

Luke Chapter 10 v 25 - 37

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, everybody. Just going to begin with a psalm.

Sometimes you look at the psalms, and there's certain psalms that stand out to you for all sorts of reasons. I always find Psalm 121 very encouraging and challenging. It says this, I lift up my eyes to the mountains.

Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip. He who watches over you will not slumber.

Indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you. The Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm. He will watch over your life. The Lord will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore.

[1 : 04] As we come this morning to worship him, that he's spoken of in those words, then it's a tremendous thing to know that the Lord is with us.

And as it says at the end, he will be with us both now and forevermore. And we're going to sing our first hymn now. It's going to come up behind me on the wall. Speak, O Lord. Speak, O Lord.

aplic, O Lord.■■ groan, O Lord. Deep, O Lord.

Hang to implinating us, clear and precious, hearköh, o Lord. Hear ourures near your body red. When the light of Christ might be seen today, May our hearts go down and our knees go away.

[2 : 23] Sing, O Lord, and we'll bring us for your purposes, for your glory.

Teach us, Lord, and we'll bring us by the wilderness to the sea.

Just our foes and our blessings with the brilliance of your glory.

For our praise to rise, for our eyes to see, Till our majesty come, heaven's glory to see.

Words of God that we're in the air, that we're to remain, for our love is here.

[3 : 32] For our Mama 6, Missupon, and■■■■■ ein laurentin teest Mu?! Zummar Bell O Lord, that we heal the light, that we shall ask the light for the past for us.

Those youths have changed on the golden land, that we will ever have for eternity.

As our grace will stand on your promises, and our faith will walk as you walk with us.

Sing your love to the earth as it is built, and the earth is filled with your glory.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's just come before the Lord in prayer. Amen. Amen.

[4 : 41] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord, we come to you through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is described in your Bible as the word.

a word and Lord as we just sung in that hymn we're asked to look to your word and be taught by it and so we pray this morning as we come before you will come humbly knowing our sinfulness but knowing you're a God who hears our prayers and Lord we know that when we search the scriptures and when we hear Joel preach later Lord it will bring joy to our souls as we're reminded of all that you've done for us when the Lord Jesus came to die on the cross for our sins we pray Lord that you'll continue with us that our conversations together afterwards will also be fulfilling and we'll be thinking of you and we do pray Lord that wherever your church meets this morning whether here Gisborough or other parts of the world Lord we just pray that there the word will be preached boldly by those whom you've led to deliver it and we ask Lord that it might be meaningful to us and go into our hearts not just into our heads and so Lord we commit our time to you now we pray that we'll be greatly encouraged and challenged as we seek to search the scriptures so Lord be with us now and with all your people wherever they might be this morning for we ask all these things in

Jesus name and for his sake amen do our reading now we're looking at Luke chapter 10 that's page 1041 in your Bibles and we're starting in verse 25 so we're looking at the Good Samaritan now some of you might be thinking I preached on this a few months back so I have prepared something different just in case you're wondering most of you probably don't remember anyway yeah so verse 25 Luke chapter 10 on one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus teacher he asked what must I do to inherit eternal life what is written in the law he replied how do you read it he answered 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 love your neighbor as yourself you have answered correctly Jesus replied do this and you will live but he wanted to justify himself so he asked Jesus and who is my neighbor in reply Jesus said a man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was attacked by robbers they stripped him of his clothes beat him and went away leaving him half dead a priest happened to be going down the same road and when he saw the man he passed by on the other side so too a Levite when he came to the place and saw him passed by on the other side but a Samaritan as he traveled came where the man was and when he saw him he took pity on him he went to him and bandaged his wounds pouring on oil and wine then he put the man on his own donkey brought him to an inn and took care of him the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper look after him he said and when I return

I will reimburse you for any extra expense you have you may have which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell in the hands of the robbers the expert in the law replied the one who had mercy on him Jesus told him go and do likewise now I don't know if many of you were here just over a week ago we had Maureen Greaves give her testimony in the church and it's a very very powerful moving story but Maureen she's a woman from Sheffield and I think just eight years ago something like that her husband was walking to play the organ for a Christmas Eve service and he was attacked on his way to church they don't know the motive why he was attacked but he was attacked and he was killed for no reason and it was amazing

Maureen her response was she knew that she had to forgive them and the place where her husband was killed was just outside her house and she said this that every day she has to walk past that spot but every day she prays she uses it as an opportunity to pray for those two she sought to meet with the family she did all she could to forgive these people she made this statement on TV many of us will have heard it now I don't know about you you hear a story like that and you think how could you possibly find it in yourself to forgive people like that you know completely undeserving of her forgiveness and Maureen said this she knew the next day her husband would be preaching on God's forgiveness on God's forgiveness for us and so she knew that she had to forgive them now today we're looking at a story an encounter of Jesus and a lawyer and it's really

[10 : 45] Jesus tells a parable about loving your enemies how can we love our enemies and this lawyer he was the opposite in a sense he couldn't forgive and Jesus tells this story to expose this man's hatred of a certain sect in society and we'll talk a bit more about that later but just a bit of background who is this man he's a lawyer he's a he's a student of the scriptures the Mosaic law and he comes to Jesus and it says he comes to Jesus to test him so he's not come to Jesus to genuinely learn from him but he's asking him this question to try to trip Jesus up you know to try get one over him and he says he says to Jesus what must I do to inherit eternal life now Jesus says well he knows he's a lawyer so he says what does the law say now every Jew would have known the answer it's to love the Lord your God with all your heart soul and mind to love your neighbour as yourself these are the two commandments which in a sense they encompass the whole law they're what the whole law is about and Jesus says go and do likewise but then what does this man say next he says this who is my neighbour and what's the question really asking it's who do I who do I have to love and underneath that question

I think there's something else it's who can I get away with not loving surely Jesus I can't love everyone surely there's certain people that I don't have to love maybe he had a certain group of people in mind maybe he had an individual in mind we don't know we don't know his motives but actually who is my neighbour it was a hotly debated topic in those days amongst the Jews and they'd in a sense they'd twisted the law to suit their own desires and they said this any Gentile any non-Jew that doesn't count as my neighbour I don't have to love them so the law the law about loving my neighbour it doesn't apply to them and the religious leaders the Pharisees some of them are taking it one step further they say any Jew who was ceremonially unclean so who wasn't

following the law you know to a T they don't count as my neighbour now Jesus tells this story to really expose this way of thinking you'll notice the two the two people who walk past this man who's beaten on the road who ignore him are religious leaders one is a scribe one is a Levite and they both they ignore the man there's no one around they choose to walk by the other side and they walk straight past him but who's the man that helps he's a Samaritan now what do we know about Samaritans

Samaritans in those days they were seen as the scum of the earth they were hated by the Jews they were seen as traitors they changed the word of God they had their own Torah but they replaced the word Jerusalem with Samaria they were involved in paganism they were seen as the lowest of the low they were hated by the Jews but what's Jesus what does Jesus force this man to say he says who was the neighbour in this story who acted the most neighbourly and if you look in verse 37 the man he won't even say the word Samaritan but he's forced to say this the one who showed him mercy and I think what Jesus is doing here he's exposing this man that his religion in a sense is dead you see in a sense this man he's trying to justify himself the Jews have this idea that if you could keep the law if you could tip the balance my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds then I'll get into heaven and so if you're going to do that you have to narrow the law down because it's not possible to love everyone completely all the time is it and they've changed the law to mean this it means to love the people who are like me no any of us can do that but the challenge is to love even our enemies to love those we don't get on with to love those who aren't like us and to love those who aren't part of our group our clan now the bible

I think it says a lot about this attitude I was struck as I was reading through a lot of the prophets God would say things like this I've had enough of this is a paraphrase obviously but things like I've had enough of your sacrifices they mean nothing to me they're worthless I don't want to listen to your prayers look after the orphan look after the widow your religion it's meaningless if it hasn't changed your heart if it hasn't caused you to love others James says this to the church in James chapter 2 verse 14 he says this what good is it my brothers and sisters if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds can such faith save them suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food if one of you says to them go in peace keep warm and well fed but does nothing about their physical needs what good is it in the same way faith by itself if it is not accomplished accompanied by action is dead and so

Jesus is saying here well James is saying here if your faith doesn't result in love for others if it's simply I go to church I say my prayers I call myself a Christian but if you can't love others then your faith is dead it's interesting this parable isn't it Jesus makes love very practical it's not an emotional feeling but love in the bible it always results in action it is an action itself you know it's seeing the man in need it's going out of your way to help him looking after him even putting yourself in danger to help the man on the streets I want to say this is Jesus advocating salvation by works is James advocating salvation by works well we know the bible says we can't be saved by our works actually this man he in a sense he was he was trying to earn his salvation by what he could do we know we can never do that but what it is saying is this a true faith if you've truly been saved by

[18:08] God if you've truly been changed by his love then that will result overflow into loving others Jesus says this by your fruits you shall know them think of a rotting tree if you see a rotten tree an old tree that's dying you're not going to go to it and find good apples on it are you you're not going to find your fruit there in the same way a healthy tree that's been nourished it's not going to grow rotting apples is it it's a simple analogy it's saying if you're alive if you've been saved by Christ if you've been changed by him then there should be the signs of life there should be fruit fruit in keeping with repentance John would say I think about the story of the sheep and the goats Jesus tells this parable and it's about the judgment day at the end of the earth and he says

I'll be able to separate the sheep and the goats those who are genuinely mine and those who aren't by what their attitude was towards my poor in a sense he's not saying that we're going to be saved by helping the poor but it is interesting isn't it he'll be able to tell those who are his by what their attitude was like to others by their love for others by our fruits you shall know them now we've looked at what love looks like and we've seen that love is not optional it's a must if you're a Christian and I want to ask this question how does our love how does it represent Christ our God to those around us I've said by your fruits you shall know them and that passage is really about false teachers in the church and he's saying you'll be able to tell a false teacher by what comes out of them by their fruits but it also says

Jesus also says that the world will be able to distinguish if we are gods by our love for one another that's to be the distinguishing thing about Christians in 1 John says this a new command I give to you love one another as I have loved you so you must love one another by this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another so that's the way we're to be marked out that's the way we're to be recognised as Christians it's by our love for one another is that true of us and I want to take this further actually God's glory whether men blaspheme or glorify our God will happen it's dependent in a sense by the way we represent him to others in the world in the sermon of the mount

Matthew 5 verse 16 Jesus says this and he's talking about being salt and light in the world and he says this in the same way let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven so we must love because in a sense the father's glory depends on it not that his glory can be diminished but his glory in the eyes of men Paul calls himself an ambassador of Christ in the sense we're all representatives of Christ to the world they'll judge our God if he's real if he's true on our actions I recently went on holiday about a month ago and on the plane I got sat next to a girl from the island of Brunei and she moved over to England nine years ago and she studied at university and you know we got talking she asked me what

I did I said I was working for a church and eventually she said this to me when I first moved to England when I first went to uni the only place I was made to feel welcome was at the Christian Union now she wasn't a Christian she was brought a Buddhist she didn't have a faith of her own but actually the way Christians are treated her at the time when she was in need had made a big impact on her and actually you know it opened up quite an interesting conversation about God now that's a positive story but how often do we hear the opposite how often do we hear people say to us I can't go to church I want nothing to do with your God I want nothing to do with church because I've been hurt by a Christian or I've been hurt by the church it's full of hypocrites that shouldn't shouldn't be said but sadly it is sometimes in the book of Romans Romans chapter 2 verses 24

[23 : 31] Paul says this about he's talking about Jews who have you know they've claimed to follow the law and they've taught the law but they haven't kept it hasn't shown in their lives it says they've stolen committed adultery he says this God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you and it's a sobering sentence isn't it but whether we like it or not people will look at the way we live people will look at whether we love others and they'll judge our God they'll judge Jesus on how we live so are we causing people to blaspheme God or are we causing people to glorify our father by the way we live is there anyone you know we're not we feel in ourselves we can't show love to we don't have to show love to we want to glorify our father we want to glorify God we must love others you know the third commandment it says this you shall not you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain and we often think of that commandment as you know you shouldn't use God's name as a swear word and in a sense it includes that that's not the whole meaning it means much more than that and the word take to take the Lord's name it actually means to lift up or to bear in a sense to hold so I want to ask this how are you in a sense how are you bearing

God's name you claim to be a Christian how are you lifting up his name before others how are you representing God are you causing others to blaspheme God by the way that you live now mostly what I've said so far I might have made you feel guilty in a sense it's a lot of law you know you must do this you must love your neighbour but where does our motivation for love come from and I think it goes back to grace it goes back to the gospel we don't love others because we're intrinsically good because we can do it in ourselves we don't love others because other people deserve it we actually love we love others because we've been shown this love first by Christ that God loved us when we were unlovely thinking back to the story of the

Samaritan where would you place yourself in that story would you place yourself as the Samaritan would you place yourself as the Levite or the scribe passing by and I think we all should place ourselves as actually the man on the road who was shown the love of God Ephesians chapter 2 says that we were all dead in our trespasses and sins but Christ made us alive it goes on to say that we were enemies of God while we were enemies of God Christ died for us we did nothing to deserve Christ's love for us but he didn't simply stoop down on the road to help a man Jesus went as far as he possibly can he stooped down from heaven he came to earth he became a man and he died for those who had rejected him those who put him on the cross were those he came to save and he said father forgive them he died for our sins you know he didn't just wash us in wine he

washed us in his own blood he actually died for us we're going to sing a hymn at the end and there's a line in it that says this hands that flung stars into space to cruel nails surrendered and I think it puts it perfectly often we fail to grasp just how big our God is and what it meant for God the perfect

perfect God to become a man a human being and to subject himself to humility to mocking by those he'd created those who'd rejected him so how can we love others we love others because we've been shown love and we didn't deserve it the gospel is really this we're actually worse we're more evil we're more deserving of judgment than we can ever fathom we can ever imagine what we've done to hurt God you know it says our righteousness is like filthy rags it's offensive before God even our good deeds it says our hearts are deceitful above all things who can know them even our motives are wrong we even deceive ourselves into thinking we're right we judge ourselves by each other but we know that God's standard is perfection and by rejecting him we've rejected our creator we're deserving of more judgment we're deserving of separation from God that's what we deserve that's what our sins have earned us but at the same time we're more loved than we can ever imagine we can ever fathom we're so loved that

God himself would die for us we'd take that wrath that we deserved himself that God would die for humanity and so we've been forgiven more than we're ever going to have to forgive anyone so what should that do to us that's where this compassion that Samaritan had comes from we'll love others not when we try to work up this love in ourselves how can we ever forgive like Maureen forgave someone who completely is undeserving it's because we were completely undeserving of God's love for us so I want to finish by asking this how are we representing Christ before the world other people that we haven't forgiven in our own hearts other people that we're not willing to love maybe there's a certain sect in society for him it was the Samaritans maybe it's a certain religious group maybe it's a person at work a person you don't get on with a person who's actually hurt you if we're representing

[30 : 20] Christ we must show love to others the word compassion it says the Samaritan had compassion on this man this word compassion it's only ever elsewhere used of God's love in the rest of the gospel it's only elsewhere used of God's love for humanity mostly of Christ's love for humanity really it's saying this the Samaritan in a sense he was moved with the love of Christ that's what we need to be we need to be moved with Christ's love for us we'll only love others when we realise just how much Christ loves us I'll just finish by reading this passage from Isaiah Isaiah chapter 1 verses 13 to 18 and really it's about it's about dead works it's about this appearance of Christianity then it was

Judaism this appearance of following God but do we have the right heart and God says this to his people stop bringing meaningless offerings your incense is detestable to me new moons sabbaths and convocations I cannot bear your worthless assemblies your new moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being they have become a burden to me I'm weary of bearing them when you spread out your hands in prayer I hide my eyes from you even when you offer many prayers I'm not listening your hands are full of blood wash and make yourselves clean take your evil deeds out of my sight stop doing wrong learn to do right seek justice defend the oppressed take up the cause of the fatherless plead the case of the widow come now let us settle the matter says the Lord though your sins are like scarlet they shall be as white as snow though they are red as crimson they shall be like wool if you are willing and obedient you will eat the good things of the land but if you resist and rebel you will be devoured by the sword for the mouth of the Lord has spoken so it's not enough to say to simply say we're Christian to come to church

God doesn't care about these things if we can't love others and ultimately it's verses 18 to 19 isn't it it's that God though our sins were like scarlet they have been washed white as snow it's out of God's forgiveness for us that we can love others we can forgive others I'll just close in prayer Father God we think about these things this parable we have to confess that we don't always love others we don't always treat others as we ought we don't go out of our way like the Samaritan did to love other people and we all fall short often we can be self righteous we can think other people aren't deserving of our love but we thank you that you didn't have that attitude towards us that Christ stepped down from heaven to earth and took the punishment we deserve for our sin help us to grasp that help us to truly understand that to truly take that at the heart just how much we've been forgiven help us to understand that we pray and make that real to us and send us out God that we might be your disciples that we might be your witnesses that we might show love to other people

give us this heart of compassion that Jesus had for us we pray in Jesus name amen should we just
say the grace together may the love of
God grace of God I'll start again may the grace of God amen going us oh okay Thank you.