

Luke 10:25-37
“Once Upon a Time”
Sermon date 9/21/2025

Ice breaker

- 1) Have you ever received help from an unexpected source? What happened?
- 2) What's the most generous or surprising act of kindness you've seen recently?

Unpack It

What stood out to you from Sunday's sermon and why? What was a takeaway or something that left you wondering about?

Looking Back

The parable of the Good Samaritan is set within the cultural and religious landscape of first-century Judaism, where boundaries between ethnic groups, especially Jews and Samaritans, were rigid and deeply hostile. Samaritans were viewed by Jews as religiously impure and ethnically mixed, descending from Israelites who had intermarried with foreigners. This enmity dated back centuries to the Assyrian exile and was further exacerbated by differing worship practices and the destruction of sacred sites. Against this backdrop, Jesus' choice to make a Samaritan the hero of the story was radically countercultural and likely shocking to his Jewish listeners.

The conversation that prompts the parable is between Jesus and a Jewish expert in the law. This "lawyer" tests Jesus, likely trying to trap Him into saying something unorthodox. When Jesus responds with a question about the Law, the man recites the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:5) and Leviticus 19:18 — love God and love your neighbor. Wanting to justify himself, the lawyer asks, “And who is my neighbor?” This sets the stage for Jesus to redefine neighborliness, not by proximity or ethnicity, but by action and compassion — emphasizing mercy over legalism.

Diving In

Read together: Luke 10:25-37

Diving Deeper

- 1) What does the phrase "he had compassion" (v. 33) imply about the Samaritan's character?
- 2) What might Jesus be saying about religious duty versus heart-level obedience and mercy?

- 3) Who do you relate to most in the story — the lawyer, the priest, the Levite, the Samaritan, or the injured man? Why?
- 4) How would you define the word “compassion” in this context? How is it different from pity?
- 5) How does this parable expand or challenge your understanding of what it means to love your neighbor?
- 6) When have you experienced or witnessed mercy in a way that changed your perspective?
- 7) What would it look like for your small group or church to be known for radical neighbor-love in your community?

Closing It Out

- 8) Suggested prayer time together to close out: Pray that each of us would have a heart to love like Jesus loves.

Take It Home

If you would like to press in a bit more this week, here is a prayer and reading guide for the week:

Day 1: Micah 6:6–8

Theme: What does the Lord require?

Reflect on God's call to "act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly." How do these connect with the Samaritan's actions?

Day 2: Isaiah 58:6–12

Theme: True Religion and Justice

God critiques empty religious practice and calls His people to serve the oppressed. Consider how this compares to the priest and Levite in Jesus' parable.

Day 3: James 2:14–17

Theme: Faith and Deeds

Faith without action is dead. How does the Samaritan exemplify a living faith?

Day 4: Romans 12:9–21

Theme: Love in Action

Paul describes a life of sincere, sacrificial love. Which verses challenge or inspire you most?

Day 5: 1 John 4:7–21

Theme: Loving as God Loved Us

Explore how God's love for us enables us to love others. What does it look like to love someone who is hard to love?

