

## Lesson 2

### The Good Samaritan

Watch this clip: <http://request.org.uk/jesus/parables/parables/>

Jesus is asked a question “who is my neighbour?” – that is, whom am I responsible for? He does not give a direct answer – he tells a story. The journey from Jerusalem to Jericho was a dangerous one in his day. It is 17 miles long and descends 3300 feet. Perhaps the story Jesus tells is based on something that actually happened, or perhaps he is referring to the fear that if you went down this road then you were quite likely to get attacked and robbed.

The man who was attacked was left for dead. The priest first walks by on the other side... there might be two reasons for this:

1. He might have been afraid that this was a trap and he could get attached.
2. He might have been worried that the man was dead and that he would become unclean by touching the man.
3. He was just too busy to stop.

The second man to come by was a Levite, who again might not have wanted to touch something he regarded as unclean.

Finally, a Samaritan turns up. Jews saw Samaritans as their enemies, likely to want to trick them. It is possible that Jesus’ audience might have thought that the man who had been attacked would be murdered by this third person. However, this man deals with the man’s wounds, takes him to a safe place and agrees to pay his upkeep at the inn.



Jesus is challenging the lawyer’s view about who was good and who was not. You might have noticed that the lawyer cannot even bring himself to say ‘the Samaritan’ at the end of the story.

All parables are about the Kingdom of God in some way and not just moral stories – in this case Jesus is asking where do we find the Kingdom of God on earth and what we can do to bring it about?

Today, Christians take this story as the inspiration to show love for all people. Charities have taken up the name:

1. **Samaritan’s Purse** – a charity to designed to help the poorest people
2. **The Samaritans** – a charity set up to listen to people who might think about taking their own lives.

Please answer these questions using full sentences:

1. What reasons might there be for not stopping to help the injured man?

Challenge:

What would Jewish people not touch someone who was injured?

2. What did the Samaritan do?

3. Why do you think Jesus told a story rather than give a direct answer?

Challenge:

Why is it better to teach in this way?

4. Can you think of a situation where you should have stopped to help someone but didn't?

5. What kind of person would you not stop to help? E.g. someone who had bullied you?

6. What effect might helping an enemy have?

7. What would you have done if you had been the Samaritan?

Challenge:

How does this parable inspire Christians today?