



# Comforting Others

BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER OF MERCIES AND GOD OF ALL COMFORT, WHO COMFORT US IN ALL OUR TRIBULATION, THAT WE MAY BE ABLE TO COMFORT THOSE WHO ARE IN ANY TROUBLE WITH THE COMFORT WITH WHICH WE OURSELVES ARE COMFORTED BY GOD. II CORIN. 1:4



## Comforting Others

- In our own pain, we at times forget to help others in need.
- We thank God for His comfort but we also need to remember to comfort others.



## Comforting Others

- Luke 10:25-37 (TLB)
- <sup>25</sup> One day an expert on Moses' laws came to test Jesus' orthodoxy (beliefs) by asking him this question:  
"Teacher, what does a man need to do to live forever in heaven?"
- <sup>26</sup> Jesus replied, "What does Moses' law say about it?"

## Comforting Others

- <sup>27</sup> “It says,” he replied, “that you must 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 you must love your neighbor just as much as you love yourself.”
- <sup>28</sup> “Right!” Jesus told him. “*Do this and you shall live!*”
- <sup>29</sup> The man wanted to justify his lack of love for some kinds of people (looking for a loophole), so he asked, “Which neighbors?”



# Comforting Others

- What can we do to be a help to others?
- Pick a number between 1 and 3.

## Comforting Others

- The man wanted to justify his lack of love for some kinds of people,<sup>[a]</sup> so he asked, “Which neighbors?”
- Which one are you?
- “A Jew going on a trip from Jerusalem to Jericho was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes and money, and beat him up and left him lying half dead beside the road.”



## Comforting Others

1. “By chance a **Jewish priest** came along; and when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by.

Why do you think the priest would pass him by?





## Comforting Others

- Priests were not expected to perform manual labor or to be involved in the unclean tasks of nursing the sick and wounded.
- So, he may have felt he was just doing his job, going from the Temple in Jerusalem to, perhaps, a synagogue in Jericho or back home to be with his family.
- In any case, he may be thinking he would be needed for priestly duties, and he was expected to keep himself ritualistically clean.



## Comforting Others

- 2. A **Jewish Temple-assistant (Levite)** walked over and looked at him lying there, but then went on.
- Why would the Levite pass him by

# Comforting Others

- The same as the priest in The Parable of the Good Samaritan.
- He was as good a man as he knew how to be.
- Given how he may have been trained and what he felt were the responsibilities of his office,
- Just going from tradition, he may not have given it a second thought to avoid a victim lying by the side of the road.



## Comforting Others

- If anything, he would have made a conscious effort to keep his distance.
- The tribe of Levi was set apart to tend to the priestly functions. In Jesus' day, Levites were responsible, among other things, for the Temple treasury.
- He may have felt the man was faking to steal from him. We need to think about how we respond when it comes to helping others

# Comforting Others

- Priests serve as mediators between humans and God, and perform sacrifices and other rituals.
- We expect compassion from clergy and assume that the priest and Levite will help, but they pass by on the other side.
- Concerns for religious purity prevented the priest and Levite from acting as neighbor to the fallen man.



# Comforting Others

- It's just as true today as it was in Jesus' time – you have to be careful when it comes to using wisdom when and how to help.
- In certain circumstances, we may have done the same thing as the priest and the Levite.
- Jesus' story highlights that observing the letter of the law falls short of loving God and neighbor, which is the standard that the lawyer has outlined to qualify for salvation

## Comforting Others

- 3. But a despised **Samaritan** came along, and when he saw him, he felt deep pity. <sup>34</sup> Kneeling beside him the Samaritan soothed his wounds with medicine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his donkey and walked along beside him till they came to an inn, where he nursed him through the night.
- <sup>35</sup> The next day he handed the innkeeper two twenty-dollar bills (equivalent of a modern day's wage) and told him to take care of the man. 'If his bill runs higher than that,' he said, 'I'll pay the difference the next time I am here.'



# Comforting Others

- As far as the Jews were concerned, the Samaritans were racially inferior. Half breeds, they called them, because they had intermarried with the Assyrians.
- Jesus said with all the responsibility of being a priest or a Levite (a child of God) he asked “Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the bandits’ victim?”
- <sup>37</sup> The man replied, “The one who showed him some pity.”
- Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.” Luke 10:25-37 (TLB)
- The function is more important than the title
- Comfort others/Be compassionate.

# Comforting Others

- Contrary to the belief of Jesus' day, it was not the priests, or the Levites, or even the Jews who held the inside track on the Kingdom of God, but whomever God chose to call, including a lowly Samaritan.
- The parable catches us in a trap of our own making: Love the Lord your God with all you've got, you say? Love your neighbor as yourself, and you'll have eternal life? O.K.
- But, first tell me, who is my neighbor? Define the parameters. Tell me who's in and who's out.
- Specify the limits. Be concrete. Then I will know precisely what I have to do to measure up, to be righteous, to justify myself.



# Comforting Others

- Do we have respect of persons when it comes to helping others.
- Like the lawyer, we want to define neighbor in reference to others. Jesus defined neighbor in reference to ourselves.
- He placed the burden of proof upon us. For Jesus, neighbor is not the object of the sentence, but the subject. So that the question is not, “Who is my neighbor?” rather, “What kind of neighbor are you?”



## Comforting Others

- The power of one; God called one man Moses to deliver the children for Israel.
- God sent one man, His Son to die for the sins of the world
- What can God do through us to help others. Be a comfort to others as God has been a comfort to us. Take time to be sensitive to the needs of those around us.



## Comforting Others

- Ask yourself: How are you going to respond the next time you cross paths with someone in need? What kind of neighbor will you prove to be?
- **what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"** (Luke 10:25). The word “inherit” is interesting. The control of an inheritance is in the hands of the giver—not the person who would receive the inheritance. An inheritance as a gift.
- The Word of the Lord is perfect but it means little until put into action.



# Comforting Others

- The limits of neighborliness come, not from without, but from within.
- The person in need is the best candidate to be our neighbor.
- The Samaritan, considered by Jews to be unclean, fulfills the requirements of the law to “love your neighbor as yourself”





# Comforting Others

- Even as the Samaritan is despised, Jesus was despised and sacrificed himself to save us (sinners). He is the embodiment of the person that he calls us to be.
- Some people feel like the wounded man in the parable, and would be delighted to have a Good Samaritan bring them comfort/relief.
- Try to do the right thing, even when you may be tempted to pass by on the other side.
- Comfort others by the comfort you have received.



# Comforting Others

- Next Bible Study
- The Role of the Holy Spirit
- Scriptures: St. John 14: 16-27 & St. John 16:7-15



## **Resources**

- **The Parable of the Good Samaritan By Dr. Philip W. McLarty**