

What is the Bible? (Answers from Rob Bell, others, and you!)

FCCLA Seeker's Class - Fall 2017

Full schedule and all articles are linked here: <http://jlharmon.com/bible>

November 5: The Good Samaritan

What is the Bible? chapter 19: "He Can't Even Say His Name" pp. 139-144

"Go and do Likewise" by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine

November 12: What does the Bible say to us...today?

What is the Bible? chapter 28 "Why Americans Often Miss Major Themes of the Bible" pp. 211-216

"Theology as Survival" by Rev. Broderick Greer

Rob Bell, pg 144: You can make it about roadside assistance, which is fine, and maybe even helpful, but Jesus is calling us to something way bigger and higher and deeper and transcendent. Jesus is calling the man to love like God loves. Which means everybody. Even those who are most difficult to love. Even those you hate so much, you can't even say their name.

Amy-Jill Levine: The parable spoke about compassion, but the lawyer read the action as one of mercy. His rephrasing the issue is apt: compassion can be felt in the gut; mercy needs to be enacted with the body. The term may come from Luke, who uses it extensively, but only in the infancy materials, where mercy is an attribute of the divine: For the lawyer, and for Luke's readers, the Samaritan does what God does. The divine is manifested only through our actions. Therefore, Jesus responds to the lawyer's observation not with a question and not with a parable, but with an imperative: "Go," he says, "and you do likewise."

1. What historical context is most important to know when reading this story?
2. Who do you identify with in this story?
3. Who are our Samaritans?
4. Who are our neighbors?
5. What does it look like to "go, and do likewise"?

Luke 10:25-37 The Message (MSG)

Defining “Neighbor”

25 Just then a religion scholar stood up with a question to test Jesus. “Teacher, what do I need to do to get eternal life?”

26 He answered, “What’s written in God’s Law? How do you interpret it?”

27 He said, “That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence—and that you love your neighbor as well as you do yourself.”

28 “Good answer!” said Jesus. “Do it and you’ll live.”

29 Looking for a loophole, he asked, “And just how would you define ‘neighbor?’”

30-32 Jesus answered by telling a story. “There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he was attacked by robbers. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man.

33-35 “A Samaritan traveling the road came on him. When he saw the man’s condition, his heart went out to him. He gave him first aid, disinfecting and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable. In the morning he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I’ll pay you on my way back.’”

36 “What do you think? Which of the three became a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?”

37 “The one who treated him kindly,” the religion scholar responded.

Jesus said, “Go and do the same.”

Luke 10:25-37 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 26 He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” 27 He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” 28 And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” 30 Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’”

36 Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” 37 He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”