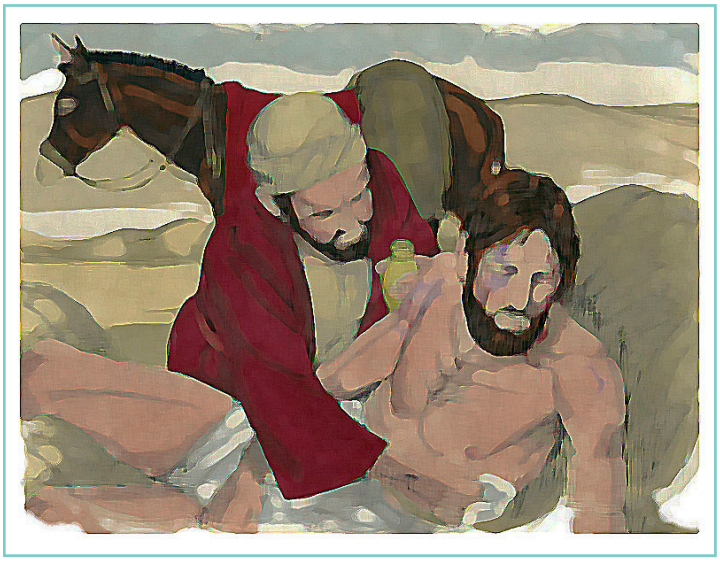
Lesson 3: Compassion



Introduction

Jesus told a parable of a man who was ambushed by robbers and left near death by the side of the road. Two religious leaders walked by and didn't help the man. But a Samaritan had compassion and stopped to take care of the injured man and bring him to safety.

Read: Luke 10:25-37

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?



Where in the Bible?

The New Testament begins about 3/4 of the way through the Bible.

The New Testament: Parables

Wherever Jesus went, crowds would follow. Jesus taught the people as they gathered, often using simple picture-stories called parables. Jesus used everyday examples to explain to his disciples the secrets of the Kingdom of God.

Biblical Background

Some of the best-known instances of Jesus' teaching come in what we know as his parables. The term comes from the Greek word *parabolé* (*pah-RAH-bow-lay*), meaning "figure" or "comparison." Parables make up approximately 35 percent of his teachings.

Some parables are short metaphorical images; others, like this one, are extended stories used to illustrate the nature of God. In this story, Jesus not only reveals our human selfishness and lack of gratitude to God: he also shows the profound love that our Father in heaven has for us, in spite of our sin.

In his parables, Jesus used as examples many everyday things that were familiar to his listeners.

Plants	Animals	Objects	People
Mustard Seed	Sheep and Wolves	Lost Coin	Good Samaritan
Seeds and Soils	Lost Sheep	Valuable Pearl	Prodigal Son
Wheat and Weeds	Sparrows	Lamp on a Stand	Ten Maidens
Lilies of the Field	Sheep and Goats	Cloth, Wineskins	Good Shepherd
Vineyard	Birds of the Air	Net of Fish	Shrewd Manager
Fig Tree	Snake, Scorpion	Pasture Gate	King and his Banquet

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Discuss: Luke 10:25-37

1. When a lawyer asked Jesus a question, where did Jesus tell him to look for answers? Why is this important for us to do as well?

2. The young man knew that God wants us to love our neighbors. So why do you think he felt the need to ask: "Who is my neighbor?" What do you imagine was going on in his head?

3. What is a "parable"? Why do you think Jesus used parables to teach and answer people's questions?

4. According to Jesus, what makes someone a "neighbor?" Who in the story was the true neighbor to the injured man?

5. Think of someone who has shown you help and kindness. In what way was that person a neighbor to you? Why is it a good thing to accept help from others?

6. When have you been a good neighbor to someone else? In what way do we serve as God's "tools" or "instruments" when we do good to others?

7. Read 1 John 3:11-18. What does John say here that matches what Jesus taught in his parable? How is it that we can sin not only by what we do, but also by what we neglect doing?

8. According to John, how has Jesus shown us the way we should treat others?

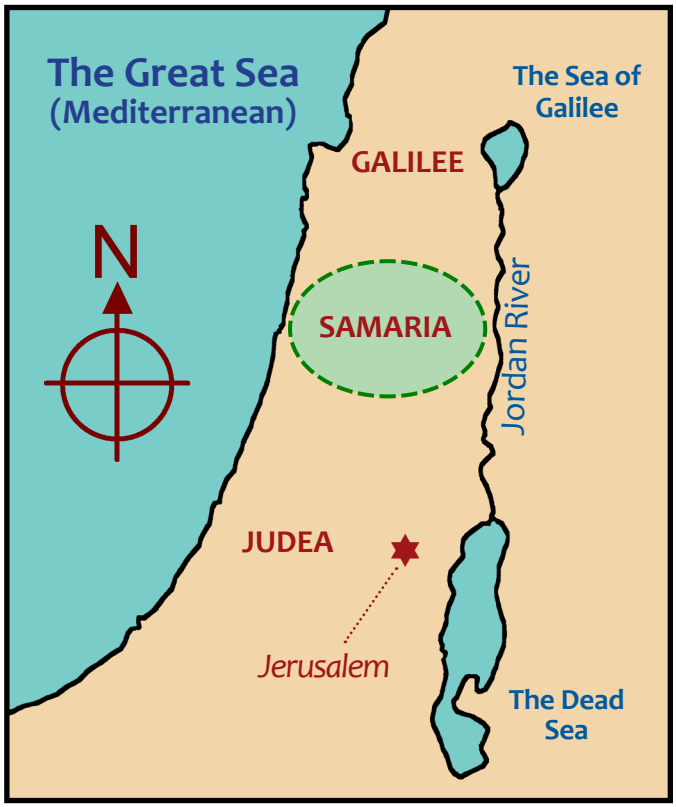
Where in the World?

The map shows the three major areas of the Holy Land referred to in the Gospels: **Judea** in the south, **Galilee** in the north, and **Samaria** in between (in the area represented by the oval).

The Jews of Jesus' day did not like Samaritans. Often, when traveling from Galilee to Jerusalem for the yearly festivals, Jews would go out of their way to avoid Samaria. To get around this area, they would cross to the east side of the Jordan River, so they wouldn't have to pass through the region. *Draw this path on the map.*

Jesus did not do so. He went straight through Samaritan lands and engaged with the people (see John 4:1-5).

The Jews were suspicious of Samaritans primarily because of the old rivalry between the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel. Jews thought the Samaritans had abandoned the true faith. In today's parable, Jesus used the example of a Samaritan to show that God can work through anyone, even those people we least expect.



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