

Series: The Cross and Culture; *Sermon:* **Mercy Ministries and Social Justice**;
Delivered by: **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; *Date:* **September 9, 2018**

Bible text explored: Luke 10:25–37

“And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He 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 he 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, “A 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. 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 and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.” [ESV]

Review and application:

1. In today’s marketplace of ideas – newspapers, tv, the internet, your own work or academic setting, other social media – there are lots of references to social justice and a range of definitions.
 - a. Do you ever think of “social justice?”
 - b. How is “social justice” defined in your mind?
 - c. What examples can you cite, either diagnostic (what’s wrong in the world) or interventional (what can be done about or what do you see being done about it)?
 - d. If you are churched, how do (or don’t) you see social justice and its imperatives intersecting with the church you attend?
2. If you haven’t yet done so as a group, pray, and then read the Bible text out loud dramatically, with different people in the group assuming the roles of Jesus, the lawyer, the Samaritan, the narrator. What strikes you as you enter into the story? Perhaps you could share that with the group.
3. Thinking of the dialogue between Jesus and the lawyer (vv. 25-29), where do you see the focus of each of those 2 characters in that dialogue?
 - a. How does the lawyer begin the conversation, and where does he seem to go “sideways” as the dialogue develops?
 - b. If the lawyer had been truly seeking an answer to his initial question, how might he have developed the dialogue with Jesus in a different way?
4. Pastor Josh noted that Luke’s goal is to provide his readers the certainty and assurance of salvation, keeping them from tripping up, helping them understand the real meaning in what Jesus said and did. In light of that, compare and contrast the focus of the lawyer in this text with the focus of Mary in the story that follows (vv.38-42). What do you think Luke was intending to teach through those 2 stories?

5. *“In order to reach out you must listen up”* (Pastor Josh) is what the story is teaching. How would you explain that? How does “listening up” help us “reach out”?
6. Relate this conversation and your learnings to what you see going on today in social justice, inside and outside the church. “Reaching out” without “listening up” seems to be the order of the day. What evidence do you see of this and where do you think it leads? What do you see as the real root of justice and kindness?
7. How does that shape your response to the poor, the marginalized, the people at the fringes or those in difficult circumstances in your world today?
8. *“First love God and then love your neighbor”* (Pastor Josh).
 - a. What practical steps can you take to love God more?
 - b. As your heart is softened by God’s call on your life, who comes to mind as someone to whom you should be reaching out?
9. *“Only being rescued by the Great Samaritan will enable you to reach out to your neighbor.”* (Pastor Josh). What does that mean to you?
10. What is a major take-away for you from this study and how can your group pray for you?