of faith today?
4. Stories like this parable were not uncommon in the time of Jesus. Usually, there were three characters: the first two representing elites, the final (hero) a common Judean. However, Jesus doesn't use this template. Instead of a common Judean, he inserts a Samaritan! Judeans and Samaritans had a history of hostility (and violence!), rival religious practices and holy locations, and cultural antagonism. Why do you think Jesus speaks of a Samaritan as the hero of this parable?

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5. Who are the neighbors like the Samaritan in our social context?
6. If Jesus were to insert a “surprise” character as the hero of this parable, based on your life, who might that be?
7. Reflect on Martin Luther’s King’s exhortations regarding this parable:

“On the one hand we are called to play the good Samaritan on life's roadside; but that will be only an initial act. One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.”

—Martin Luther King Jr., "A Time to Break the Silence"