

Short Stories By Jesus

Session 2: The Good Samaritan

1. Defining “Good Samaritan”

How does our culture define a “Good Samaritan”?

Use the internet to look up news stories that refer to a “Good Samaritan.” How do these examples illustrate the use of the term “Good Samaritan” in our culture?

Do you think the way the term is used is closely related to the parable of the Good Samaritan found in the Bible? Why or why not?

2. Read the Handout the History of Samaria and the Samaritans

What did learn about the Samaritans and their relationship with the Judeans would later be referred to as Jews?

3. This week’s parable: Read Luke 10:25-37

What question was asked that caused Jesus to tell the parable of the Good Samaritan?

What might we wish to know about any or all of these characters that we can only guess at or imagine because of a lack of evidence in the story?

4. Watch Video

Questions about the video:

1. What did you learn about the Good Samaritan that you didn’t know before?

2. Based on what you studied earlier in this session about the historic relationship between Jews and Samaritans, how do you imagine a first-century Jewish audience would react to this parable told by Jesus, a first-century Jewish teacher, and why?
3. How do the good Samaritan's actions mirror what Samaritans did to the Judean captives in 2 Chronicles 28:8-15? How does this story from Hebrew Scripture add significance to Jesus's parable?

5. Call to Action: Read these quotations from Short Stories by Jesus

“To ask “Who is my neighbor” is a polite way of asking, “Who is not my neighbor?” or “Who does not deserve my love?” or “Whose lack of food or shelter can I ignore?” or “Who can I hate?” The answer Jesus gives is, “No one.””

“Can we finally agree that it is better to acknowledge the humanity and the potential to do good to the enemy, rather than to choose death? Will we be able to care for our enemies, who are also our neighbors?”

Think silently about someone—a specific individual, or a type of person—whom they consider (or have considered) an enemy. Then read aloud Luke 10:27: “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 love _____ as yourself”
— *fill in the blank with the enemy they have identified*

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, you command us to love our enemies. Teach us that this love is not so much about what we feel as about what we do, and strengthen us, by your Spirit, to see, to touch, to provide for, to heal, and to care in practical ways for those we may be unable even to bring ourselves to name, that we may be children of your Father in heaven and ours, who causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good and who sends rain to shower both those who are righteous and those who are not. Amen.