

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 10: 29-37

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. We continue to read Luke chapter 10. Yesterday we read from verse 25 to verse 37, and first read it according to the facts presented on the surface.

Today we'll look again at the same passage of Scripture. Today we will be a little freer and allow more room for imagination in the spirit to see what the spiritual meanings behind this passage really are. Because there are many parts that involve spiritual interpretation (allegorical interpretation), their main purpose is to help us apply them in our daily life; therefore there is no so-called right or wrong, or standard answer.

When we read the Bible, if any interpretation can help us love God more and also help us love others more, then it is a good interpretation, an interpretation that helps you. So let us temporarily look at this passage again from this angle.

This lawyer stood up to test Jesus. His question was a good question, but the direction he asked was wrong. He said, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Because he asked "what shall I do," Jesus answered his question by first asking him back, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" His answer was also very standard and 100% correct: First, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; second, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Because he asked "what shall I do," Jesus answered, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

Of course, when he thought about it, he had known this for a long time, yet he could not do it at all in life. He could not love the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, and with all his mind; but although others might not know that he could not love God, they could see that he could not love

his neighbor as himself. Because he could not do it and wanted to find an excuse for himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Afterward Jesus told him a story. Today we look at this story from another angle.

Verse 29: “But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’”

Obviously his question was: Who is worthy of my love? Who is my neighbor?

Verse 36: “So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?”

Let us compare verse 29 with verse 36: He asked “who is my neighbor,” and Jesus asked him “who was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves.” The “I” in his question “who is my neighbor” exactly corresponds to the “him who fell among the thieves” in Jesus’ question.

In Jesus’ story, the implied meaning is equivalent to answering this lawyer: Do not ask who is your neighbor that you can go and love; you need to know your own identity—you are the one who fell among the thieves. Do not think you can help others; you are the one who needs help! If we grasp this main point, the meaning of this passage becomes completely different.

This lawyer was arrogant and always thought he was very good: Who is worthy of my help? Jesus, through these words and through his question, completely reversed the question: Do not think you can help others; do not think you are good. Do you know you are the person in the story who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho? You are the one who met the robbers. You are the one who was stripped of his clothes, beaten half dead, and left lying on the roadside in the wilderness, feeling there is no hope and no help.

Sometimes we also see some religious people, like the priest. The problem is that this priest is also walking the same road, also going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, also leaving the foundation of peace and heading toward the city of curse. He himself has no way to help himself—how can he help you? Yet he has a very respectable reason to comfort his own conscience: I cannot touch anything unclean, therefore I cannot help this person who needs help. Then we see a Levite, exactly the same: he also left the foundation of peace and headed toward the city of curse; of course he also could not help you.

Then we meet a good Samaritan. Actually, this person is our Savior Jesus Christ Himself. He had no form or comeliness on earth, like a root out of dry ground; born in a small town of Nazareth, a despised place. He purposely came here.

Verse 33: “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion.”

In verse 33 we see several main verbs: He journeyed and came here—how did He come? Because He knew you needed help, He purposely came into your life. Then He saw you. Others saw an injured man lying on the ground and ignored him; He specially came over to see you. After seeing you, He had compassion.

From coming, seeing, and having compassion—once His heart was moved with compassion, He immediately took action. He went to him, drew near to him, then poured oil and wine on his wounds. Oil typifies the Holy Spirit; wine typifies the essence of life in the grape. He supplied you with His own life. He gave the Holy Spirit so that you feel moistened, so that you feel peace. Then He bandaged you. In His ministry full of love, He directly faced and dealt with every wounded place on your body.

Which one of us has not been beaten half dead in this world, has not been left on the roadside, has not felt there is no one to care? But Jesus came into our life; He saw us, He had compassion, He supplied us with His life, He bandaged us with the Holy Spirit, and then He completely wrapped up our wounds.

Not only that, He lifted us onto His own animal. This animal may not look impressive, perhaps it is a little donkey, but this animal is enough to bring us to an inn. Isn't it true that when you feel discouraged, disappointed, and helpless in life, the Lord Jesus personally comes into your life? Not only does He come personally, He also sends His children, His servants, His handmaids—like these animals—around you, carrying you and bringing you into the church.

And He instructs the innkeeper—that is, some saints who serve in the church: Take care of him well. Not only take care of him, but He also takes out two denarii and gives them to the innkeeper. In other words, your life was redeemed and purchased by Him; for you, He still gives “silver” to the church. That is to say, one day when your life slowly matures and grows, you will become the “silver” in the church, someone who can serve and function in the church.

Not only that, He also says to the innkeeper, “Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.” This is a very beautiful promise to the saints who serve in the church. Do not belittle what you do today for every saint who needs help; one day our Lord will come again, and He will surely repay you double according to what you have done. This is also the future reward every servant hopes for.

So after Jesus spoke such a long passage, He said to this lawyer: You are the one who fell among the robbers; you need a neighbor to help you; you need a good neighbor. So who exactly is your neighbor? Is it the priest? Is it the Levite? Or is it the Lord Jesus Christ, like the good Samaritan?

If we truly have such understanding, if this lawyer recognized the deep meaning in the Lord Jesus' words, he would know that when the Lord Jesus said, “Go and do likewise,” in other words: Go and receive the supply, support, and help of the good Samaritan.

Every child of God can testify to such an experience. We were originally in this world, beaten all over, feeling disappointed, and in need of help. But one day Jesus personally came into our life; not only did He bandage our wounds, He also brought us into the church, and in the church there are many lovely saints who serve us and

help us. After we receive so much help, we slowly grow in life and can also become people who help other saints in the church.

Before the Lord Jesus returns, in principle we are all in this temple—that is, the church—serving one another. In the church we can experience what it means to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and to love the saints around us as ourselves. Because Jesus has given us the best example, today we are His disciples and those He has purchased; naturally, His example is also the object we learn to imitate.

Let us pray together: Lord, yes, we humbly come before You; we confess that we are the one who was beaten half dead, who left the foundation of peace and headed toward the city of curse. Thank You that in this process You personally came to find us. You personally bandaged us with Your life and with the Holy Spirit; You brought us into Your house and placed us among the saints, letting us learn to serve You together and to serve one another. You also promised that one day You will come again, and according to what we have served and offered, You will repay us double. Therefore we offer You our thanks and worship.

Thank You for becoming the Savior of our life; thank You for preparing a home for us on earth, which is the church; and for the saints You have placed around us, we offer You praise. Thank You for giving us a church like a home, where we can learn together, love You together, and love the brothers and sisters around us. Bless my life today. We pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.