

Questions Jesus Asked: What Does Scripture Say?

Goldstone Church – 13-Jul-25 10:30am

Luke 10:25-37

Introduction

Jesus had a conversation with a man who was an “expert in the law”; someone whose job was to study the Law of Moses and who would have debated publicly about legal and religious issues. In Bible times, the Pharisees and the Sadducees made sure the people obeyed the law. By contrast, the “expert in the law” copied, preserved, and interpreted the text. This man knew every word of the Law of Moses.

Yet when this man spoke with Jesus, there was a hidden agenda within his questions.

1. The FAKE QUESTIONER

(Luke 10:25A)

“One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”” (Luke 10:25 NLT).

The expert of the law had probably been sent by the religious leaders to trap Jesus into saying something foolish. He started his conversation with Jesus by standing up. In Bible times, the rabbi’s and the teachers would be seated, and their students would stand.

Standing to speak to Jesus shows that the expert in the law must have been important enough to have been seated. In Jewish culture, standing up before speaking to someone was a formal and a respectful action. When expert of the law stood up, it visibly said that Jesus was an honoured teacher, and that he wanted a serious discussion with Him.

But the man’s true character is seen after the first set of questions and answers with Jesus.

“The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbour?”” (Luke 10:29 NLT).

The original word translated “justify” means to vindicate, i.e., the man wanted to reestablish his own credibility as an “expert”. But by doing this, the man revealed his insincerity in speaking with Jesus in the first place.

The man asked a very important question, ‘What should I do to inherit eternal life?’ (v.25). It seemed that he genuinely wanted to know how to go to heaven. This, of course, is the ultimate question – and one that is still asked today. How can I go to heaven?

In response, Jesus answered his question with a question. ‘You know the Bible backwards and forwards. What does it say?’ (v.26). The lawyer gave the right answer (v.27). If you want to go to heaven, you’ve got to love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. While you’re at it, you’ve got to love your neighbour as yourself.

It sounds like a great answer – and it is. But there is a sense that the man was only reciting two Old Testament passages (Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18). The man had the head-knowledge, but he didn’t believe the truth deep down in his own life.

When Jesus told the man *““You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.””* (Luke 10:28), the man responded by focusing on his own reputation rather than following God wholeheartedly. The man had all the knowledge, but he had not put his faith in God.

This is something that we need to ask today. Are we so consumed in learning the facts and the knowledge about Jesus that we have missed putting our faith in Him? Do we know the answer in our head, but not stepped out and put our faith in Jesus. Knowledge of what to do to go to heaven is not enough. As Jesus said, we must do this.

2. The FOOLISH QUESTIONS

(Luke 10:25B)

“One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”” (Luke 10:25 NLT).

Although it sounded good, the expert in the law asked the wrong question. *“What should I do to inherit eternal life?”* (v.25).

The original word translated “do” means to make, or to perform. Essentially, the man wanted to know what activities he needed to carry out to secure his place in heaven. In his mind, salvation was through his works; God would honour what he had done with eternal life.

“God has done it all! He sent Christ to make peace between himself and us, and he has given us the work of making peace between himself and others.” (2 Corinthians 5:18 CEV).

Instead of asking “What should I do to inherit eternal life?”, the expert in the law should have asked, “What has God done that I may receive eternal life?” The answer is clear: God has done it all through Jesus.

The lawyer asked another wrong question. *““who is my neighbour?””* (Luke 10:29b NLT).

This was an improper question because the man was trying to exclude others. The expert in the law wanted to create a category of people who were “non-neighbours”. Instead of asking ‘Who is my neighbour’, the correct question is, “How can I be a loving neighbour?”

As Christians, because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross at Calvary, let us be genuine, loving neighbours. Let us show the love of Jesus to our families, friends, and our community in our words and actions.

3. The FIRM FOUNDATION

(Luke 10:27)

“The man answered, ““You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’”” (Luke 10:27 NLT).

The expert in the law did give Jesus the correct answer and Jesus even complemented the man, *‘You have answered correctly.’*

In Jewish culture, what the lawyer quoted is known as the SHEMA. For the Jews, this was one of the most famous prayers in the Bible. It was a daily prayer for the Israelites and is still recited by Jewish people today. The name SHEMA comes from the first Hebrew word in the prayer and means “hear” or “listen”. It is both a prayer of allegiance to God, as well as a hymn of praise.

The prayer starts by calling us to love the Lord your God. The word translated “love” is not a fuzzy feeling but is a deliberate activity. In the same way that listening is an action, Biblical love is an action. It is an act of loyalty and faithfulness to God. It is choosing to express our love for God, in every part of our lives.

a) To love God with All our Heart.

The word “heart” is referring to our feelings and emotions. It is the opposite of being half-hearted. All our senses are to love God.

b) To love God with All our Soul.

The word “soul” is referring to the core breath of life that is within us. It is the opposite of being bleak and insensitive. Every part of our personality is to love God.

c) To love God with All our Strength.

The word “strength” is referring to our physical activity and ability. It is the opposite of being hesitant or timid. All our energies are to love God.

d) To love God with All our Mind.

The word “mind” is referring to our thoughts and understanding. It is the opposite of being mindless or unthinking. Every thought should focus on loving God.

The prayer ends by underlining that all this love for God is to be visibly shown as we love our neighbours. We do this because of the certain assurance we have in Jesus.

Rather than day-dreaming our way through life, as Christians we are called to love the Lord our God with all our all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. What a privilege - and a challenge.

CONCLUSION

A key part of Jesus’ answer to the expert in the law is the ‘Parable of the Good Samaritan’.

Interestingly, Jesus did not say that his story was a parable. One Bible commentator suggests that the event occurred on the road to Jericho. It would be unwise for Jesus to make up a story that made the Jews look bad and the Samaritans look good. Furthermore, if the events were not real, the people could argue that nothing like it would ever happen. So, perhaps Jesus’ story was based on actual events. Either way, the account is realistic.

The purpose of Jesus’ parable was to respond the lawyer’s question. The lawyer wanted a complicated and a philosophical discussion, but Jesus made it simple and practical. Jesus moved the focus of the lawyers’ question from responsibility and duty, to love and loyalty to God. Jesus challenges our perspective and our outlook on the situation.

- For the Thieves, the travelling Jew was a victim to exploit – so they attacked him.
- For the Priest and the Levite, the man was a nuisance to avoid – so they ignored him.
- For the Samaritan, the man was a neighbour to love and help – so he took care of him.

It is significant that Jesus did not answer the lawyers ‘*Who is my neighbour?*’ question. Instead, Jesus asked, “*Which of these three do you think proved himself a neighbour to the man who encountered the robbers?*” (Luke 10:36 AMP).

The answer is obvious. So, Jesus underlined the point with a command. What Jesus said to the expert in the law, He says to us today, ‘*Go and keep on being a loving neighbour.*’ That is what Scripture says.

“Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.” (Ephesians 5:1-2 NLT).

AMEN