

WEEKLY DEVOTIONS AT GLENKIRK



# The DEVO

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TOLD

OCTOBER 22 – 26, 2018

# MONDAY

## Luke 10:25-29 – Do This and You Will Live

Before I can love someone, I must first get to know him or her, right? Similarly, how can I love God—let alone love Him with my whole heart, soul, strength, and mind—if I don't even know Him, or if my knowledge of Him is sorely deficient or even distorted?

Praise God, the Bible answers that question! It says that Jesus is the key to knowing and therefore loving the Father. Jesus says in Luke 10:22: *“All things were handed over to Me by My Father. And no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son—and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him”* (DLNT). Thus, it's clear that if I want to know God the Father, I must know, love, and obey Jesus. And knowing the Father enables me to love Him more, not only at the intellectual level but at the heart or “feeling” level.

As our Teacher and Shepherd, Jesus deals with us differently according to our differences. But the aim is the same: to get us to know the Father, to grow in our love for Him, and to grow likewise in our love for our neighbor.

In the course of my walk with our Lord Jesus Christ, I have grown in my love for the Father as my Creator. This has happened through Bible reading, joining Bible studies, getting involved in the ministries of Church (the Body of Christ), fellowshiping with other believers, and trying to live a life of obedience according to the Bible. This is combined with a growing

understanding of the complexities of how the world works, resulting from my growth in scientific knowledge which, of course, follows from the use of God's gift of intelligence. And I am appreciating more how special we humans are. We are the crowning glory of God's creation, having been made in His image and likeness, and destined to have dominion over all of His creation (Genesis 1:27-28).

I realize now that every breath I take, every beat of my heart, every movement I make with my body, every flicker of thought in my brain is a gift of love from God. Therefore, it's only right that I should love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. And since every other human being is likewise created in His image, I should also love that person as myself.

## QUESTION

How have you grown in your knowledge of, and your love for, our heavenly Father?

## PRAYER

Dear Jesus, please give me the grace to know the Father more and more so that I may also grow in my love for Him. Amen.

# TUESDAY

## Luke 10:25-37 – Jesus Is the Key to Knowing the Father

Before I can love someone, I must first get to know him or her, right? Similarly, how can I love God—let alone love Him with my whole heart, soul, strength, and mind—if I don't even know Him, or if my knowledge of Him is sorely deficient or even distorted?

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## PRAYER

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# WEDNESDAY

## Luke 10:29-37 – Who Is My Neighbor?

“*Who is my neighbor?*” I wonder why the law expert asked this of Jesus after Jesus told him that if he wanted to inherit eternal life, he should obey God’s command through Moses: to love God with his whole heart, soul, strength, and mind, and his neighbor as himself.

Perhaps to the lawyer there was no ambiguity as far as loving God is concerned, for there is only one God. However, who should be counted as “neighbor” since there are so many other human beings in the world? They can range in distance from one’s next-door neighbor to people living farthest from you. They can range relationally from one’s spouse, parents, siblings, and children to other nations and peoples (i.e., India and Pakistan) with whom one has no blood relation, except that they are also fellow human beings. So who, indeed, is my neighbor?

Jesus’ response was to tell the parable of the Jewish man on the way from Jerusalem down to Jericho, who was attacked, plundered, beaten, and left half-dead by bandits. Two religious figures, a priest and a Levite, passed by but avoided helping him. Perhaps Jesus was alluding here to the legal expert himself for all the times he himself “passed to the other way” on seeing someone in dire need. Ironically, it was a Samaritan who was a neighbor and helped the wounded man—someone the Jews despised and hated. Having compassion on the man, he went out of his way and used his modest means (a donkey, oil, wine and some money to pay for lodging) to help this hapless fellow man.

The lesson? A need is a need that I must try to meet, regardless of the differences I may have with the needy person, even if he is my enemy. For Jesus also says, “*Love your enemies ... that you may prove to be the children of your Father in heaven ... you are to be perfect, like your Heavenly Father*” (Matthew 5:43-48).

Today, with our modern means of transport and communication, our high-tech economic systems improving every aspect of our lives, and our democratic political system that gives us individual and collective power to propose policies and programs to alleviate human suffering and improve people’s lives, “loving God fully and loving our neighbor as ourselves” acquires a whole new scale and dimension.

## QUESTION

Given your own situation, how would you apply the commandment to love God completely and to love your neighbor as yourself?

## PRAYER

Dear God, notwithstanding how much life has improved, my need for eternal life has not changed. Please give me the grace to express my love for You and my neighbor in every aspect of my life. Amen.

# THURSDAY

## Luke 10:25-37 - He Also Passed By on the Other Side

I almost feel alluded to on reading this parable of Jesus. I have been a “born-again Christian” since my mid-twenties. Since then, I have read through the Bible many times, memorized key verses, read Christian books, regularly attended church, taught Sunday School, became a deacon and a member of the church council, etc. Yet, I also know that many times when I saw other people’s needs, like the priest and the Levite, I “passed by on the other side.”

Certainly, I cannot count on my own tattered “righteousness” to be in right standing before our holy God. That’s what Jesus was ultimately leading to in this parable about this expert on the Mosaic law. Jesus wanted the man to realize that the qualification for eternal life is moral and spiritual perfection, which is beyond the reach of any descendant of Adam, who ate the forbidden fruit and assimilated the “death gene.” Adam, with a perfect body meant to live forever, eventually died after 930 years (Genesis 5:5). We all have the same “death gene” predisposing us to selfishness and sin and weakening our resistance to temptation.

Jesus our Savior knew this, and he wanted the legal expert to realize it too so that instead of trying to justify himself, this “expert”—like the cheating tax collector publican in another parable of Jesus (Luke 18:9-14)—would simply beat his breast in guilt and sorrow and say, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

Jesus came to declare that the Kingdom of God is at hand and its doors are opening wide for all to come in to experience its joys forever. What is impossible for man to achieve, God did on man’s behalf through Jesus Christ His Son. Seeing man’s predicament, God did not abandon man and “pass by on the other side,” but He “gave His only begotten to die on the cross for our sin, so whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

Like the merciful Samaritan, God consoles us, soothes our wounds with olive oil and wine, puts us on His own donkey, takes us to an inn (the church), and pays all our bills (our total moral and spiritual debt to God). That’s why Jesus’ last word on the cross was “tetelestai” (John 19:30), which is Greek for “it is finished” but also means “paid in full.”

## QUESTION

Which character do you identify with in this parable of the Good Samaritan?

## PRAYER

Dear God, we are all wounded and left half-dead by sin’s attack on us. Thank You for being the Good Samaritan to us, not passing by us but stopping to help us, covering our expenses, and making us debt-free by paying all our debts for us. Amen.



# FRIDAY

## Luke 10:25-37 – Go and Do the Same

How do I become a good Samaritan in this day and age? An even bigger question is: How does my church apply this principle? How does being a Good Samaritan relate to my church's mission, "To lead uncommitted people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ"?

Perhaps it will help to relate the good Samaritan model to the inspirational "why's" of Glenkirk Church shared recently by Pastor Tim.

- 1. God can be trusted.** Go ahead, dare to be a Good Samaritan as you see a need waiting to be met. You can trust God to help you.
- 2. Everything is in Jesus.** On Tuesday we cited Jesus' own statement: "All things were handed over to Me by My Father ..." (Luke 10:22). To be a good Samaritan is to follow Jesus' command to "go and do the same."
- 3. All is forgiven.** To be a good Samaritan is not for the purpose of being forgiven but because we are already forgiven in Christ by whom "God reconciled the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19).
- 4. Everybody matters.** We must try to help without regard to the superficial differences that normally divide people, for we are all created in the image of God.

- 5. God defends the weak and the oppressed.** "If loving our God and our neighbor does not promote justice and mercy, if our love doesn't pay attention to the weak, the addicted, the abused, the widow, the orphan, and the alien, then our love has nothing to do with our neighbor and nothing to do with God. ... Justice and mercy are the culture of God's Kingdom. ... [It] is to be our way of life. [It] is to be our spiritual service of worship ... Our true worship service is seven days a week." (Tim Fearer, Sermon, 9-18-18)
- 6. Everybody has a calling.** The Holy Spirit empowers all of us to be witnesses for Jesus. Being "a church of good Samaritans" should be one of our defining features.
- 7. Life is a daring adventure (or nothing at all).** Willingness to take risks as a good Samaritan opens the powers of the Kingdom for us. (Ephesians 3:20).
- 8. Anything is possible!** Follows from 7. (Matthew 17:20)
- 9. The Spirit empowers.** "... you will receive power and ... be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

## QUESTION

How do you see yourself as a good Samaritan follower of Jesus Christ?

## PRAYER

Dear God, as I look at the world around me, I can see the dire need for good Samaritans. By Your grace, help me do my part to do something about the suffering of others. Amen.



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