

Kingdom Compassion

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 June 2025

Preacher: Jesse Kincer

[0 : 00] So Father, we do come to you right now. And I want to take time for all of us just to sit and push pause and consider all the things! It's so easy to overlook how sacred these moments are.

! The singing of songs of worship to you as the family of God, as the redeemed, those are sacred, beautiful moments. Getting around the room and greeting one another, the old phrase from across time and history of the church was passing the peace, passing your peace to one another. And so thank you for the privilege of being able to do that, again, as the family of God and the household of God. And Lord, now we come to your word, your truth. Lord, the thing that encourages us, convicts us, corrects us, that which we need, it's our daily bread, you call it.

And so we ask that you would open the ears of our hearts to receive all that you have for us today. In your name we pray, Jesus Christ, amen.

Amen. So we're continuing on in our series on the parables. And Jesus told these parables to reveal his kingdom. And if you've listened to any of them, and if you haven't, I encourage you to go back into our app and to listen to what has been preached so far. But what we found along the way is these parables, what they continue to be doing is challenging our modern perspectives and values and virtues, just as much now as they did when Jesus first told them. And what we're seeing is that the kingdom of God, it doesn't follow and nor does it fit neatly into the moral structures and value systems of our modern prevailing cultures and subcultures or countercultures.

In the way of the kingdom, over and over again, it confounds the world's wisdom and it exposes the world's folly. Today's parable does the same as Jesus reveals a very important and integral virtue of his kingdom, which is compassion. But what makes this parable more interesting is actually the context in which Jesus tells it. And it's both the context and the parable, itself, that helps us to understand, in a much deeper sense, this virtue of compassion that Jesus has in mind. But even more specifically, I would say, it reveals how that virtue changes, confronts, and challenges some of the most entrenched parts of our thinking.

[2 : 56] And in the end, we find a kingdom principle at play that colors life with Jesus and what it means to follow him. And so without further ado, we're going to jump into Luke 10. If you don't have Bibles with you, don't worry, they're going to be up on the screen as well.

So Luke chapter 10, and we're going to start in verse 25. It says this, Behold, a teacher stood up to put him, to put Jesus to the test, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said to him, What is written in the law?

How do you read it? And 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.

And Jesus said to him, You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live. But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

Jesus replied, Man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. And he went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii, two days' wages, and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.

[4 : 45] Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers? The lawyer said, The one who showed him mercy.

Jesus said to him, You go and do likewise. This is God's word. You know, all of us, I think, live this life trying to be, to do our best to be right and to do right in the hopes that it kind of matters in some meaningful way.

In this parable, it strikes at the heart of that noble desire, be right and do the right thing. And the lawyer, he's wanting to know how to do that. He's wanting those things, and he's speaking to Jesus and asking him that.

And he's so steeped in God's law and the law of God, knowing what's right, the things of God and his rules and regulations handed down to show the way in which you should live.

And he's so steeped in it that he is able to sum it up in a way that Jesus says, You nailed it. A plus. Now, go and do it.

[5 : 59] And let's remember what this lawyer summed up. He said, Well, the law can be summed up to loving the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul and all your strength, and then also to love your neighbor as yourself.

Now, I hope we can appreciate, if Jesus was to stand in front of you and say, Sum up the Old Testament for me, and you were able to say it in a way that he said, Bingo. I have nothing to change.

You would kind of probably be like, Sweet. I got this. But as right as this lawyer is, that's not the last word. Because life doesn't allow things to just be as easy as getting our theology right, as Jesus points out in this parable.

And before Jesus speaks this parable out, even the lawyer knows at that moment when Jesus says, You got it correct. Go and do likewise. That obeying the law isn't that simple, which is why he asked the question, Well, let's define who is my neighbor, which is a very lawyer thing to do, right?

If you're concerned that you're somehow going to break the law and haven't been upholding it, what do lawyers do? Well, let's figure out how to bend the law, manipulate it, and do some hurdles to make it work in our favor.

[7 : 09] That's what we do. We're just like that in a lot of ways. We're moralists at our heart. And so we ask that good question. Let's start arguing on terms here.

Now, as clever as that question may be, it also betrays his heart. Jesus notices that and he addresses it. Because he knows this lawyer isn't asking out of concern for others.

Because he's some kind of very loving person. He wants to go out and just love everybody. He's actually just looking out for himself. Let's remember how this conversation started. It started with him saying, What do I need to do to inherit eternal life?

This lawyer is very concerned about himself and his eternal security. That's what he cares about the most and how he can earn it and secure it. He's looking out for himself.

In a very subtle way, this parable says that is exactly what has to change. In kingdom compassion, it confronts that. It comes and it says, Hey, what we look out for needs to change.

[8 : 17] This lawyer is a great example of what it means to be looking out for yourself. And when we lack compassion, that compassion that comes from heaven, what we do is we go about life and we look at others.

But we look at others in a transactional sense if we're kind of obvious. We look at others and we say like, Man, are they deserving of my time and my energy and my effort? Are they deserving of that? Man, being in a relationship with that person or stepping into that scenario, what is that going to cost me? And then is it really worth it? What's going to be my return on like stepping into that situation?

What do I gain from having that relationship or helping that kind of person? It's a very natural way that we go about managing life while at the same time trying to be right and trying to do right.

We scan and we assess who we should obligate ourselves to, who we should be obligated to love because I think we intrinsically know that we can't be everybody's friends and we can't solve every problem we come across.

[9 : 24] We're people with limits. We're finite people with limited time, limited energy, limited money, etc. And those are legitimate things to consider. Those are legitimate things to reckon with.

So the good news is that this parable doesn't mean you have to stop and hug every person you come across that isn't smiling. That's not what Jesus is trying to get at. Nor does it mean that you have to stop and give money to every panhandler.

I just want to say this with a lot of sensitivity here, is that there is a marked difference between the needs of the man in this story, the obvious needs of the man in this story and his situation, and those who may or may not be as destitute as they're making out.

That's a reality. And that's what Jesus isn't trying to get across here. And also, I want to say, hey, if you walk past a stranger in the grocery aisle, you don't have to stop and say hello and try to get their phone number and hope that to become your BFF.

And you know what? You can still get into heaven if you don't do that. Now, at the same time, the question really is, do you go about your day thinking beyond your own needs and your own plans and your own desires?

[10:42] See, the priest and the Levite, they saw a beaten man, a man who was on his way to death, and at the same time, they didn't see him. And here's the interesting thing.

In any other story that Jesus may have told, the audience of Jesus' day would have shrugged off the priest and Levite's actions without much thought.

And here's why. The argument would have been that these two men were actually doing the first great commandment, which was loving the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

After all, they were heading to Jerusalem for important religious duties. They were going to the church to serve in the church. And make no mistake, in that context, at that time, there wasn't a higher and holier calling or place to be called to in their religious value system.

See, the crowd, like that lawyer, were steeped in a certain structure and value system that guided their moral betters. And kingdom compassion, what it does, it confronts those things.

[11:52] It confronts our moral structures and value systems. And here's the danger about any kind of morality and value system that man makes, that man can build upon.

It produces a rigid kind of prejudice toward who and what we think is right and wrong. And I know that prejudice is a loaded word today, so hear me out. Today, we've kind of really narrowed that to just mean racism.

And it does include things that's kind of a fruit of it. Prejudice can have the fruit of racism, but it goes way beyond that. To have prejudice means, in its original definition, that you have a biased or a preconceived opinion, idea, or belief about something, and you bring that into what you hear and what you see and how you think you should behave.

And the thing about prejudice, it's more than just a preference. Preference saying, I just have a preference, that's not strong enough because our prejudice is a preference and it is partiality, but it is backed by a sense of righteousness.

It is backed by a sense of, I'm doing this because I know I'm right. So every skin color, every ethnicity, any age, any gender, we are all capable of being prejudiced.

[13:07] All you have to do is build out your own moral code and hierarchy of values without reference to God and his truth and you'll get there. And guess what? We do get there. All of us do.

And I'm taking time to explain this because we can be so overly sensitive to think like, oh, I don't want to be called that. I don't, no, that can't be me. Because of, especially because of our cultural moment, it's almost like the worst thing that you'd be called in this day.

But in the end, if we ditch those terms that the Bible says are actually hard issues that it's trying to get to to sort out and to address, what we end up doing is we end up throwing the biblical baby out with the cultural bathwater.

And we can't avoid talking about it today because Jesus' parable clearly confronts some of the common prejudices of his day that existed because of a misguided moral value system.

Jesus intentionally made the setting of his parable the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. It was a well-known and well-traveled road of his day.

[14:14] It was known to be dangerous. And people were attacked and robbed frequently on that road. And Jericho was a priestly city. At that time, they reckoned that there's about 12,000 priests that live in the city of Jericho and its position to Jerusalem, which was 15 miles away, which is about a half a day's journey, meant that a lot of priests and a lot of Levites were traversing it on ecclesiastical errands.

They did it a lot. So anybody that was traveling that road, you passed by a lot of priests and a lot of Levites. They trafficked it a lot. So when Jesus says a priest and a Levite passed by a man on the other side, so far they would have kind of been like, okay, so?

It would have kind of been saying like the preacher was on his way to the church service and saw an accident and just kept on driving. We would have found ways to be like, yeah, okay, I get it. He's got more important things to be on about. It wouldn't be a stretch to assume the crowds would have excused their behavior with thoughts of, I'm sure they would have passed by saying a prayer for the man or a blessing over him.

But let's be honest, they had some important religious duties in Jerusalem to get to. I mean, like, you know? And think about this too. It would have been very dangerous for them to stop.

[15:31] I mean, if that guy got robbed and beaten and left for dead, like, who knows how close the robbers were still by if they were helping him out and, like, they got jumped as well. And let's not forget the purity laws for priestly ministry.

To take care of a man and to help him out in any way that was bloody and to get blood on your clothes and on yourself created a problem that you would have to go purify yourself for days before you could serve again.

So, you know, if he stopped to help, man, that creates kind of a scheduling problem here. You know, that might create a potential ministry gap in Jerusalem. And, you know, let's be reasonable about this.

This is a really busy highway. I'm sure there's gonna be some other people right behind them that can do the stopping and the helping. And that's the kind of self-justifying prejudice through which they would have filtered Jesus' parable.

And they probably were up to that point. Priest, Levite, man, very important calling. Very important role in our society.

[16:40] Their religious duties, man, very important to keep. Honoring religious purity laws, super, super important. Beaten man on the side of the road?

Yeah, okay, yes, that's important too, but just not as important as all these other things. We solve our moral dilemmas by choosing what we think the greater obedience is or the greater good is, don't we?

Church work, we can say, is more important than stopping and helping somebody. We gotta get to that obligation. But church work is people work.

You know, Jesus is very, I think, both clever and cheeky here. He puts these two great commandments of some of the whole law at odds with one another in this parable.

And he does that so that the crowd and the lawyer could be exposed to their own self-righteous presumptions. But their moral structure and their value system because of the parable begins to crumble exactly when Jesus makes the Samaritan the moral exemplar.

[17:52] And it is a brilliant stroke of genius because the Jews of that time hated Samaritans. I mean, guys, you cannot appreciate it. There was long-standing prejudice and enmity toward them that stretched back for centuries.

And that was coming from both sides. They were mutual enemies, these two people groups. And so we cannot even begin to imagine or possibly appreciate how surprised and offended it was in that moment that Jesus made the Samaritan the hero.

The lawyer, think about this, the lawyer couldn't even use the word Samaritan when Jesus said, who was the one who proved to be the neighbor? He couldn't say, well, the Samaritan was. He had to say, well, I guess the guy that showed mercy.

He couldn't even give a Samaritan credit for being the hero of the parable and doing the right thing in a fable. It's hard for us to understand.

I mean, I heard one pastor say probably the closest that we can appreciate how like unfathomable this would be, it would have been like that Samaritan's actions would have been as unlikely and as unwelcome to those listeners the first century as a Comanche of the 1800s would have been coming to a U.S.

[19:11] fort with a scalped soldier slung over his horse with the hope of helping him. It just didn't fit. That is not what's supposed to happen.

That is not how things go. But Jesus is confronting their moral moral structures and value structures and the reason compassion has to do that, has to confront those things is because we often use them to excuse the people we like and to dehumanize the people we don't.

If you just look at the political landscape that's what's happening a lot. You have priorities in your life that you have established and we will moralize them and we will justify them and the problem is that

we don't spend much time thinking deeply and evaluating them according to any meaningful standard beyond our own sense of right and wrong or wherever else it's coming from. Here's some priorities that this parable challenges. Challenges personal protection. I have to look out for myself.

My safety is the most important thing but yet the good Samaritan he stopped and helped. He looked at a man who was in dire straits.

[20 : 38] He was going to die if somebody didn't stop to help him out at the risk of his own safety. He looked at his own needs and he considered that man's greater needs and he said like okay I'm going to risk here.

And compassion will, heavenly compassion will move us to do that. and then there's the priority of our possessions. What's mine is mine to use how I want and to live how I want.

I get to control those things. I get to use it for what I think is good and better but the good Samaritan he's like a steward. He's like so generous with his stuff. He takes his wine and his oil and he pours them on the man.

He expends it on the man to help him. Then he goes and he takes them to an inn and he pays two days wages and makes a pledge and says like whatever else this is going to cost it's on me.

What about keeping important commitments? This one hits me personally. Nothing would be more justifiable than saying like no, no, no I got to keep, I already said yes to something else I got to keep to that.

[21 : 48] I got to get to the church meeting I got to be there on time to preach. I can't miss it. There's so many people depending on me. I'm so important. Just really kind of at the root of that when we get to it. The good Samaritan he was going to be late for something.

He had to push pause for something and he did that to stop to save an enemy's life. And what about convenience?

It's a big priority for us. What's convenient for me? The Samaritan had to go out of his way. He had to spend time. He had to look for a place where the man can safely recover.

He had to step down, step into that man's world, step into the bloody mess, bandage him up, get dirt and blood on his clothes, all that stuff. Kingdom compassion challenges our priorities.

And here's the thing, we all have them. And I want to say this, they're actually quite necessary.

Priorities are neither a good or bad thing, but the foolish are ignorant and naive about them. We can walk around life and the foolish will be like, I ain't got priorities.

[22 : 59] Yeah, you do. The wise are aware of priorities and they're actually intentional about them. Jesus isn't saying in this parable, don't have priorities. He's just revealing what they should be.

And gospel wisdom with the help of heavenly compassion discerns when a priority needs to take a backseat for something more important. I mean, when the gospel hits us, when heaven hits us, when the kingdom starts to grow in us, our priorities are going to be affected.

Think about this, the alabaster jar. This lady comes with an alabaster jar and some commentators say that thing was probably worth a whole year's wages. She breaks that jar and pours that expensive ointment, that expensive perfume on Jesus.

Like, who is spending \$60,000 to \$100,000 on something, doing that on a dude's feet? What happened? Her priorities changed.

What about when Jesus came to Peter and James and John, career fishermen, rooted in their community of Galilee, and he says, leave all that behind, leave your nets, leave your family, come and follow me?

[24 : 15] That was a change of priority. The kingdom constantly confronts our priorities. Kingdom compassion may at any time challenge you when you see something to die to a priority that you may hold sacred for the sake of a greater gospel priority.

See, there's a great irony in a seeming paradox being revealed in light of the original topic being discussed by Jesus and the lawyer. What does it take?

How does one inherit eternal life? love? And here's the thing, what Jesus has been telling us through this story in a very subtle way, the kingdom compassion confirms that eternal life only comes through death.

One can read this parable and conclude that if you do enough good things, you can earn eternal life for yourself, but that isn't the point Jesus is making. Does Jesus want us to live compassionate lives that looks out for others without any prejudice, but has the willingness to go into tough situations

and to die to our priorities in order to fulfill gospel priorities?

Absolutely. But all of this points to and confirms the greater principle upon which Jesus' kingdom is established, and one that you can see actually being played out in kingdom compassion that is being presented to you and me today.

[25 : 52] And here's this principle, kingdom life only comes through losing ours. You and I can't have both. Why should you die to your prejudice and priorities and put other people's needs before your own?

Because that's what Jesus did. That is the way of heaven. That is the way of our savior. And that is the way of life in him and eternal life, plain and simple.

As much as we are the priest, as much as we're trying to be the priest and the Levite, trying to turn good Samaritan like what Jesus presents to us, perhaps even more so we have to see that we are the almost dead man that needed rescuing.

Because we are, and we once were. The Samaritan is so out of place in this parable. His role wasn't expected.

His role was an enemy helping his enemies. Jesus was out of place seemingly. He was not accepted and he was not expected.

[27 : 04] The prince of heaven come down and walked among us. The one who came to live among us to speak truth and heal and ultimately to save his enemies.

And yes, we were enemies of God and we treated God like an enemy. The root desire behind sin, because we are sinners and every sin that we do, the thing behind that is a desire to de-God God.

Is to try to make him what he is not and try to reject what he is. And so we doubt his goodness.

That's what sin is, doubting his goodness. We don't want to have his authority over us.

We want to go our own way and so we cast him off. Sin is enmity with God. It is destructive.

In the end, it leaves us robbed of dignity, bruised and beaten, bloodied, hopeless and helpless. And for all of you and for all of us that remain in our sin and choose not to make Jesus as our Lord and Savior, at the end of the day, after all of that, we still have to face a holy God of heaven who is going to judge us for our sins and he's going to do that.

[28 : 17] We're all like the man laying on the side of the road as good as dead. And that's why Jesus had to come. He denied the privilege of heaven. He didn't walk by because he never stopped looking at all who were lost in their sin, dead and dying on the road.

And he didn't look at us with any cold prejudice, but he looked at us with warm, loving compassion. And he moved in and he came and he did what he did, living a life we couldn't live and dying a death that we deserve, but he did for us.

And he did that because the Father's glory and our salvation was his priority. That is the kingdom priority. This is the moral structure and the value system of the kingdom.

And so he gave up his life so that we can live, but not live to ourselves, to live in him, to live for him and to live to him. And so yes, eternal life begins in death.

When Jesus calls us into his life, first he bids us to come and to die, to join him in his death. We have to die to our way of doing things.

[29 : 30] We have to die to trying to earn eternal life for ourselves through our good works. We have to die to our prejudice and priorities, our moral structures and our value systems. We have to die to those things.

We have to join Jesus in his death, meaning that we get rid of all those things that block kingdom of compassion. We leave them behind in the grave to come out to walk into resurrection life and newness of life with him.

And we live in this new way, in the way of Jesus, the way of the kingdom that he is revealing and has revealed. And so yes, we are called to live like the good Samaritan.

We are those who look at others like Jesus looks at them. And we let ourselves be moved with compassion just like he was. And then we move in to help in meaningful gospel priority ways.

The gospel is not love your neighbor to earn eternal life. It is that we were loved and brought from death to life by Jesus.

[30 : 34] And now he is working out his life through us to others. And that is kingdom compassion. So the band comes up and we respond.

In a moment we're going to take communion. I just want to say to you, if you're here or even listening to this and you wouldn't call yourself a follower of Jesus. Jesus. And if you're here before

you come to the communion table, we would say, man, this isn't for you.

Don't come to the table because communion, taking communion doesn't save you. Jesus saves you. Faith in him alone saves you. That is it. Faith in his life and death and resurrection in your place.

That is what saves you. Because your sin can't be healed by any earthly medicine. This can only be healed by Jesus' blood. It can only be washed away by Jesus' blood.

Which is why he came and he died on the cross for you. And he did that so you can be saved. He did that so you can be healed. And he did that so you can live with him, to him, and for him.

[31 : 42] And if that's you, as we're taking communion, there's going to be prayer up on the screen for you to pray. And I want to encourage you to pray that prayer. Now for those in the room that are followers of Jesus, we're going to take communion.

And we do that remembering the sacrifice. It points to the sacrifice that saved us. This meal we're going to take that our Savior invites us to, it magnifies our Savior's death.

And we don't get to touch Jesus physically in a literal way, but we get to draw near and hold the signs and symbols of his sacrifice. And draw near to him in that way, in a wonderful way.

And as we come in with faith and thanksgiving and partake of this meal, we get to feast on God's grace. It's a grace that encourages us and strengthens us to walk in kingdom compassion.

So I'm going to pray right now. And then when I say amen, you can respond in the appropriate way.

If you're going to come take communion, you can go to the table nearest to you. Bring it back and take it when you're ready.

[32 : 42] But let me pray for us. Lord, we come to you right now. Father, we come to you right now. I pray for those in the room that are coming to you for the first time in faith.

She would meet them in a profound way that they would see you for the first time and be convinced in their heart of their hearts, the core of their being that you indeed are their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who takes away their sins.

And that there is another way to be saved and to inherit eternal life. And as we come to the table for those who believe, we come with great thanksgiving, but we also come remembering that on the night that you were betrayed, not too far from your death, you were having a meal with your disciples and you took a loaf of bread and you broke it and you said, this is my body, broken for you.

Eat of it in remembrance of me. It was a cup of wine that you took and you blessed it and you said, this is the cup, my blood, blood of a new covenant shed for the forgiveness of your sins.

Drink of it in remembrance of me. And so Lord, we receive this meal from you just like the first disciples did with thanksgiving with soberness and seriousness.

[34 : 31] And we thank you for your sacrifice. We thank you for your great compassion over us. Amen. Amen. Amen.