

Week 4: A Question about Compassion

Series: The Questions Jesus Asked

Key Verses: Luke 10:25–37

Speaker: Dr. Justin Hardcastle

Big Idea: Today’s question comes from the story of the Good Samaritan. It comes at the end of the story, when Jesus asks, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” It forced the scribe to reluctantly admit that it was the one who had compassion on him.

An expert in the Law, a religious professional, asks Jesus a question.

The question: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus responds, “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. Jesus was saying that it isn’t enough to know the right answer—you must do it. Then comes the man’s next question. “But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’” (v.29).

First-century Judaism had a definition for “neighbor.”

- They defined it as “One who is near.”
- He is challenging Jesus on something absolutely fundamental: He is asking Jesus to give his definition of the boundary-markers of God’s kingdom—who’s in and who’s out.

In the story, this man chose to take a detour on the road to Jericho, a detour that required four things from him.

1. The detour required a _____ .

- But can we admit that most of the time, our problem isn’t that we take too many risks, it’s that we don’t take any risks.
- Being wise is good, but being loving is even better.

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1. The detour required a _____ .

- But can we admit that most of the time, our problem isn’t that we take too many risks, it’s that we don’t take any risks.
- Being wise is good, but being loving is even better.

2. The detour required _____.

- The Samaritan inconvenienced himself to help this man.
- All of this was inconvenient.

3. The detour required _____.

- The Samaritan delayed his trip by a whole day to take care of this man.
- Social experiments have shown that this is the most important factor in determining whether or not people are willing to help others in need.

4. The detour required _____.

- The Samaritan paid for a room at the Inn.
- If we're going to learn to love our neighbors, we can't use money as an excuse to hold back.
- Jesus knows that if we define "neighbor" only as those who are like us—people who are part of our own religious and/or ethnic community—then we will never stretch ourselves to love beyond those whom it is natural to love.

Jesus and his earliest followers were relentless in pressing people to see two things:

1. Loving people is the primary way we love God.
2. This love for people must always take precedence over religious traditions or ethnic obstacles.

What Is God Speaking to me today?:

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