

# Jesus, The Master Teacher

**Memory Text:** “And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.” (Luke 4:32)

**Setting The Stage:** G.K. Chesterton quipped, “Without education, we are in a horrible and deadly danger of taking educated people seriously.” Similarly, Derrick Bok's law (former Harvard president) states: “If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.”

Next to your parents it's likely a teacher impacted your life for the better because they didn't just teach, they inspired. We could probably agree with William A. Ward when he said, "The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires."

There is One from whom all inspiration and wisdom flows from. His name is Jesus. He came into this world at a very dark hour (John 1:5). How was light to shine in darkness? How does one explain the things of heaven to people who only know the things of earth? How do you explain dry to a wet fish? Awareness is largely the product of comparison. Those that have travelled, how do you help the person you are talking to appreciate what you've experienced? You do it by using some form of attachment – “You know how we have \_\_\_\_\_, well over there they have \_\_\_\_\_”

To complicate things even more Jesus had to not only communicate God's ways, but He needed to do this to people who already thought they knew what God's ways were (fish that think they know what dry is).

## Sunday – The Authority Of Jesus

Luke 4:32; Luke 8:22-25; Luke 12:8

**Luke 4:32.** “Authority” – “the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.” The Bible writers prefaced their words with the authority of a “Thus says the Lord.” Jesus used the phrase, “I say to you,” (more than 130 times in the Gospels, including 33 times in Luke) to indicate that his authority comes from Who He is.

The Sabbath listeners at Capernaum “were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.” (Luke 4:32) The Greek word translated “astonished” literally means “blown away.” It was the same reaction from those who heard the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7:28, 29). “The scribes spoke *by* authority – quoting those who preceded them – but Jesus spoke *with* authority.” After all He was the Creator and the Father did send Him. That's why He was able to confront Roman authorities, Jewish scholars, and basically anyone else.

How much authority did Jesus have? Luke 8:22-25 – the winds and waves obeyed Him; Luke 4:31-37 – the demons obeyed Him; Luke 5:24-26 – disease obeys Him; Luke 7:49 – He had authority to forgive sins; Luke 12:8 – He had authority to save.

## **Monday – Christ’s Greatest Sermon**

Luke 6:20-49

The Sermon on the Mount is hailed in literature as “the essence of Christianity.” The bulk of the sermon is found in Matthew 5-7, but Luke takes portions of it and shares the instruction throughout his account, but primarily in Luke 6:20-49. The sermon was given in the late summer in AD 29. Luke’s order: 1. Night of prayer. 2. Ordination of 12. 3. Descent to plain. 4. Sermon. The ordination of the 12 was the first step in organizing the church – 12 charter subjects – inaugural address given (conditions of citizenship, giving of law, and delineated objectives).

“Mountain” (Matt. 5) – the Sinai of the NT. More than 14 centuries earlier Israel had gathered in the vale of Shechem, and from the mountains on either side the voices of the priests could be heard declaring the blessings and the curses (Deut. 11:27, 28). But not from Gerizim was did Jesus seek to lead His people toward that true rest, but from an unnamed mountain beside the Lake of Gennesaret. His sermon began with four blessings and four woes. Jesus thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Deut. 28).

“Happy are you” (Luke 6:20-23) – The strong contrast between poverty, hunger, and persecution now, and the future state of blessing may at first seem to lend a literalism to Christ’s words, but this isn’t the case. Christ is simply contrasting the present state of those seeking the kingdom with their condition after entering the kingdom.

“Woe to you” (Luke 24-26) – Comparable with the “woes” of Matthew 23. Pride and self-sufficiency has no need of a Savior.

“Love your enemies” (Luke 27-31) – An imperative to love, not to “not hate.” “Give to everyone” – does not mean to give him everything he asks for, nor does it require us to give something every time your asked. Christ means our giving should be habitual with us. Christian’s should have a generous spirit that is ready and glad to give according to the need presented and to one’s own ability to give. He will be disposed to cooperate than to oppose.

“Judge not” (Luke 6:37-42) – This is not a call to set aside making distinctions between right and wrong, but from judging motive and character which is not ours to give. Instead it’s a call to give the benefit of the doubt and be gracious toward others. “Blind” – A blind person is not fit to guide another blind person. “The disciple” – “A stream rises no higher than its source.” It’s relationship to the previous verse equates the “master” with the blind man who attempts to lead, and the “disciple” the one being led. The moral is simply that those who would pose as

teachers of others must clearly understand the matters they desire to teach others on. The parable illustrates the same lesson given in v. 41. A man must see himself clearly before he can be of any help to others.

“Good fruit” – A tree is known by its fruit. A person is known by the life he/she lives.

“Foundation on rock” – Hard to build a good character on shifting sand (philosophies not in accord with the word of God).

## **Tuesday – A New Family**

Luke 8:19-21; Eph. 3:15

It is evident from the life and ministry of Jesus that He was seeking to establish a new family, one not defined by the exclusivity of caste, color, language, tribe, or religion, but one defined by “agape love – unmerited, nonexclusive, universal, and sacrificial – a family built on His original formula found in creation, that every human being is God’s child, made in His image (Gen. 1:26, 27), and therefore equal before Him.”

**Luke 8:19-21.** Without minimizing the ties and obligations that binds parents and children, etc. Jesus declared that all those who acknowledge God as their Father are members of “the whole family in heaven and earth” (Eph. 3:15). The ties that bind Christians to their Heavenly Father and to one another are stronger and truer even than blood ties, and more enduring.

### **What do the following texts tell us about the walls Christ came to tear down?**

Luke 5:27-32 – the call of Mathew the tax collector; Luke 7:1-10 – the healing of the centurion’s servant; Luke 14:15-24 – the parable of the great supper; Luke 17:11-19 – healing of ten lepers. In each one of these cases Jesus indiscriminately helps those in need. It doesn’t matter whether they are considered to be the lowest of the low according to social standards then, Jesus reveals by His actions that people are of equal worth in the eyes of God

## **Wednesday – Love Defined: The Parable Of The Good Samaritan: Part 1**

Luke 10:25-29

Of the four Gospels, only Luke records the parable of the prodigal son and the Good Samaritan. The first story illustrates the love of the Heavenly father toward sinners. The second illustrates the love we should have for each other because we appreciate the love the Father has toward us.

Rather than putting people in their place perhaps we need to put ourselves in their place. It will help with understanding a person. In this parable Jesus taught more

than the principles of understanding and sympathy, but the necessity of empathy in all of our relationships.

What is empathy? It's distinct from sympathy (a feeling of compassion or concern for another, or just a wish to see them better off), and pity (often described as "feeling sorry" for someone). The word empathy is derived from the Greek word *empathēia* (*en* – in, *pathos* – feeling/passion). In other words it means the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Empathy is the key cornerstone in genuine human relationships. It means the one with empathy is compassionate, while those without it don't consider others. I describe empathy as carrying someone else's pain or pleasure on your heart.

Who should I have empathy for? As a follower of Jesus am I to be selective, picky, or clicky? As a Christian, am I at liberty to have empathy for only a chosen, select few - empathy just toward my close friends, those I get along with, those I feel comfortable with, or those that understand me best?

In the two great commandments of life, Jesus told His followers to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbors as ourselves (Matt. 22:37-40). To love our neighbors is to show our love of God. So who is my neighbor that I am to love?

That was the big question among the Jews at the time of Christ. It was asked repeatedly causing endless heated discussions. They wondered where the distinction should be made among their own people and the different classes of society. Jesus was about to blow the top off of their cherished ideas and reveal what the true nature of religion looks like. He was about to show them that it really does matter how we treat one another.

The Pharisees, it seems, put this young lawyer up to asking Jesus this tricky question to corner Him (see v. 25). You have to understand that the religious leaders of that time believed that meticulous obedience to the law of God was imperative for eternal life. They felt Jesus put little emphasis on it. So the question was designed to trip Him up. Yet Jesus gave the lawyer the opportunity to answer his own question (see v. 26).

The lawyer then with confidence quotes Deut 6:5 & Lev. 19:18 which say.... **Luke 10:27**. These two great commandments were repeated every morning and evening by the most devout Jews as a part of the "shema" (confession of faith). It should have been known by those who had any insight at all that its principles were not arbitrary but based on fundamental principles of right that would be summed up in the command to love. So to love would be to fulfill the demands of the law.

And did you notice that Christ presented the law as a whole (v. 26), not one section without the other? Love God, love man. Love man, love God. Inseparable. Why

does that matter? Because as we'll see, it was a very common practice then to profess high regard and love for God while giving partial treatment to His creation. The truth is that one cannot properly love their fellow man without supreme love for God in the heart. Actually, how you and I treat a person reveals the lengths to which we love God.

## **Thursday – Love Defined: The Parable Of The Good Samaritan: Part 2**

Luke 10:30-37

**Luke 10:30-37.** A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho (v. 30) – A man is traveling, perhaps on business, we don't really know the reason, but he's traveling down the main road that follows through the dry, barren, uninhabited hills of the Wilderness of Judah – a 17 mile journey. At one point the road narrows, with rocks and caves on either side making it a perfect spot for thieves to hid and surprise their unsuspecting victims. It is around this spot that the tragedy occurs. The traveler is stripped, robbed and wounded left half dead in the middle of the road.

The story continues (v. 31). A certain priest is traveling the same road. He's very likely returning from his appointed term of service at the temple (see Luke 1:5, 9, 23). He sees the half-dying man, yet passes by as if he had not seen him. Does he care? Obviously not, for his actions tell us the truth.

Then a Levite, another religious leader, is traveling the same road (v. 32). He's probably returning from his appointed term of service at the Temple too. He seems to be a little more conscientious, but it becomes apparent that he is just curious because he continues on not lifting a hand to help.

It was law back then that if a religious leader touched a dead body they were considered unclean for 7 days and needed to go through a round of rituals to be cleaned before they could serve in their appointed duties again (see Num. 19:11-22; Lev. 21:1-4).

Admittedly it was a lot of work to go through for just helping someone, right? Be careful how you answer. Would it be worth it? Should they defile themselves just to help this poor man? Could they justify their lack of concern by upholding the demands of ritual law?

These two men knew that the same law which they used to relieve themselves from helping this man, also made merciful provisions for animals (Ex. 23:4, 5), which they happily obeyed. But how much more valuable was this suffering brother? How much more should their hearts have gone out in tender pity for him than for an animal?

Through Moses God had commanded, “Love the stranger...Love him as yourself.” (Deut. 10:17-19; Lev. 19:34). The priest and the Levite were familiar with these teachings but they hadn’t brought them into their every day affairs. They had been “trained in the national school of bigotry [and] had become selfish, narrow and exclusive.” (Desire of Ages, p. 500)

But now the hero of Jesus story emerges (v. 33). The fact that the Samaritan was traveling in what was to him a foreign district made his deed of mercy even more significant. In this district the unfortunate traveler was very likely a Jew, a member of the race that had the most hatred against the Samaritans.

But this Samaritan had compassion on him (v. 33). Even at the risk of being harmed, he still helped. He had compassion. He empathized for this poor man. Of all the people who should have passed by, it should have been this man. There was really no good reason for the Jews to despise the Samaritan’s, and when the Samaritan saw this Jew he could have allowed past injustices and cruel treatment to taint his judgment, but he didn’t.

This man could have passed by in retaliation for the way his own race had been treated by the likes of a Jew as him, but he didn’t. It was those who knew better, one of his own that passed by on the other side, but the unexpected traveler stopped to help. Amazing!

The spirit we manifest to someone reveals what our spirit is toward God. “If a man say, I love God, and hate his brother, he is a liar: for he that doesn’t love a brother whom he has seen, how can he love God Whom he has not seen?” (1 John 4:20)

And notice what the Samaritan did for this man: **Read v. 34, 35.** Notice – “came where he was” (he didn’t pretend to ignore him); “saw him” (took in the situation); “had compassion” (let his feelings move him to help); “went to him” (nothing and no one was beneath his help); “bound up his wounds” (dealt with the most pressing need first); “pouring in wine and oil” (brought comfort and healing); “set him on his beast” (irrespective of the stains to his upholstery); “brought him to an inn” (provided a place where he could receive rest to restore); “took care of him”(he spared no expense). He treated him like he would like to be treated if the same thing happened to him.

The truth is that true empathy always leads a person to action. True empathy always leads a person to care for the less fortunate or the under privileged. True compassion always leads a person to stop, listen, and seek understanding regarding the plight of a victim. True empathy always leads a person to try and help if they can, however they can. And like this generous Samaritan, true empathy often goes beyond mere duty and obligation.

If you stop and think about it, in a very real way the mercy shown by the Samaritan reflects the spirit that moved the Son of God to come to this earth to rescue us. God

was not obliged to rescue fallen man. He might have treated us and passed us by as the priest and Levite had done. But He was willing to be treated as we deserve so that we might be treated as He deserves.

He saw our plight and came near to us. He has bound up the wounds that sin has inflicted with His grace. He has poured on us His precious blood and His Holy Spirit for healing and restoration. He has carried us in His everlasting arms. He has placed us within the safe confines of the church, and given us the assurance of His return to take us to be where He is. What more could He have done for us? What a Savior! What a God!

**Appeal:** As a teacher, Jesus taught with authority. He taught how his followers should live, relate, worship, and witness. Is there congruence between what we believe and what we live?