



2020 January Sermon Series: Storyline

Message #4: Setting Up Shop in a Shaky Place

Getting the Nod:

Opening Video: [The Parables of Jesus – The Good Samaritan](#)

Illustration of the Subway Save: It was an ordinary day of commuting Cameron Hollopeter. The 20-year-old film student made his way down the steps into a New York City subway station to wait for the train. All of a sudden, something went horribly wrong in the young man's brain, sending him into a violent seizure. Hollopeter fell to the ground, tumbled down into the railway bed, just as the rumbling of an approaching train began to shake the station.

Here's how the people in the subway probably reacted. Some turned away, eyes clenched against the horror of what was happening. Other commuters stood frozen in a sense of utter helplessness. Others were in such a hurry to get to where they needed to go, that they missed the moment altogether. In mere seconds, a young man with his life ahead of him would most likely meet an unthinkable violent end, and no one could stop it. No one would stop it. **Except the one man who did.**

A 50-year-old construction worker named Wesley Autrey did the unthinkable. Autrey crossed the boundary of horror that withered all the others in the subway. He pulled his feet from the concrete shoes of helplessness that froze others. He stepped over the high curb of hurry despite being busy taking his two daughters' home before he went to work. This middle-aged man from Harlem who had little in common with this Harvard student, chose to do what no one else at that scene elected to do: **he chose to cross over.**

Autrey ran across that subway platform, jumped down into the ditch, and covered Hollopeter's bloodied, writhing body with his own. He held Hollopeter against the ground while the subway train thundered over top of them. Later, when interviewed about the incident, Autrey said that when he saw the headlights of the train appear, **he knew he had to make a split decision.** "I don't feel like I did something spectacular; I just saw someone who needed help," he said. "I did what I felt was right. ...aren't you supposed to come to people's rescue?"

There's something about the story of Wesley and Cameron that is both inspiring and convicting. It's like there's a law of love—a law of profound regard for the well-being of others which, if we could all live by it, would make this world a very different place than it is. We all hunger for a better world and we long to know the part we can play in helping to make it happen.

Transitional Statement: Jesus tells us a similar story in Luke 10 that not only speaks to making a difference that can and has changed the world... but a story that exposes another non-negotiable for every believer... **The Non-negotiable of knowing and showing God's Love.**

Connecting Us:

The story starts with a lawyer who asks Jesus a very important question in Luke 10:25...

NKJV | Lk 10:25-37 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, **“Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”** 26 He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” 27 So he answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as

yourself.’” 28 And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.” 29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, **“And who is my neighbor?”**

Now let me set this passage up with the backstory:

- **There was a rejection of Jesus and His 12 by a Samaritan Village.** In the previous chapter (9), a Samaritan village rejected the idea of Jesus and the 12 disciples coming to their village. And because of that long running feud, **James and John wanted to call fire down on them.** Jesus warned them about their spirit of revenge.
- **The tremendous success of the 70 followers of Jesus.** Those who had performed miracles and cast out demons by the very name of Jesus. Jesus then sends out 70 followers, **two by two, to every city they were about to go through to Jerusalem.**
- **Then Jesus prays a prayer of thanksgiving for that success and for the visible spiritual authority given for Jesus’ name.** With a crowd close by, Jesus thanks His heavenly Father for this story of miracles. **His name was used by the 70...** and miracles along with spiritual victory over demon-possessed occurred.
- **Among the crowd watching this celebration, this expert of the law stands up. What made him stand may have had some merit... but also some disgust.** It was the mere **mentioning of Jesus’ name that had to bug him** and caused the Lawyer to stand up and begin his interrogation of Jesus.

Look at the Lawyer’s motives with Jesus:

1. **Jesus was an easy challenge with the lawyer’s intellect.**
 - **He stood up and “TESTED JESUS” out of his own expertise.** The Greek word for **“TESTED”** is *ekpiradzo* meaning to make Jesus prove His knowledge of the law in front of this Jewish law-abiding people. **The Lawyer thought he was smarter than Jesus.**
2. **Jesus was just another teacher.**
 - **He only viewed Jesus as one pointing the way... not as one leading the way.** He called Jesus **“Teacher,” didaskalos**, Luke’s equivalent of a Jewish Rabbi. **The Lawyer thought that Jesus was no better than any other teacher down the road.**
3. **Jesus was no more important than the lawyer.**
 - **He saw this moment as a chance to impress Jesus with his response about who his neighbor was... rather than follow Jesus.** **“Tried to JUSTIFY HIMSELF”** comes from a Greek word *dikaioo* which means he tried to convince himself as righteous to Jesus. **The Lawyer thought he was equally as righteous as Jesus.**

Transitional Statement: That’s when Jesus challenges the Lawyer to share his expertise of the Law... 26 He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” 27 So he answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’ ” 28 And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.”

God’s Word on World Changing Love:

Then the expert in the Law trying to JUSTIFY HIMSELF... Asked the question about clarifying who his neighbor was. That's when Jesus starts to tell the story of a robbery on a historically bloody road.

The Road Itself:

- **The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was a notoriously dangerous road.** Jerusalem is 2,300 feet above sea level; the Dead Sea, near which Jericho stood, is 1,300 feet below sea level. So then, in somewhat less than twenty miles, this road dropped 3,600 feet.
- It was a road of narrow, rocky passages, and of sudden turnings which made it **the happy hunting-ground of bandits.**
- In the fifth century **Jerome** tells us that it was still called **'The Red, or Bloody Way'**.
- **In the nineteenth century** it was still necessary to **pay safety money to the local Sheiks** before one could travel on it.
- **As late as the early 1930s** travelers were still warned to get home before dark, if he intended to use the road, because **a certain bandit by the name of Abu Jildah** was adept at holding up cars and robbing travelers and tourists, and escaping to the hills before the police could arrive.

So, when Jesus told this story, he was telling about the kind of thing that was constantly happening on the Jerusalem to Jericho road.

Next, let's us look at the characters.

- **There was the traveler.** People seldom attempted the Jerusalem to Jericho road alone if they were carrying goods or valuables. Seeking safety in numbers, they travelled in convoys or caravans. **This man had only himself to blame for the plight in which he found himself.**
- **There was the priest.** He hastened past. No doubt he was remembering that **anyone who touched a dead man was unclean for seven days (Numbers 19:11).** He could not be sure but he feared that the man was dead; **to touch him would mean losing his turn of duty in the Temple; and he refused to risk that.** He set the claims of ceremonial above those of charity. The Temple and its liturgy meant more to him than human suffering.
- **There was the Levite.** He seems to have gone nearer to the man before he passed on. The **bandits were in the habit of using decoys.** One of their number would act the part of a wounded man; and when some unsuspecting traveler stopped over him, the others would rush upon him and overpower him. **The Levite was a man whose motto was, 'Safety first'.** He would take no risks to help anyone else.
- **There was the Samaritan.** **The listeners would obviously expect that with his arrival the villain had arrived.** The Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans and yet this man seems to have been a kind of commercial traveler who was a regular visitor to the inn. The name "Samaritan" was sometimes used to describe someone who was considered a heretic and a breaker of the ceremonial law.
- **But two things we are sure of: His credit was good; and he alone was willing to help.**

So, Jesus closes the story with this question: 36 So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" 37 And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Transitional Statement: With this story completed... how does this story speak to changing the world? **Back to the non-negotiable.** When we live with love like the Good Samaritan, which is the love of Christ... we can impact and change the world!!! **What lessons are we to learn???**

Our Response to God's Word:

The World Changing Truth of This Good Samaritan Story: Jesus is telling us that...

1. Our entrance to eternal life is connected to our exposed motives.

- Jesus tells this lawyer heard this story so that his motives would be corrected.
- NKJV | 1 Jn 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
- The love of God is different than the World's love! It is world-changing in its transforming power.
- NLT | 1 Jn 4:7-8 Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. 8 But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
- **Why do you come to church? How do you treat others around you? Motives?**

2. Real people suffer when we play church.

- NLT | Ro 12:9 Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. **How we view brokenness should fuel our love!!**
- **Illustration about my father and the mistreatment of his favorite pastor.**

3. Religion can ruin a righteous opportunity.

- The first two travelers who passed up helping the fallen and bleeding man were men of religion. Rules were more important than the heart of God and the needs of people.
- NLT | Eph 5:2 Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.
- **Illustration of those who completely miss the opportunity we have with COMO and Ron Smith and his wife at Real Life. Complaints about her nurse's smock drove her husband away. Is our goal to impress people or impact people?**

4. God often uses the least among us to do the most among us.

- The Samaritan wasn't supposed to be the hero! The Levite and priest were.
- **God can use any of us when His love is an active force in us!!!**

5. There's no such thing as short-term servants.

- The Good Samaritan saw to it that the broken man was taken care of. He would return to continue his recovery.
- **Real followers of Christ don't give up or give out on those in need. Is there someone you need to engage with again? Someone in needs?**

Transition: As the Praise Team comes, let's stand together. Is there anyone who God is spoken to?

Drawing the Net:

I want to pray for those who have acknowledged their need...

But I'm going to pray for us all.

I want to challenge us all to respond with a non-negotiable to live the Love of God!

The Pastoral Prayer of Challenge

(Make the congregation aware of the altar time being both now and after the service)

Things to pray about:

- We are instruments of your love. Without your love we fail to love you!
- Make our motives right. Squelch our critical and impatient and hateful attitudes.
- Help us to know that Jesus, You are the Lord and the love of our lives.

Ways to apply this message:

- Teach us to see those who suffer and to come to their need.
- Don't let religion be our idol... let our love for you be our creed.
- Don't let us miss the opportunities before us.
- Use us all... but help the least of us to know that they can do the most among us.
- Keep us from laying down our apron of love. Give us all a basin of water and a comforting towel to change our world... You did.
- Let the love of God be our contagious draw to a lost and dying world.

Join with the Praise Team and Let's close off with this song...