

Have Mercy on One Another - Luke 10:25–37 — Sermon Guide

Purpose

To help see that Christian love cannot remain theoretical. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus shows that love becomes real when mercy moves toward actual people with actual needs. Koinonia is not merely warm feelings, shared history, or church friendship; it is love lived in community.

Ice Breaker

Can you think of a time when it was easier to talk about loving people than actually love someone in a costly or inconvenient way?

Scripture Focus

Read aloud **Lk 10:25–37**. Additional texts: John 13:34–35; 1 John 4:19–21; James 2:14–17

Observations from the Text

An expert in the law asks Jesus, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus turns him back to Scripture, and the man answers correctly: love God fully and love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus affirms the answer but presses him toward practice: “Do this and you will live.”

Wanting to justify himself, the lawyer asks, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus responds with a story. A man is beaten, robbed, and left half dead. A priest and a Levite both see him and pass by. Then a Samaritan sees him, is moved with compassion, bandages his wounds, brings him to safety, pays for his care, and promises to return.

Jesus then asks, “Which of these three was a neighbor?” The answer: “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus says, “Go and do likewise.”

Core Teaching Connection

The sermon contrasts **love in theory** with **love in reality**. Love in theory can know the right answer and still look for limits. Love in reality sees need, is moved with compassion, and acts with mercy.

Jesus shows that love for God and love for people cannot be separated. The priest and Levite saw the wounded man but passed by. The Samaritan saw him as a person with dignity, worth, and need.

Using Martin Buber’s language, the sermon contrasts **I–It** and **I–Thou** relationships. In an I–It relationship, people become objects, problems, interruptions, or means to an end. In an

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I-Thou relationship, we receive others as people before God. Koinonia becomes real when the love of Jesus moves us toward actual people with actual needs.

Group Discussion

1. What stood out to you most from Luke 10:25–37?
2. Why do you think Jesus answers the lawyer’s question with a story rather than a definition?
3. Where do you see the difference between “love in theory” and “love in reality” in your own life?
4. The priest and Levite saw the wounded man and passed by. What are some reasons we “pass by” people in need?
5. How does the Samaritan show mercy in practical, costly ways?
6. What does the I-It / I-Thou distinction help you see about the way we treat people?
7. What would it look like for CBC to “go and do likewise”?

Dig Deeper

1. Read John 13:34–35. How does Jesus connect love with witness?
2. Read 1 John 4:19–21. Why can love for God not be separated from love for people?
3. Read James 2:14–17. What does James teach about compassion that remains only words?

Personal Reflection

Where am I tempted to keep myself at the center?

Who have I reduced to an “it”—a problem, interruption, opponent, or obstacle?

What wound am I tempted to walk past?

Where is Jesus inviting me to move toward someone with mercy?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for moving toward us with mercy. Forgive us for the times we know the right answers but pass by people in need. Teach us to see others as people made in your image, people with dignity, worth, and need. Form us into a community where love is not merely theory, but reality. Help us go and do likewise. In Jesus’ Amen.