

## SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SUNDAY, JULY 30, 2023

Luke 10:25-37

NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION UPDATED EDITION

<sup>25</sup> An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>26</sup> He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" <sup>27</sup> 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." <sup>28</sup> And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

<sup>29</sup> But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" <sup>30</sup> Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and took off, 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. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, treating them with oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him, and when I come back I will repay you whatever more you spend.' <sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" <sup>37</sup> He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged, enraged, or surprised you in the text?
- The expert asks about inheriting eternal (abundant) life. Jesus talks about living. Are they talking about the same thing?
- Jesus' story is so familiar that we don't see that for the Jewish people of that day it was impossible for a Samaritan to be good because of their racial, cultural, and religious baggage. What keeps us, or you, today from extending hospitality and safety to others outside of our circles? How is Jesus calling us to be like the Samaritan?
- What invitation do you hear the Spirit of God speaking to you – or to us, as a church – to act, speak, be, or change, through this word of scripture?

### LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

**Luke** is one of the four gospels in the Second Testament, telling the story of the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Today's reading, one of the most famous teachings of Jesus, is found in Luke alone.

*expert in the law* :: νομικός pronounced /nomikós/ (from /νόμος, "law") – properly, an expert in Jewish law (theology); an ancient Jewish-attorney ("Scripture-lawyer"), specializing in interpreting the OT and applying the teachings of established rabbis. The word implies someone even more learned in the Law than a typical scribe.

to test Jesus:: This tells us a lot about the context of the story. Is the question asked even really one for which the asker seeks an answer? Does he even really care?

*eternal*:: αἰώνιος pronounced /aiónios/ age-long, and therefore: practically eternal, unending; partaking of the character of that which lasts for an age, as contrasted with that which is brief and fleeting. It has more to do with quality than quantity, as in, experiencing this quality of God's life right now.

*a priest*:: ἱερέυς, pronounced /hiereus/ a priest; one who offers sacrifices and works in the sacred space of the Temple.

**a Levite**:: Λευΐτης, pronounced /Leuités/ a Levite, properly a man of the tribe of Levi; hence: a priest's assistant, an under priest, as the members of that tribe were charged by God with this duty.

a Samaritan:: The Samaritans came from Samaria – the region between the south (Judea) and the North (Galilee) of Israel. They had remained in the land when the majority of the population of Israel was taken into exile in Babylon during the 7-6<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. As a result they were deemed to be *less-thans*, sort of bastard cousins who weren't really Israelite but had mixed culturally and religiously with other peoples. So they were looked upon as racially, culturally and religiously inferior in Jesus' day.

*"The one who showed him mercy"*:: The expert of the law answers curiously. While not wrong, wouldn't it have been easier to say, "the Samaritan"? Could it be that his racism or sense of superiority impedes him from even saying the word aloud?