**Luke VIII Jesus and the Samaritans/The Outcast/Outsiders**

**Luke 9:51-56, Luke 10:25-37 Good Samaritan Luke 17:11-19**

**Review: The Parable of the Lost Son Luke 15:11-32**

In this parable we saw the incredible faithfulness of the Father, that he entrusted his wealth to his son, and because of his love, he let him leave and squander his possessions.

We are that lost son. God gave us so much, but we squandered it on riotous living. We were truly and completely lost and alienated from God, despite his love for us

But what did we need to do?

1. We needed to “come to his senses.”

2. We needed to return to God.

Look at God! He ran to his son and welcomed him home with ring, robe and sandals. God is always waiting for us to come home, but he will not follow us and drag us home.

But then look at the older son. He is the one who was truly lost. He viewed God as a taskmaster. His concept of being a Christian was earning his inheritance by hard work. He forgot what we learned from Galatians 5:1,6 In Christ we are free and the only thing that counts is faith, expressing itself through love.

This week: God and the Samaritans/God and the Outcast, the Outsider and the Foreigner.

Jesus’ ministry was to the Israel. The Syro-Phoenecian woman recognized that, on Matthew 15:24 Jesus says, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.
“even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” To the extent that we will see Jesus interacting with “outsiders” in Luke, it will be with either outsider Jews or Samaritans. We will look at both in this lesson. Our outsider Jew will be Zacchaeus, and we will look at Jesus interacting with Samaritans both in an actual situation and in a parable.

So, who are the Samaritans?

They are half-breed Jews. Assyria defeated the Northern Kingdom/Israel, also known as Samaria in 722 BC. Sennacherib deported the elite and the wealthy, but presumably the poorer and less well-placed Jews remained behind.

Those deported are the supposed ten lost tribes, none of who were actually completely lost. (besides, Judah, Benjamin, part of Dan, Simeon and most of the Levites were in the Southern Kingdom!)

He deported people from other conquered areas into Samaria, thus forming a mixed race of Jews and non-Jews.

The Samaritans used only the Pentateuch. They worshipped, not in Jerusalem, but at Mt. Gerazim, near the city of Samaria, at Jacob’s Well.

Sanballat and Tobiah—the opponents to Nehemiah in rebuilding Jerusalem were Samaritans.

They still exist as a tiny minority in Israel today. Jan and I visited a Samaritan village.

In Acts, Philip preached and converted people in Samaria (Acts 8), and this was before Peter’s vision which caused him to go to Cornelius’ house for the first Gentile conversion. This means that the Samaritans were NOT considered Gentiles. They were half-breeds. They were semi-Jews.

But who do we hate the most? The ones who are almost like us! Palestinians hate the Jews and vice versa, but they are brothers.

Jesus will ignore all that!!!

Jesus and Outsiders. How should we treat those who know little of Christianity? What about Muslims, atheists, agnostics, Hindus, New-Agers and the like? What about foreigners and immigrants, including illegal aliens? Will you talk to them? Will you reach out to them? What will you say to them?

I am doing a class at the Campus conference next Sunday about this.

Luke 9:51-56 Jesus resolutely sets out for Jerusalem.

Will you follow Jesus as he resolutely sets out to Jerusalem? You die there!

 He could go around Samaria—through the Jordan Valley. That is what most Jews did, but he does not. Prideful Samaritans refuse him hospitality—a big thing is the Near East.

The disciples: Let’s call down fire on them! They are other! They are not us! They are different! We don’t like their culture! We disagree with them on politics, language, customs.

Jesus: Not a good idea. Jesus loved his enemies. This is not my ministry right now, but we are planning on loving them, baptizing them, not blitzing them.

Luke 10:25-37 The good Samaritan

Luke 10:25-29 Jesus: Love your neighbor. Lawyer: Who is my neighbor? Question for us: Who should I love? Who should I reach out to? Who should I invite? Who should I put myself out there and take a chance to help them into the kingdom?

v. 28 You believe the right thing, now go out there and ***do it***, and you will live.

v. 29 Who is my neighbor? But here is the question: Do you want to justify yourself, or do you want to do what God has asked you to do. When we do not do God’s will, we always have great reasons. Too busy. Not enough money. He can really mean that. No one really does that…. That’s too radical.

Luke 10:30-37 A man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho. This is done through a long canyon that heads down toward the Jordan River.

Who is this man? Was he old, young, wealthy, well-connected? Was he a white guy? Did he appear to be an immigrant? Was he a native speaker? Jesus: Does it matter? He is a person in need.

v. 31 A priest “passed by on the other side.” Q: What would you have done? Would you have gotten involved? What is more important to you? Religious duty or loving people?

A priest represents the specialness, the holiness, the separateness of the Jews. Jesus is turning that world upside down. This is, after all, the Upside-Down kingdom of God.

v. 32 A Levite “passed by on the other side.” I do not want to get involved. This is not my problem. Like Jesus said, “The poor you will always have with you.”

v. 33 But a Samaritan “took pity on him.” He was not so busy that he could not show compassion to a stranger.

He went out of his way. He went above and beyond the call of duty.

v. 36 Jesus: Which of these acted appropriately to their neighbor?

Lawyer: “The one who had mercy.”

Who is righteous? The one who goes to church? No! The one who shows mercy to his neighbor.

Literally: The one who did mercy. Mercy is something we do, not something we feel.

Jesus: Go and do likewise!!! That is the real child of Abraham.

Q: Who are you in this situation? What should you do about this? Who will God put in your path? We cannot help everyone, but we need to help someone.

Luke 17:11-19 Ten lepers healed.

17:11 Remember, Jesus is traveling to Jerusalem—something he has been doing since Luke 9:51. But Jesus is still ministering by teaching, preaching and healing. “That is why I have come.”

v. 12-13. These poor men are the ultimate outsiders. Leviticus 13:11 If it is a chronic skin disease (presumably leprosy), the priest shall pronounce them unclean. v. 45 “Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, “Unclean! Unclean!” They must live alone; they must live outside the camp.

These guys are the ultimate outsiders. No Jew would touch them. What did Jesus do? He healed them. Luke 5:12-13 Jesus reached out his hand and he touched the leper. Jesus made himself unclean (ceremonially) to help an “unclean” person.

Is there someone you will not touch? Is there a situation you will not go into?

Luke 17:14 Go show yourself to the priest. This was the commandment in Leviticus 13.

v. 14 Only as they obeyed were they healed. Like Namaan in 2 Kings 5.

Luke 17:15 But one of these outsiders is the ultimate outsider of all outsiders. He is a Samaritan leper!!!!!

The Samaritan (Jesus calls him a foreigner in v. 18) came back, praising God and thanking Jesus. Samaritans are more “open” to Jesus than the Jews. In Luke, Samaritans are always more spiritual than the Jews. God shows favoritism to outsiders (and outsiders show favoritism to Jesus!)

Luke 19:1-10 Zacchaeus may not be a Samaritan (heaven forbid), but his is something nearly as bad! He is not just a tax collector, he is a chief tax collector. He is a boss of the traitor Jewish tax collectors. He is rich! (note, Luke 18:35-42 Jesus had just healed a blind beggar—rich or poor does not matter to him.)

So, what will Jesus do about that? This is exactly the kind of guy I want to hang out with. Jesus bordered on provocative here. He refused to be intimidated by society’s idea of who is OK and who is not. Jesus would have hung out with tattooed people, fat-cat rich people, with gay and transgender people, with illegal immigrants…

Luke 19:3-4 Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus. Outsiders somehow instinctively knew that there was on Rabbi who would listen to them. But he was short.

Luke 19:5 Jesus: Now this is my kind of guy. He is an outsider for sure. He is a “sinner” but he recognizes that fact and he wants to do something about it.

“I am going to stay at your house today.”

I picture Jesus stopping, in the midst of a huge crowd, and helping Zacchaeus down from the tree. The crowd: What is he doing?

Luke 19:7 “All the people” were unhappy with this. Jesus is used to opposition from the Pharisees, the Teachers of the Law and the Saducees, but now he has gone too far. Jesus has finally stepped over the line, so even the crowd are not supportive—reaching out to a chief tax collector, the most infamous man in town.

Jesus does not care about that. Why? Let’s see.

Luke 19:8 Zachaeus is ready and willing to repent. Reminds us of 2 Cor 7:11 See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: 1. Earnestness check 2. Eagerness to clear yourself check

3. Readiness to see justice done covered.

Q: What is your attitude toward your own sin? Are you like Zachaeus?

19:9-10 If so, I have good news for you. You are the reason Jesus came and took on human form. You are the reason he came.

Jesus loves Samaritans and all kinds of outsiders.

Are you a “normal” person? I am not. Are you aware that you DESPERATELY need Jesus? Then you are Jesus’ kind of person. Yeah, but I struggle with same-sex attraction. Perfect! Yeah, but no one knows the kinds of crazy thoughts that run through my head. Ideal!

Yeah, but if anyone knew the real me… Spot on.

If you feel distant from God, go ahead… Get up in a Sycamore-fig tree. Jesus would love to call you down and spend the evening in your house.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost—You!!!!