

The Good Samaritan

(St. Luke's Gospel Chapter 10, verses 25 to 37)

One day a crowd surrounded Jesus, listening to him speak. After he had spoken for some while, one man asked a question. "Teacher, what must I do to get to Heaven and live forever?"

Jesus replied, "You must do that which is written in the Bible? What do you think it says?"

The man answered, "Love the Lord God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength." He paused. "Love your neighbour as yourself."

"That is right!" Jesus said. "Do all of this and you will live forever in Heaven."

Yet the man wanted to know more, "But who is my neighbour?"

To help his audience to understand, Jesus decided to answer this question with a parable:

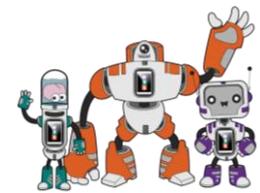
There once travelled a Jewish man, on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho. The journey was a full day or two of walking and the road was rocky, with small hills all around, but he hummed to himself, enjoying the pleasant air. Just then a group of men jumped out from behind a hill, grabbed his belongings and tore off most of his clothes. They left him unconscious and bleeding on the side of the road.

A few minutes later a priest walked down the same path and noticed the man lying on the side of the road, but he did not run across to help. Instead he crossed the road and walked on the other side, pretending not to have seen the injured man.

About an hour or so later another person followed along the road. He was a Levite, a priest's assistant and would surely help this injured man. He slowed down and walked a little closer, then hurried on without a backward glance.

Perhaps the injured Jew appeared to rest by the roadside and the priest and Levite thought he was fine? But no, he bled profusely, with livid bruises, hardly breathing. His clothes were ripped from his back.

Just a few minutes later another man came walking by. He was a Samaritan. One thing you should know about Samaritans and Jews is that they didn't always get along.. The man who was dying on the road was a Jew. You might think that the Samaritan would walk by and maybe even laugh at him. .



But as soon as he saw the man he went over to him and felt compassion for him. He put bandages on his sores and poured expensive oil and wine on the sores to prevent them from getting worse. Then he lifted the man on his own donkey and took him to a hotel to take care of him.

Next day the Samaritan paid the man at the front desk and asked him to take care of the injured Jew. If he wasn't better after about two months the Samaritan would return to pay for the extra cost.

Once Jesus finished the story he asked, "Which of the three men do you think was neighbour to the Jew left beaten at the roadside?"

The man who asked him the question at the beginning replied, "The one who had compassion and helped him."
Jesus told him, "Go and do the same."