SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES



DEEP DIVE

Luke

Chapter Ten, Verses 1–42

Lambs, Neighbors and the One Thing — seventy sent in pairs, names written in heaven, a man half dead on the Jericho road, and a sister at the Lord's feet

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

Jesus sends seventy ahead of Him as lambs among wolves, tells them to rejoice not in their power but in names recorded in heaven, answers a lawyer with a story about a Samaritan on the Jericho road, and gently tells a busy Martha that only one thing is necessary. Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Luke's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Luke 10:1–42

sent · rejoicing · neighbor · the one thing

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Five movements from the mission of the seventy to Mary at the Lord's feet

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"Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven." — Luke 10:20

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Luke 10:1–42

Lambs, Neighbors and the One Thing — Jesus sends His laborers, rejoices in the Father's grace, redefines a neighbor, and names the one thing necessary

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Luke 10 in 5 movements, in Luke's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the passage so you can see where Luke is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word — R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle — MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · LUKE 10:42

"but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

† Before the Passage

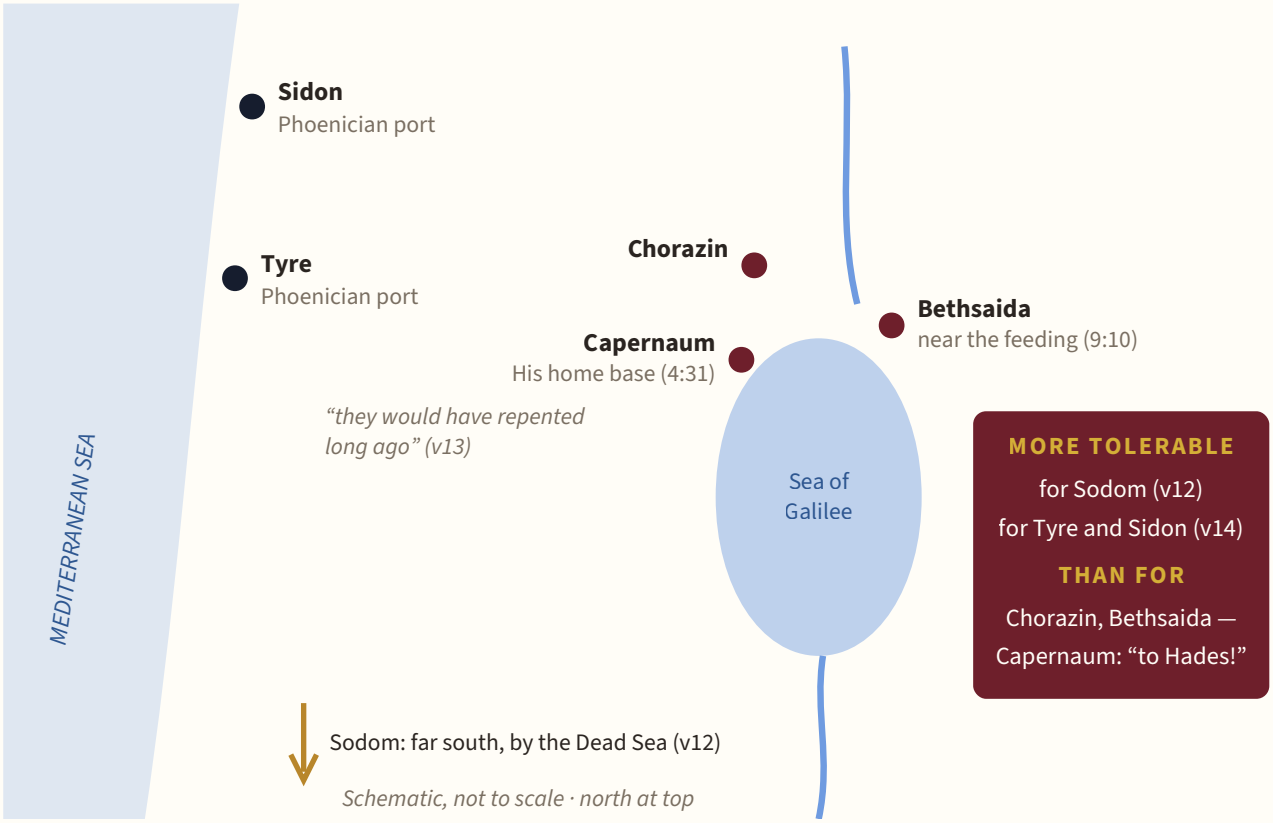
Luke 9 ended with Jesus "determined to go to Jerusalem" (9:51) and three would-be followers who wanted to follow later. Chapter 10 is the first full chapter of Luke's travel narrative, and it shows what real following looks like: men sent ahead in pairs (vv. 1–16), disciples who rejoice in grace rather than power (vv. 17–24), a neighbor who stops on the road (vv. 25–37), and a woman who sits still at the Lord's feet (vv. 38–42). Much of the chapter is found only in Luke.

Only Luke records the sending of "seventy others" (v. 1); in 9:1–6 the Twelve had gone out first. Some manuscripts read seventy-two, and the NASB notes it; Sproul's sermon is titled "The Mission of the Seventy-Two," while Guzik and Henry say seventy. Henry hears an echo of the seventy elders Moses appointed in the wilderness (Numbers 11:16, 25). Either way the point is the same: the harvest is bigger than twelve men can reap.

The towns named in verses 13–15 sit around the north end of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was Jesus' home base (4:31); Bethsaida was near where the five thousand were fed (9:10); Chorazin lay a short walk into the hills above Capernaum. Tyre and Sidon were the old Gentile ports of Phoenicia, condemned by the prophets, and Sodom was the Bible's byword for judgment. Jesus says the cities that saw His miracles stand under heavier judgment than all three.

The lawyer of verse 25 was an expert in the Law of Moses, not a courtroom attorney. His answer joins Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, the two commands Jesus Himself named as the greatest (Matthew 22:37–40). The road from Jerusalem down to Jericho dropped roughly 3,300 feet in about seventeen miles of desert, and Sproul calls it a dangerous road. Priests and Levites served in the temple; Samaritans were despised by Jews (see 9:52–53). The chapter ends in "a village" where Martha and Mary lived — John tells us it was Bethany, near Jerusalem (John 11:1).

FIGURE · THE CITIES OF THE WOES



The three towns that saw most of Jesus' miracles cluster at the north end of the lake; Jesus says Gentile Tyre and Sidon, and even Sodom, will fare better in the judgment.

I
MOVEMENT

LUKE 10:1–16

Lambs in the Midst of Wolves

Seventy sent in pairs, a plentiful harvest, a word of peace, and woes on the cities that would not repent

1 *Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place*
where He Himself was going to come. 2 *And He was saying to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers*
are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. 3 *"Go; behold, I send*
you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. 4 *"Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way.*
5 *"Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.'* 6 *"If a man of peace is there, your peace*
will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. 7 *"Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you;*
for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house. 8 *"Whatever city you enter and*
they receive you, eat what is set before you; 9 *and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom*
of God has come near to you.' 10 *"But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets*
and say, 11 *'Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of*
this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' 12 *"I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom*
than for that city. 13 *"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in*
Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 *"But*
it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. 15 *"And you, Capernaum, will not be*
exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades! 16 *"The one who listens to you listens to*
Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."

LUKE 10:1–16

"How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!""

ISAIAH 52:7

ἀποστέλλω

APOSTELLŌ · "SEND" · G649

The verb behind "apostle": to send someone out on a mission with a message. It frames the whole speech — "sent them in pairs" (v. 1), "I send you out as lambs" (v. 3), and "he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me" (v. 16). The seventy are not freelancers; they carry the authority of the One who sent them, and He carries the authority of the Father. Sproul: "If you receive the Apostles, you receive Christ."

εἰρήνη

EIRĒNĒ · "PEACE" · G1515

The Greek for the Hebrew *shalom* — wholeness, well-being, peace with God. Three times in verses 5–6. The NASB's "a man of peace" is literally "a son of peace" (so the KJV), a Hebrew way of saying a man whose character is peace, ready to receive it. If no such man is there, the blessing "will return to you" — Spurgeon: "Wish well, and your well-wishing will do you good, even if it does nobody else good."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik reads verse 2 as Jesus' own eyes on the crowds: "He considered the multitude of humanity to be like a harvest field ready for gathering," and "He thought of the greatness of human need, and saw it as an *opportunity*." The first assignment is prayer — "the work before them was great and could not be accomplished without much prayer" — and then the same men are sent: "Jesus commanded them to go, because God would use them to answer their own prayers." They go as lambs among wolves, and "They were instructed to bring a blessing of peace to each house, if the home would receive it."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "The Mission of the Seventy-Two" (21 July 2013) notes the manuscript question — seventy or seventy-two — and moves to the harvest. Pray for laborers, he says, but remember who does the reaping: "God does not need us to harvest His elect." "We can plant and we can water, but only God can give the increase." Of the towns that refused the message, he says the kingdom was right in front of them: "The reality is that most of them missed it, and it was right there at hand." Judgment comes in degrees — "Some sins are far more egregious than others" — and of Capernaum: "You will wish you had lived in Sodom."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In his exposition of Luke 10 Spurgeon finds comfort in verse 1: "What a mercy it is when the preacher knows that his Master is coming after him." The seventy "were very few compared with the many that were needed," and "A good minister always desires to see more good ministers." Lambs are defenseless, and they must not waste time on long roadside greetings, which "took up a very long time." When a town refuses, "We are not to stop and argue; that is no business of ours." And verse 16 names the worst sin of all: "Hearing and rejecting the gospel is the crowning sin of all."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry hears in the seventy an echo of Moses' seventy elders and sees the mission as urgent: "Ministers should apply themselves to their work under a deep concern for precious souls." Like Spurgeon, he notes that "Those that are good ministers themselves wish that there were more good ministers, for there is work for more." The woes on the Galilean towns are a warning to everyone who has heard the gospel: "It is good to be made sensible of our advantages and opportunities, that we may lay hold of them," for "The doom of those who thus receive the grace of God in vain will be very fearful."

II
MOVEMENT

LUKE 10:17–20

Names Recorded in Heaven

The seventy return with joy, Satan falls like lightning, and Jesus points them to a better joy

17 *The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."* 18 *And He said to them, "△ I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.* 19 *"Behold, ☆ I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.*
20 *"Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but ☆ rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."*

LUKE 10:17–20

Ὑποτάσσω

HYPOTASSŌ · "SUBJECT" · G5293

A military word: to arrange under, to rank beneath. "Even the demons are subject to us" (v. 17); "do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you" (v. 20). The same verb is used of the boy Jesus, who "continued in subjection" to His parents (2:51). The demons fall into rank under the name of Jesus — but that is not the deepest thing to be glad about.

ἐγγράφω

ENGRAPHŌ · "RECORDED, WRITTEN IN" · G1449

To write in, to enter in a register. Only three New Testament uses: here and twice in 2 Corinthians 3:2–3, of a letter written on hearts. Luke 10:20 has the perfect tense, *engegraptai* — "have been recorded and stand recorded." The Bible speaks of a book in which God's people are written (Daniel 12:1; Revelation 20:15; 21:27). Sproul: "Your name is either in the Book of Life or it is not."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik enjoys the seventy's report: "This was a good day." "All seventy returned." On verse 18 he is careful: "*Fall like lightning from heaven* doesn't mean that Satan fell *from* heaven, but that his fall was as dramatic and sudden as a bolt of lightning from heaven," for Satan "still has access to heaven" (Job 1:12; Zechariah 3:1), and his fall was judgment "though not complete judgment, which still awaits." Then the warning: "Some people get emotionally intoxicated after successful service or the display of spiritual power." "God wants us to always see that what He did for us always is far greater than what we could ever do for Him."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

In the same sermon Sproul paraphrases Jesus' answer to the seventy: "I could see it wasn't just lightning." "It was Satan and the great fall of his power because of the ministry that you have undertaken in My name." He notes that some take serpents and scorpions "to be a metaphor for all kinds of evil resistance," and he does not despise the gift: "It is good that you have this power." But the greater joy is grace, not achievement — a name written by God's sovereign choice. "Your name is either in the Book of Life or it is not."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's "Why May I Rejoice?" (29 Oct 1876, MTP 22) does not forbid joy in success but ranks it below a deeper joy. Gifts and results prove nothing about grace, since unconverted men can have them: "We cannot judge character by gift." "Grace without talent will save, but talent without grace will only increase our condemnation." The joy Jesus commends "springs from faith, while the other joy arises alone from sight," and it is open to every believer, the bedridden and the poor included. "We see our election by our calling, and not else."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry rejoices with the seventy: "Note, Satan and his kingdom fell before the preaching of the gospel," and "the saints have no greater joy or satisfaction in any of their triumphs than in those over Satan." But he keeps the credit where it belongs: "all our victories over Satan are obtained by power derived from Jesus Christ." And he states Jesus' correction as a rule: "Saving graces are more to be rejoiced in than spiritual gifts."

III
MOVEMENT

LUKE 10:21–24

Revealed to Infants

Jesus rejoices in the Holy Spirit and thanks the Father, and blesses the eyes that see Him

> 21 *At that very time* △ *He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and* △ *have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.* 22 *"All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and* △ *no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."* 23 *Turning to the disciples, He said privately, "*☆ *Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see,* 24 *for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them."*
>
> LUKE 10:21–24

> *"but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God."*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 1:27–29

ἀγαλλιάω

AGALLIAŌ · "REJOICE GREATLY" · G21

Not ordinary gladness but exultation — joy that leaps. Luke uses it of Mary: "my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior" (1:47). Here it is Jesus Himself, "in the Holy Spirit" (v. 21): the Son, filled with the Spirit, exulting before the Father — the whole Trinity in one verse. Guzik and Spurgeon both note that this is the only place in the Gospels where Jesus is said to rejoice.

νήπιος

NĒPIOS · "INFANT" · G3516

A baby, a little child too young to speak well; figuratively, the simple or immature. Fifteen New Testament uses; Paul uses it of the immature (1 Corinthians 3:1; 13:11). Jesus sets it against "the wise and intelligent" (v. 21): God hides the things of the kingdom from the self-sufficient and reveals them to people who know they have nothing. Spurgeon: "It is not ignorance which God loves, but conceit that he hates."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik is moved by the scene: "Jesus was genuinely excited." "This is the only occasion in the gospels where it is specifically said that Jesus rejoiced," and "Jesus' joy made Him break out into prayer." What delighted Him was God's way of working: "God delights in using the weak and foolish things of this world to confound the wise (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)." The disciples saw and heard what prophets and kings had longed to see.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "The Return of the Seventy-Two" (11 Aug 2013) calls verse 21 a strange prayer: "Jesus praised and thanked God, not only for revealing the truth to some, but for concealing it from others." He admits, "This is one of the most difficult aspects of doctrine that we must deal with, is it not?" But it leaves no room to boast: "We are not believers based on any merit of our own, but purely by the grace of God." "That is the essence of grace, that it is altogether undeserved and unmerited." And so the disciples' blessed eyes are "our joy, our unspeakable joy, which we have done nothing to earn."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's "The Joy of Jesus" (5 Dec 1880, MTP 26) opens with the same observation: "It is remarkable that this is the only instance on record in the gospels in which our Lord is said to have rejoiced." Jesus rejoiced not in His fame or in the disciples' miracles but in the Father revealing Himself, for "God is not known except as he reveals himself, nor can he be discovered by human ingenuity." God chose the childlike: "It is not ignorance which God loves, but conceit that he hates." And "God never did a sovereign act yet that the loving Christ himself could not rejoice in."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry sees what makes Christ glad: "Nothing rejoices the heart of the Lord Jesus so much as the progress of the gospel." His was "a solid substantial joy, an inward joy." He is grateful for the kind of men God chose — "Thanks be to God that the apostles were not fetched from their schools" — and he presses the privilege of the blessed eyes on his readers: "Though the bare knowledge of these things is not saving, yet it puts us in the way of salvation."

IV
MOVEMENT

LUKE 10:25–37

Who Proved to Be a Neighbor?

A lawyer's test, the two great commands, and a Samaritan on the Jericho road

25 *And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*
26 *And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"* 27 *And 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 answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."* 29 *But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"* 30 *Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead.* 31 *"And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*
32 *"Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.* 33 *"But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,* 34 *and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.* 35 *"On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the*

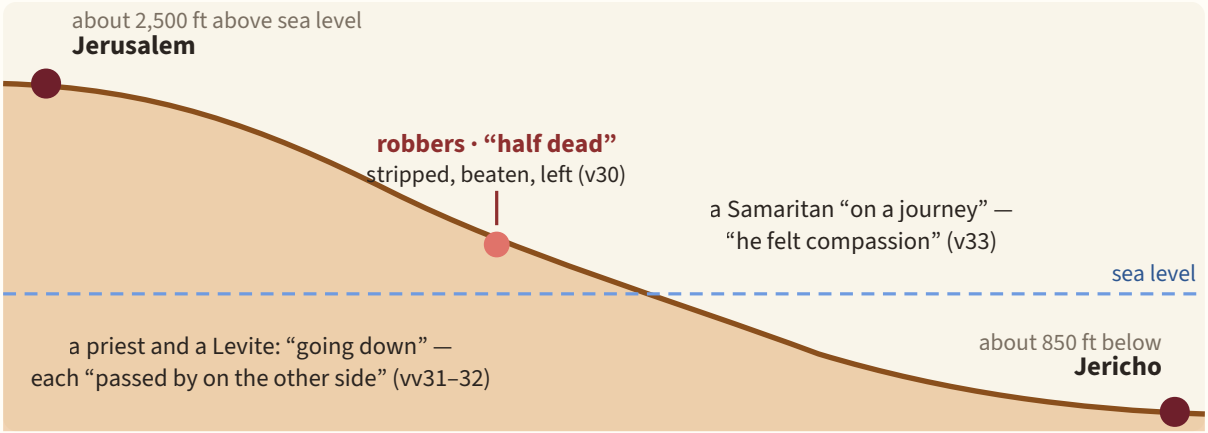
> *innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'*
> 36 *"Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?"*
> 37 *And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."*
>
> LUKE 10:25–37

> *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."*
>
> DEUTERONOMY 6:5

> *"You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD."*
>
> LEVITICUS 19:18

FIGURE · THE JERICHO ROAD

"A MAN WAS GOING DOWN FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICHO" (10:30)



About 17 miles of desert road, dropping roughly 3,300 feet — lonely, rocky and dangerous.

Elevation profile, schematic · figures approximate

The road falls steeply from Jerusalem to Jericho through empty desert — a good place for robbers, and a long way from help.

FIGURE · THREE MEN SAW HIM

THREE MEN SAW HIM · LUKE 10:31–35 · WHAT EACH ONE DID

THE PRIEST v31	THE LEVITE v32	THE SAMARITAN vv33–35
"when he saw him"	"came to the place and saw him"	"when he saw him"
"he passed by on the other side"	"passed by on the other side"	felt compassion · came
		bandaged · poured oil
		and wine · his own beast
		an inn · took care
		two denarii · "I will repay"

All three "saw him." Two kept walking; one "came to him" (v34) and stayed until the job was done.

THE LAWYER ASKS	"And who is my neighbor?" (v29)
JESUS ASKS	"Which of these three … proved to be a neighbor?" (v36)
JESUS SENDS	"Go and do the same." (v37)

Read the columns, then the bars: all three men saw the wounded man, but only the Samaritan's verbs keep going — and Jesus turns the lawyer's question around.

δικαιόω

DIKAIOŌ · "JUSTIFY" · G1344

To declare or show to be righteous. The lawyer, "wishing to justify himself" (v. 29), wants a definition of "neighbor" small enough to keep. It is the word Paul uses for God's gift — "justified as a gift by His grace" (Romans 3:24). Luke uses it again of the Pharisees "who justify yourselves" in 16:15 and of the tax collector who "went to his house justified" in 18:14. Sproul: "He thought he could justify himself."

σπλαγχνίζομαι

SPLANCHNIZOMAI · "FEEL COMPASSION" · G4697

From *splanchna*, the inward parts — compassion felt in the gut. Twelve New Testament uses, mostly of Jesus Himself. Luke has it only three times: of Jesus at the widow's bier (7:13), of the Samaritan (10:33), and of the father who sees his prodigal son "a long way off" (15:20). Sproul: "True compassion goes far beyond feelings" — the Samaritan's feeling turned into ten verbs.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik grants that "The lawyer was wise enough to know this was the essence of the law," but he wanted to measure himself — "The lawyer measured himself against both commands" — and "It all depends on who your *neighbor* is and who your enemy is." The priest and Levite had reasons, "But all of these are simply excuses." "The Samaritan came right to the afflicted man"; "He didn't wait to be asked; to see the need right in front of him was enough to make him do something." Guzik lists "many ways that the Samaritan was like Jesus," and draws the lesson: "My neighbor is the one with a need right in front of me."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "The Parable of the Good Samaritan" (25 Aug 2013) frames it as a contest the lawyer started. Jesus sends him back to the Law, and he quotes it correctly — but no one keeps it. "You cannot understand grace if you do not understand the law." "He thought he could justify himself." "Jesus was teaching this lawyer the ABCs of the law of God." The Samaritan, despised by Jews, shows mercy in deeds: "True compassion goes far beyond feelings." Sproul draws a careful line: "The Bible does not teach the universal brotherhood." "It does teach the universal neighborhood of God."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's "The Good Samaritan" (17 June 1877, MTP 23) begins, "Our Lord was a great practical preacher." He is hard on the priest and Levite, who were sent down that road by providence and walked past: "They had been near to God, but were not like him." "I never knew a man refuse to help the poor who failed to give at least one admirable excuse." "The Samaritan was personally benevolent," and he "did not cease till he had gone through with his kindness." Spurgeon warns against forcing the parable, yet adds: "our Lord Jesus Christ has done better than the good Samaritan, because our case was worse."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry reads the parable first as a rule of mercy — the Samaritan's kindness is to be imitated, and "It is sad when those who should be examples of charity are prodigies of cruelty." Then he reads it as a picture of the gospel: "We were like this poor distressed traveller." "Satan, our enemy, had robbed us, stripped us, wounded us," and "then comes the blessed Jesus, that good Samaritan." Of our teachers he leans hardest on the picture of Christ; Spurgeon allows it with a caution; Guzik lists likenesses; Sproul keeps to the lawyer and the law.

V
MOVEMENT

LUKE 10:38–42

The One Thing Necessary

Martha's many preparations, Mary at the Lord's feet, and the good part that will not be taken away

38 *Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her*
home. 39 *She had a sister called Mary, who was ☆ seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word.* 40 *But*
⚠ Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care

> *that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.”* 41 *But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, ⚠ you are worried and bothered about so many things;* 42 *but only one thing is necessary, for ☆ Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”*
>
> LUKE 10:38–42

περισπάω

PERISPAŌ · “DISTRACTED” · G4049

Literally “to drag around,” to be pulled in every direction at once. Its only New Testament use is here, in the imperfect: Martha “was being distracted” (v. 40). Then Jesus names two more strands: she is “worried” — *merimnaō* (G3309), the anxious care of 12:22–26 (“do not worry about your life”) — and “bothered” (*thorybazō*, stirred up, in an uproar). Spurgeon: “Martha’s fault, then, was that she grew cumbered.”

μερίς

MERIS · “PART, PORTION” · G3310

A share or allotted portion. “Mary has chosen the good part” (v. 42) — the dinner-table picture fits: Martha is preparing many dishes, and Mary has taken the best portion of all. Paul uses the word for the saints’ share in their inheritance (Colossians 1:12). The Psalms call the LORD Himself the portion of His people. And this portion “shall not be taken away from her.”

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik is fair to Martha: “Martha did nothing wrong in working hard for Jesus – that was good.” The trouble was inside her: “Martha’s real problem wasn’t Mary; it was Martha.” Nor was Mary idle: “It wasn’t that Mary was lazy – she prepared as well as Martha, but Mary also sat at Jesus’ feet.” And the one thing? “Mary’s *good part* was her simple devotion to Jesus, loving Him by listening to His word.”

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew’s

Sproul’s “Martha & Mary” (8 Sept 2013) insists that “Jesus was not saying that serving the way Martha had been serving was a bad thing to do.” “This was not a contrast, but a comparative analysis”: service is good, sitting at His feet is better. And Mary was not making small talk — “this was not chit-chat.” “She was conversing with the Son of God.” Sproul ties it to the church’s devotion to the apostles’ teaching and to faithful worship and study: “we need to have our souls fed,” for “Until we get the mind of Christ, we will never begin to live like Christ.”

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon’s “Cumbered With Much Serving” (No. 3163) is equally careful: “Her fault was not that she served.” “Martha’s fault, then, was that she grew cumbered.” “She overrode her union with Christ by her service of Christ—and herein was the mischief.” With the Lord in her house, “She was losing what she could not get at any other time.” He comforts busy workers — the work is God’s, and fretting changes nothing — and then sums it up: “Communion with Christ is the most precious thing!” “Serve the Master, but do not break your fellowship.”

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry draws the line in one sentence: "Care is good and duty; but cumber is sin and folly." Martha's busyness became a snare because it crowded out the Lord: "Worldly business is then a snare to us when it hinders us from serving God." Mary chose what no one could take from her, and Henry names it plainly: "Serious godliness is a needful thing, it is the one thing needful."

VI
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

From the dragon's fall to the book of life, and the love that keeps the whole Law

"Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued."

DANIEL 12:1

"And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."

REVELATION 12:9

"and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life."

REVELATION 21:27

"And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.""

MATTHEW 22:37–40

"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,"

MATTHEW 5:44

"If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen."

1 JOHN 4:20

> *“Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.””*
>
> JOHN 6:35

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik ties verse 18 to the rest of Scripture: Satan’s fall was real judgment, “though not complete judgment, which still awaits” — the final defeat Revelation describes.

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers, one chapter. Guzik walks the text and keeps the details straight; Sproul presses the doctrine — God's sovereignty in the harvest and in revelation, the law that drives us to grace; Spurgeon preaches to the heart of the worker and the seeker; Henry draws counsel and, in the parable, a picture of Christ. They differ on how far to read Jesus into the Good Samaritan, and they agree that joy in grace outranks joy in success, and that sitting at His feet comes first.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · The seventy sent	Need is opportunity; pray, then go and answer your own prayers.	God needs no one to reap; only God gives the increase; degrees of judgment.	His Master is coming after him; don't stop and argue; rejection is the crowning sin.	Deep concern for souls; good ministers wish for more good ministers.
II · Names in heaven	Not from heaven but like lightning; don't get intoxicated by success.	Satan's power fell; your name is in the Book of Life or not.	Grace without talent saves; joy from faith, not from sight.	Saving graces outrank spiritual gifts; victory is Christ's power.
III · Jesus rejoices	The only time the Gospels say He rejoiced; God uses the weak.	Hidden and revealed — hard doctrine, pure grace, nothing to boast in.	God hates conceit, not ignorance; Christ rejoices in every sovereign act.	The gospel's progress gladdens Christ; apostles not fetched from schools.
IV · The good Samaritan	Excuses, not reasons; my neighbor is the need in front of me.	Law before grace; universal neighborhood, not universal brotherhood.	Near to God but not like Him; Christ did better, our case was worse.	We were the traveller; the blessed Jesus is that good Samaritan.
V · Martha and Mary	Martha's problem was Martha; Mary's part was listening to His word.	A comparison, not a contrast; souls must be fed.	Not that she served, but that she grew cumbered; keep fellowship.	Care is duty, cumber is sin; godliness is the one thing needful.

LUKE 10:1–42 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **Pray, then be the answer.** "Beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers" (v2) — and then "Go" (v3). Guzik: "God would use them to answer their own prayers." GUZIK
- **Sent men carry the Sender.** *Apostellō* frames verses 1–16: "the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me" (v16). THE GREEK
- **Rejecting light is the heaviest sin.** Sodom, Tyre and Sidon will fare better than Capernaum (vv12–15). Spurgeon: "Hearing and rejecting the gospel is the crowning sin of all." SPURGEON
- **Satan fell like lightning.** Not necessarily "from heaven," Guzik says, but suddenly and decisively — real judgment, "though not complete judgment, which still awaits." GUZIK
- **Grace outranks gifts.** "Do not rejoice in this … but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven" (v20). Henry: "Saving graces are more to be rejoiced in than spiritual gifts." HENRY
- **The only time He is said to rejoice.** Guzik and Spurgeon both note it: Jesus exults in the Spirit because the Father reveals Himself to "infants" (v21). SPURGEON
- **Grace hides and reveals.** Sproul: "Jesus praised and thanked God, not only for revealing the truth to some, but for concealing it from others" — and so no one can boast. SPROUL

- **The law drives us to grace.** The lawyer answered "correctly" (v28) and then tried to shrink the command. Sproul: "You cannot understand grace if you do not understand the law." SPROUL
- **Compassion has verbs.** *Splanchnizomai* (v33) — and then came, bandaged, poured, put, brought, took care, paid, promised. "True compassion goes far beyond feelings" (Sproul). THE GREEK
- **Service can crowd out the Savior.** Spurgeon: "Her fault was not that she served." Henry: "Care is good and duty; but cumber is sin and folly." Only one thing is necessary (v42). THE TEXT

† Questions for the Table

1 **Jesus told the seventy to pray for laborers and then sent them (vv2–3). Who is the one person I have been praying would hear about Jesus — and what would it look like for me to be the answer to that prayer?**

God would use them to answer their own prayers (Guzik).

10:2-3; Matt 9:37-38

2 **Jesus said it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for the towns that saw His miracles and did not repent. What have I seen God do that still has not changed the way I live?**

It is good to be made sensible of our advantages and opportunities (Henry).

10:12-15

3 **What do I rejoice in most — what God does through me, or that my name is written in heaven? How would my week look different if it were the second?**

Grace without talent will save (Spurgeon).

10:17-20; Rev 21:27

4 **Jesus thanked the Father for revealing these things to "infants." Where does my pride or my need to look smart keep me from receiving what God wants to show me?**

It is not ignorance which God loves, but conceit that he hates (Spurgeon).

10:21-24; 1 Cor 1:27-29

5 **Like the lawyer, where am I trying to make "neighbor" small enough to be manageable? Who is the man on my road I keep passing on the other side?**

My neighbor is the one with a need right in front of me (Guzik).

10:29-37; 1 John 4:20

6 **Am I more like Martha or Mary this week? What would it take for me to sit at Jesus' feet before I start serving?**

Serve the Master, but do not break your fellowship (Spurgeon).

10:38-42; Ps 27:4

Luke 10 sends us out and sits us down. Jesus sends laborers into a plentiful harvest, tells them their names in heaven matter more than their victories, and shows a lawyer what a neighbor does on a lonely road. Then He says the one thing necessary is to sit at His feet and listen — because only the man who has been loved there can go and do the same.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) completed his *Commentary* himself through the Gospels and Acts. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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