

Living in HisStory: Revealing the True Wonder of Who God Is
Radical Love - Everyday Love
Luke 10:25-37
May 6, 2018, Adrian Moskal

It is good to be with you this morning. First off, I want to say I am excited this morning as this is going to be fun. This is a simple, yet, fascinating and challenging text for each of us. It should cause each of us to look inward and outward. It should cause us to look at our own heart and then how we see the world around us. Jesus is going to show us how to love.

Before we get to our text, let's pull back and remember what we are doing in this series. Back in September, we started this series. Living in History or Living in His Story. We have been looking at what God is doing in His Story and how does my story intersect his story. We started in the Old Testament in the first book of the bible, Genesis. The Old Testament tracks from the beginning of creation, including Adam and Eve. It started with where sin entered the world and how that affected us. Just recently, we have entered the New Testament where it begins with the birth of Jesus and his effect on us.

Over the last seven months, this is what we have been doing and all the while we have been seeing three threads weave their way through scripture.

[2]

- 1. God is up to something: He is restoring the shalom (peace) that was lost at the fall of humankind.**
- 2. Satan is up to something: He is trying to destroy God's shalom.**
- 3. We, left to our own devices, without the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, most naturally move away from God.**

[3]

So, as we dive into scripture today, keep this in mind. Ask yourselves these questions:
What is God doing?
What is Satan doing?
What is your natural response? What is the Holy Spirit nudging you to do/change?

Our passage today is a verbal exchange between Jesus and an expert in religious law. As we have seen in the past, Jesus' harshest words and most pointed questions were for the religious elite. Jesus saw past their strict adherence to the law and saw that their trust was in the law and not in God. Let's start here:

[4]

Luke 10:25-37 (NLT)

25 One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"

We must first look at who is asking the question and how is he asking. So again, it is one of the religious elite. A lawyer in their day. An expert in religious law and he is testing Jesus. There is an undertone of hostility to the question. There is no humility in asking a question if you are testing the person. You aren't looking for the answer, you are looking to judge the one who is responding.

The question itself is a common but profound question. "What should I do to inherit eternal life?" "How can I be saved?" It is great question then and it is a great question now.

We see this question or variations of it in other places in the NT. If you want some deeper study, check out these passages that ask the same question. Luke 18:18, Acts 2:37 and Acts 16:30. We won't have time today to look at them.

[5]

26 Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?"

Now Jesus is the best conversationalist. Refusing to be trapped in this line of questioning, he responds brilliantly. He asks the expert on OT law, what does the bible say and what is HIS interpretation. Jesus draws him into the conversation. This also shows that the answer is in the OT. Jesus affirms the law and shows that the way to eternal life is the same in the OT as it is in the NT.

[6]

27 The man answered, " 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' "

The expert in the religious law answers. He answers with the same verse that Jesus answers with when the Pharisees were trying to trap him in:

[7]

Matthew 22:34-40 (NLT)

34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. 35 One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: 36 "Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?"

37 Jesus replied, " 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

The apostle Paul sums it up in Galatians 5:14:

[8]

Galatians 5:14 NLT

14 For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

This whole exchange is going to hinge on one word. Neighbour. To most Jews, in this day, a neighbour was another Jew. A neighbour was not a Gentile and definitely not a Samaritan. This was contrary to what Jesus knew and taught.

[9]

28 "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!"

Jesus affirms his knowledge and adds if you JUST "Do this and you will live!" Jesus is saying, if you love all people all the time, you will live.

[11]

29 The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

To continue in the lawyer's insincere line of questioning, he asks, "Who is my Neighbour?" What he is asking is, "What must a man do to qualify to be loved as my neighbour?"

How do they have to dress? How do they have to talk? How do they have to smell? Where do they have to live? What do they have to believe? Who do they have to be married to? Do they have to vote your way? Do they have to think your way? Do they have to look like you? What are the prerequisites they have to have, to qualify, for me to love them.

This is what the lawyer is asking Jesus. Let me ask you a question. What are our prerequisites before you will love someone? You may have some minimum requirements for your help and/or love and not even know it.

We are going to see in a bit, how Jesus changes this question and the discussion.

[12]

30 Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

As Jerusalem sits 2500 feet above sea level, no matter the direction you travel, you have to go down. Robbers would hide along the route in mountains, rocks, and desert.

[13]

31 “By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. 32 A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

Let’s be clear here. This is a fictional priest. We may want to put motives on him of why he chose not to help but none are offered. He is not real. Jesus story shows that he chose not to help or love the man laying there alone, half dead, naked, and beside the road. The fact that both the priest and temple assistant (a Levite) pass over to the other side of the street, shows that they are choosing not to show love to this man. Jesus is saying neither the wise and understanding (priest) nor the proud and ruling (levite) showed any compassion whatsoever.

[14]

33 “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. 34 Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. 35 The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’

The Jews despised the Samaritans and the hatred was mutual. The Jews looked down on them. In our story, the Samaritan shows him mercy, love, and compassion. The man was in such bad shape, the Samaritan put him on his own donkey to take him to the inn. He treated his wounds, he took him to an inn and paid for a room for as long as is needed.

[15]

Consider the length the Samaritan goes to help the wounded man who was a Jew. How much love had to be in his heart. What would have to happen for this to occur in your life. Remember, no one is looking. It is a deserted road. The Samaritan is all by himself. This is an example of a selfless heart. Not a selfish heart but one that is selfless. A love like this, for an unknown man who probably detests you, in a dangerous area, that is going to cost you money and time, shows a heart that is changed by God. To the outside world, the Samaritan loved him radically. As we look deeper into the details - they were alone, he goes about giving him medical aid, gives him his donkey, and pays for the inn. You get the idea, that this is who he is. This is an everyday thing, not an everyday occurrence but an everyday love for him.

[16]

36 “Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked.

Earlier in the text, we see the lawyer ask “Who is my neighbour?” He was asking what someone would have to do or be to qualify to be loved as a neighbour. Jesus turns this on it’s head in verse 36 and asks him, “Who was a loving neighbour to the man in need?” Jesus flips the script on him. Do you see the difference in the 2 questions? Jesus is looking right into the lawyer’s heart when he asks this.

Every Sunday afternoon, I have the pleasure of serving with a team of people at RiverKids. We have a housing complex that houses low income families in our community. We put on a Sidewalk Sunday School for kids aged 4-12. We sing songs about Jesus, share a bible story and application, share a snack or meal, and play games including soccer. We go every Sunday afternoon at 3pm. No one in our group had any previous connection with the people other than wanting to share Jesus with them. The reason, I say it is my pleasure is because I get a front row seat in seeing what God is doing in hearts of my team, these kids and their families.

Let me paint you a picture. If you have kids, especially this year, you know what has gone through the elementary schools this year. There has been one outbreak of lice after another. This has occurred in all of the schools. It isn’t a poverty thing, it is a kid thing. So a bunch of our kids, boys and girls have brush cuts to help in this area. The kids that take part in our program are ages 4-12. They sometimes, depending on age, have runny noses and colds and this group is some of best people I have ever met. Their smiles, hugs, and playfulness absolutely melt my heart. This past Sunday, I was talking about how much Jesus loved them and one of our 5 year olds was in the front row and as I am sharing how much Jesus loves him, he reaches out and hugs me. How can your heart not melt.

That is easy to see love. I painted a picture that is easy to love. What really stands out to me are some other events. At Christmas time this same 5 year old was having a tough time. He was sick, had a runny nose and overall having a tough time. We are doing our Birthday party for Jesus and my wife is sitting with him during the story. He is standing on his chair and she is sitting so they’re are pretty much eyeball to eyeball. He goes in for a hug and Kerri wraps her arms around him and he gives her a big hug. He has goobers all over his cheeks and she doesn’t hesitate. That melts my heart.

I see week in and week out. Every Sunday afternoon, this team sacrificially gives up each Sunday to love these kids. Think about what you do on Sunday afternoons. Hang out as a family, go and explore the city, prepare for Monday and so on and so on. Yet, this team with enthusiasm takes part and takes on a role. One will lead the song, another lead a game, another will share the message and application, another will bring a large snack of fruit and baking. I see how individually they will come along side the quieter kids and connect with them. I see this team love them no matter what.

I get a front row seat to God changing hearts of this team, the kids and their families. I see this team who comes each week with enjoyment and excited to see God at work. I get to see how radical love has turned to an everyday kind of love. “Ought too” has changed to ‘Want to’. That is the work of the Holy Spirit.

[17]

2 Cor 5:17 (NLT)

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

Ezekiel 36:26 (NLT)

26 And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.

Will you be saved if you come down and help at RiverKids. No and neither will we. It is a heart that is changed by God that causes you to love without strings, without prerequisites, and without barriers. How do you learn to love that way, you put yourself out of your comfort zone and ask the Spirit to lead you.

Who is Jesus calling you to love and how is he calling you to love them? No matter how hard it may seem, Jesus has already begun if your trust is in him.

We finish off our passage in verses 36 and 37.

[18]

36 “Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked. 37 The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.” Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

The expert of religious law can't bring him to say the word Samaritan. He simply responds with, “The one who showed him mercy.”

Jesus agrees his answer is correct. However, knowing he still does not get it. “Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

Jesus' response is to go and do it. Jesus' response is this is how we live. This is not a one time thing, a Sunday thing, or when someone is watching thing. This is how you love going forward.

Love those who are tough to love, when no one is looking. Love sacrificially those who detest you. You cannot fulfill this without Jesus changing your heart.

The original question is “How can I be saved?”. Love your neighbour as yourself. This is not saying if you rescue someone that you will be saved. This is not saying that you are saved by your good works because we know that salvation is a free gift. Jesus is saying that if you repent and follow him, he will give you a new heart. As you continue to open up your heart to him, he will soften it and your heart will continue to grow in its capacity to love. As you trust in Christ you will LOVE more and more.

This is why James says:

[19]

James 2:17 NLT

17 So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

James isn't saying good deeds will save you. He is saying that good deeds are inevitable as you open up your heart to Jesus in faith.

Faith involves more than mental assent to theological doctrines. Similarly, love is not just an emotion but also an action. Both entail an obedient trust in the God of grace and mercy. The response of love to God and of faith in God are very much the same. Salvation is by grace through faith, but this faith works through love. Paul explains this clearly in:

Galatians 5:6 NLT

For when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, there is no benefit in being circumcised or being uncircumcised. What is important is faith expressing itself in love.

Paul also shares in Galatians 2:20.

[20]

Galatians 2:20 (NLT)

20 My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

If you put your trust in Christ knowing he loves you and gave himself for you, then Jesus can begin to change your stony stubborn heart and give you a tender responsive heart. If you put your trust in Christ, you will begin to love others the way that Christ loves them.

As you trust him more and more, your love for others will grow and grow. And others will see it as radical love and you will just see it as love that you have experienced from Christ already.

The only way you can grow in this, is by trusting Jesus more and more. If you want to grow your muscles, you exercise them. If you want to grow in your capacity to love, you have to exercise those muscles.

How do you exercise your capacity to love? Find a place to serve and love that might be out of your comfort zone. Start with prayer. Who is God calling you to love that would be a stretch for you. As you are serving, pray and ask Christ to lead you. Ask Christ to change your heart for who you are serving.

If you need some ideas, of where to try serving, we have had in our bulletin the last few weeks that there is an opportunity to partner with Radiant Life Church. Radiant Life serves some of the most vulnerable people in our community. They feed and shelter the homeless and those seeking help. We are being asked to form a team that will serve lunch one Sunday a month. You will be responsible to serve and clean up. The food will be provided. I have 2-3 people already and we are needing about 4-5 more. If this is of interest, there is a sign up at the Welcome Kiosk in the foyer or talk to me directly.

Let's pray.

Radical Love - Everyday Love
Luke 10:25-37
Week of May 6, 2018

Objective of this study: Learn from Jesus how to love.

[Remember, the main goal of each Growth Group is to allow God's Word to change your heart so that others would see Jesus in you and be likewise changed to be like him. He wants to change the world through us.]

Worship (5 – 10 minutes)

1. Sing a song or two of praise and thanksgiving to God.
2. Spend five minutes in silence asking God to prepare your heart for how he wants to speak to you.
3. After the five minutes have someone interrupt the silence and read Psalm 36 5-9 meditatively to the group. Pause after each phrase letting God speak to you. Did anything "jump out at you"?

Welcome (5 minutes)

What is your favourite love story in book or movie?

[It's really important when doing this study that we each think about ourselves specifically and ways we need to grow, not how Christians in general need to grow. Do the hard work of letting the Holy Spirit speak to your heart.]

Word (30-45 minutes)

1. What stood out from the sermon?

Read Luke 10:25-37.

2. What is the relationship like between Jesus and the religious elite?
3. What is the lawyer asking him and what is Jesus response? (see verses 25-26)
4. How do they agree and yet not agree in verse 27 and 28?
5. What stands out from the parable in verses 30-35?
6. Why is the distinction between the priest/levite and the Samaritan in regards to the hurt Jewish man, important for Jesus and the lawyer?
7. How are the questions in 29 and 36 different?
8. How does the lawyer's response in verse 37 show us that this is really hard to live out daily?
9. How is this passage similar to Luke 18:18-23?

Work (30-45 minutes)

Sermon quote: "How do they have to dress? How do they have to talk? How do they have to smell? Where do they have to live? What do they have to believe? Who do they have to be married to? Do they have to vote your way? Do they have to think your way? Do they have to look like you? What are the prerequisites they have to have, to qualify, for me to love them."

1. When you read this passage, who do you think of when you see 'neighbour'?
2. To what extent would you go to help your neighbour?

Sermon quote: Consider the length the Samaritan goes to help the wounded man who was a Jew. How much love had to be in his heart. What would have to happen for this to occur in your life? Remember, no one is looking. It is a deserted road. The Samaritan is all by himself. A love like this, for an unknown man who probably detests you, in a dangerous area, that is going to cost you money and time, shows a heart that is changed

by God. To the outside world, the Samaritan loved him radically. As we look deeper into the details - they were alone, he goes about giving him medical aid, gives him his donkey, and pays for the inn. You get the idea, that this is who he is. This is an everyday thing, not an everyday occurrence but an everyday love for him.

3. Have you ever had an experience like this? Have you ever helped someone this way or been helped by someone like this? Discuss in your group how our hearts can grow so that we can love more completely. What work does Jesus have to do? What do you have to do?

Sermon quote: If you put your trust in Christ knowing he loves you and gave himself for you, then Jesus can begin to change your stony stubborn heart and give you a tender responsive heart. If you put your trust in Christ, you will begin to love others the way that Christ loves them. As you trust him more and more, your love for others will grow and grow. And others will see it as radical love and you will just see it as love that you have experienced from Christ already.

4. Is your love too safe or sanitized? Who do you open your heart to and who don't you open your heart to? Brainstorm about the people Jesus moved towards.

5. Is there a step God is asking you to take in loving someone who may be hard to love or who you have previously not taken the time?

Prayer

Spend the rest of the time praying for each other. Praise God together for how he works, and how he allows us to partner with him to accomplish things in his kingdom.

Here are some things you can pray about for the church:

A. That, as a church, we would actively and purposefully engage in the mission of Jesus in Campbell River.

B. Our church board and staff as they lead us to live out the mission of Jesus.

C. Pray for Radiant Life Church and their need for another Sunday lunch team.

River Kids ministry as they reach out to kids in our community.

D. Our missionary of the month: Ken & Debbie Dewar with Kendra, Kaylee & Austin.

E. Our missionary of the week: Brody & Allison Naknakim with Josiah, River & Emma, here at CRBC working with the First Nations in Campbell River and Quadra

F. Local CR church: Foursquare Gateway Gospel with Pastor Matt & Deanna DelBlanc