

**The Rich Man and the Good Samaritan
(15th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)**

Deuteronomy 30:10-14: The Commandments of God

1. Possibility of Obedience: it is “not too hard for you” (30:11)
2. Word: is “very near to you; it is *in your mouth* and *in your heart*” (30:14)

Psalm 69—Turn to the Lord in Your Need

1. Deliverance: “rescue me” from “sinking in the mire” (v. 14, 17)

Col 1:15-20—The First Born of Creation

1. Image: “the image (Greek *eikōn*) of the invisible God” (1:15)
2. First-born: “the first-born (Greek *prōtōtokos*) of all creation” (1:15).

Luke 10:25-37—The Rich Man and the Good Samaritan

1. Lawyer: “lawyer” = “scholar of the law” (Greek *nomikos*) (10:25; cf. Luke 11:52-53)
2. Eternal Life: “what must I do to *inherit* eternal life?” (10:25; cf. Promised Land)
3. Love Commandments: Love of God (Deut 6:4-6) and Love of Neighbor (Lev 19:18)
4. Question: “*Who* is my neighbor?” (10:29)
5. Parable of the Good Samaritan (10:29-37)

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| 1. <i>Priest</i> : descendant of Aaron;
official in the Temple
(Exod 29:1-9; cf. Luke 1:5) | Passes by on the other side
(Luke 10:31) |
| 2. <i>Levite</i> : descendant of Levi;
assistant in the Temple
(Num 1:47-53) | Passes by on the other side
(Luke 10:32) |
| 3. <i>Samaritan</i> : enemy of Israel;
participant in illegitimate
Temple of Gerizim
(2 Kings 17:24-41) | Has “compassion”
cares for the man
shows “mercy” to him
(Luke 10:33, 37) |
6. Ritual Purity? (cf. Levine and Brettler, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, 136)
 - a. Some interpreters: no evidence that they avoid him because of Jewish laws of ritual purity (cf. Lev 21:1-3).
 - a. Burial of the Dead: obligation; transcends purity (Tob 1:16-20)
A High Priest or Nazirite may not contract uncleanness because of their [dead] kindred, but *they may contract uncleanness because of a neglected corpse*. (Mishnah, *Nazir* 7:1; trans. H. Danby)
 7. Mercy: Samaritan shows “mercy” (Greek *eleos*) (Luke 10:33, 37).

The Living Tradition

Catechism: Christ died out of love for us, while we were still “enemies” (Rom 5:10). The Lord asks us to love as he does, even our *enemies*, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself. (CCC 1825)

Augustine: “The whole human race, you see, is that man who was lying on the road, left there by bandits half dead, who was ignored by the passing priest and Levite, while the passing Samaritan stopped by him to take care of him and help him.... In this Samaritan the Lord Jesus Christ wanted us to understand himself.” (Augustine, *Sermons* 171.2; trans. E. Hill, cited in Gadenz, *The Gospel of Luke*, p. 213).

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (15th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)

1. Is it possible to obey the commandments of God? Or are they too lofty for us?

2. Who were the “lawyers” of Jesus’ day? Why might they have tried to put Jesus to the test?

3. Why do the Priest and Levite avoid the man on the side of the road?

For Further Study

1. Arthur A. Just, Jr. *Luke*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament III. Downers Grove: IVP, 2003. Pp. 177-81
2. Pablo Gadenz. *The Gospel of Luke*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. Pp. 209-214.