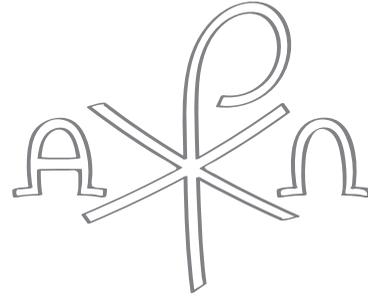


# THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Study Notes for the Christian Layperson

by: Rev. Daniel Hinton



## LUKE 10:23-37 ESV

### Author and Date:

The Holy Spirit caused Luke the physician to write the words of this Gospel around AD 55-60. In this parable, which is among the most beloved of all parables, Jesus teaches us of a love that reaches beyond the boundaries of our own people and church to people very much unlike ourselves.

<sup>23</sup> Then turning to the disciples he said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! <sup>24</sup> For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

- The promise of the Savior that was first declared to Adam and Eve in the Garden was heard and believed by God’s people in the Old Testament. However, they were not blessed to see and hear the fulfillment of it in the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ like the disciples were. We too are blessed to hear the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise in the New Testament.

<sup>25</sup> And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

- A lawyer, not necessarily in the sense of an attorney as we might think, but a man trained in the laws and traditions of the Jews.

- His intent is not to seek wisdom but to trap Jesus. After all, heirs do not do anything to inherit an inheritance; they are born into it.

<sup>26</sup> He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?”

- Jesus, being holy and not guileful, points the man back to the Bible.
- “Philosophy of the Christian religion is a dangerous term, and stands for a dangerous science. The Lord does not want us to philosophize and to think out our own religious scheme, but to follow the Word.” (P. E. Kretzmann)

<sup>27</sup> And he answered, “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 your neighbor as yourself.”

- This lawyer’s summary of the Law is correct. He summarizes the First Table of the Law (commandments 1 – 3) and then he summarizes the Second Table of the Law (commandments 4 – 10).

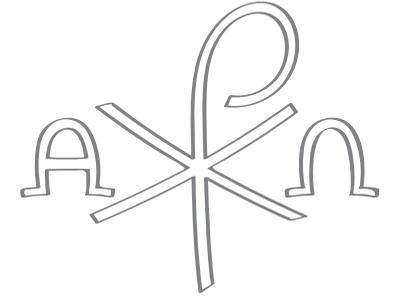
<sup>28</sup> And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.”

- The man *knows* the Law, but he is incapable of *keeping* the Law, and Jesus knows this. This ought to drive the man to seek salvation from God, but this is not how he responds.

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<sup>29</sup> But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus,

<sup>29</sup> But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

- Jesus’ answer shocked the lawyer, who likely assumed that he already had kept the commandments. The man’s solution to Jesus’ words “Do this, and you will live” is to find loopholes, argue, and redefine the terms until he thinks he has managed to keep the Law.

<sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

- The lawyer probably would have thought that the priest and the Levite should have been the “good guys” of the parable, since they were most like himself. Sadly, they truly were like the lawyer: proud, not thinking of their neighbor, and most importantly, interested in justifying themselves by their keeping of the Law.

<sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion.

- The average Jew of the time, such as this lawyer, knew for a fact that Samaritans had no good in them at all. But in Jesus’ parable the Samaritan of all people is the one who shows compassion on the beaten man.

<sup>34</sup> He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’

- The Samaritan did not spend time deciding whether or not to help the man, neither did he hesitate simply because he was on a long journey and had no time to lose. The Samaritan used his own time, his own effort, and his own money to help this man.

<sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?”

- Jesus has now proven that the lawyer has, in fact, not kept the Law because he has not shown mercy to his neighbor. The lawyer knew that the Law says “love your neighbor as yourself (v.27)” and yet stands condemned by that same word of Law.

- Following this understanding of the Law, Jesus is vindicated as the One who has kept the entire Law perfectly, and He sacrifices all of Himself for the sake of those very far from Him: “For God so loved the *world* [that is, all of it without exception] that He gave His only Son... (John 3:16)”

<sup>37</sup> He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”

- We Christians do not need to spend time finding neighbors who need our help; in many cases our neighbors who need mercy are placed directly in our path by God. Jesus teaches us that while our mercy toward our own family and church is certainly good, our mercy toward our neighbor must extend beyond these to embrace people very much unlike ourselves, even to those outside the Church.

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