

Week 4 – Questions:

1. What background issues are in this passage that we covered this week?

There was a lot of travel for merchants and trade groups and pilgrims to and fro Jerusalem and elsewhere -

There were also many Romans coming and going collecting taxes.

There would have been merchants delivering incense and other items to the Temple at Jerusalem.

There were people at many levels in society- rich to poor, esteemed (including this Levite and Priest) to not esteemed (this Samaritan). Also robbers and thieves.

There was also a sense of kindness and hospitality to be provided for traveling strangers.

2. As you read this familiar story again, how has your understanding of this story changed or become deeper?

Verse 25- tells me this man was not yet a believer because he did not know the Lord nor have an inward expectation of eternal life- like Job did when he said- I know that my Redeemer liveth.

Verse 26/27- but he knows the law and is able to quote it- "Love your neighbor as yourself" But recognizes he did not know who was meant to include as his neighbor.

Verse 28- reveals the expectation of the Lord to say to this man- "Do this and you will live"

This implies to me that this man knew OF the Law but did NOT apply it to himself/embrace it WITH FAITH.

*The Lord showed him that the outward appearance of a person (Levite and Priest) did NOT necessarily reveal their faith- BUT ACTIONS do (such as the Samaritan). James says: 2:20 **But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?** And 4:17 **Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.** (the priest and Levite crossing the road as if to avoid responsibility and kindness)*

Also – I believe the Lord was revealing to this man that you cannot rely on someone else's faith. I understand that many believed that if they were children of Abraham- there were OK. But here I think the Lord is revealing – not so- only those who embrace the Scriptures—for themselves-because "He who comes to God must believe that He IS..."

3. How might you retell this story using contemporary characters to represent the Samaritan, priest, and Levite? For example, a South African artist paints a black man helping a white Afrikaner.

A city district leader sees a black skinned woman falling in the street and drives right by. A young Asian man stops and helps her up and gives her ride home.

Week 5

Question:

1. What surprised you most as you read this chapter knowing what you now know? Explain.

I see now the WIDE spectrum of people that coexisted in the Roman Empire, that I hadn't seen before and Paul seemed to address many of them.

He went 1st into synagogue and spoke to Jews- some believed some did not. There were God fearing Greeks and wives. There were Jews who were jealous and there were those who were troublemakers – the Jews used them to counter Paul and his group and to cause trouble for him with the city officials, the Jews, and the Romans as well. Also Philosophers. There were passionate belief systems among many. But some come against Paul just as some came against Jesus. And all the idols, some were political, some religious, but all were fruitless and empty. Only God hears and answers prayer and cares about people. Only God is Faithful and True. The contrast of knowing the True God compared to silly idols is LARGE- SEVERE- PASSIONATE. To Know the TRUTH now and Not the lies- seems to provide a compelling inner zeal to share to those who will listen.

2. Luke wants the reader to take away some spiritual insights and truth. What do you think he wants the reader to understand?

I think Luke was showing that despite all the different belief systems among men- there will be those who will believe, those who will not, and those who will come against you life, just as they did with Jesus. The gospel message doesn't really change- but be prepared and TRUST GOD. Man's response is their own.

I believe that I see that as Paul was walking around Athens and saw all the idols, and knew he would be addressing many philosophers and leaders and peoples questionings. He would have been grieved to see all the idols but I believe he asked the Lord for guidance – who I believe answered with –“see Paul- the statue to the Unknown god-- that's me- start with that”.

(God is with us and guides us- it's not all on our shoulders- it's ON HIS Shoulders)

Week 6 - Prayer

O Lord God, you have opened my eyes to see many things which include the inner belief systems of man which falsely guide him and do not uphold him. But I know that the whole world and all that in it is Yours. You provide Light and You open Doors of opportunities in man and to man. I believe that Your mercy has not run out and there are many here in the US that still have not known of Your salvation and goodness and have not repented and turned toward You. I ask that You would not turn away from this ungodly land, but would shine and shine toward those who will listen. Lead me also as You did with the Apostle Paul to see the Doors You may open.

You are a great God. Amen