

## Media Notes

We will recognize new members and say the Apostles' Creed as a responsive reading before the Joys and Concerns.

There are several scripture verses close together near the beginning of the sermon and one near the end.



## Key Questions, Metadata and Outline

### ***What is this sermon about?***

This sermon is about the ways that God invites us to love and show compassion.

### ***Why is this sermon important?***

This sermon is important because we too often limit the love and compassion which we show for other people.

### ***What is the context of this sermon?***

This sermon is the second to last in the Today worship series. It is preached on my 34th birthday.

### ***What are the next action steps?***

Then, as we are healed by God's love, our next steps are to share this love with others by making compassion an action and caring for anyone who is in need.

### ***What is the good news (bottom line)?***

The good news is that God's love is an action and knows no boundaries.

## Metadata

1. Topic(s)
  1. Compassion, Love
2. Sermon Books of the Bible
  1. Luke
3. Series
  1. Today
4. Speaker
  1. Andrew Conard
5. Tags

4th Sunday after the Epiphany [Green]  
Today - I will show compassion.  
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado  
Text Online at <http://j.mp/1y7R5jf>

February 1, 2015  
Luke 10:25-37  
Preaching Target Word Count: 2,447  
Video is not available online

1. Compassion, love, action, forgiveness, boundaries, forever, eternal life, God, neighbor

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Call to Action

Invitation

Closing Prayer

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## Luke 10:25-37, CEB

25 A legal expert stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to gain eternal life?”

26 Jesus replied, “What is written in the Law? How do you interpret it?”

27 He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

28 Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.”

29 But the legal expert wanted to prove that he was right, so he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

30 Jesus replied, “A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. 31 Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. 32 Likewise, a Levite came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. 33 A Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. 34 The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day, he took two full days’ worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, ‘Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.’ 36 What do you think? Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?”

37 Then the legal expert said, “The one who demonstrated mercy toward him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

## Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

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## Introduction

### Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

\*\*\* Start Sermon Timer \*\*\*

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## Opening Story - Super Bowl XLIX

### **Pain is temporary. Glory is forever.**

Have you ever heard the phrase “Pain is temporary. Glory is forever.”?

We most often hear this phrase associated with sports. It is designed to be motivational and help players move past the pain they may be experiencing at the moment by remembering that the glory of winning a game or championship will last a long time.

Who knows?

That phrase might even come up in the locker rooms of the New England Patriots and Seattle Seahawks as they prepare to play Super Bowl XLIX (49) tonight.

### **Compassion**

There are a lot of things that might be said in the locker room or take place on the field at the Super Bowl, but one of the things which we would not expect to see is compassion.

You can almost hear a sports announcer say:

“They have to have a great game for their team to win.”<sup>1</sup>

Or, maybe...

“Defense wins championships.”<sup>2</sup>

What you don't hear is this:

They have to have great compassion for their team to win.

Compassion wins championships.

Pete Carroll and Bill Belichick are probably not going to tell their players that they need to show compassion for the other team.

### **Sermon Outline**

These two themes are addressed in the scripture and they are where we turn our attention for the sermon.

How do I get something that lasts forever?

To whom, do I need to show compassion?

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<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "List of sports clichés," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List\\_of\\_sports\\_clich%C3%A9s&oldid=606660352](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List_of_sports_clich%C3%A9s&oldid=606660352) (accessed January 31, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "List of sports clichés," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List\\_of\\_sports\\_clich%C3%A9s&oldid=606660352](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List_of_sports_clich%C3%A9s&oldid=606660352) (accessed January 31, 2015).

## Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

So, I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes.

Every Sunday, it is my hope that at some time during the worship service, you will feel that God is speaking directly to you.

Listen for something that will help you be a disciple of Jesus Christ who seeks to worship, grow, give, serve and share your faith.

Write these things down.

Your bulletin is designed to be a tool to help you grow in your faith.

Take it home so that you will be able to:

- reflect on what you heard today,
- pray for those who are in need of prayer and
- prepare for next week by reading scripture before you come to worship.

### **Transition**

Will you pray with me?

### **Prayer**

O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

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## How do I get something that lasts forever?

### **Jesus and the Legal Expert**

The legal expert in the scripture passage from Luke, asks a question to Jesus: "What must I do to gain eternal life?"

How do I get something that lasts forever?

What do I have to do?

Instead of providing an answer, Jesus turns the question back to him in Luke 10:26-27:

"Jesus replied, "What is written in the Law? How do you interpret it?"

He responded, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself."<sup>3</sup>

The legal expert quotes the Hebrew Bible.

First from Deuteronomy 6:5

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<sup>3</sup> Luke 10:26-27, CEB.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your being, and all your strength.”<sup>4</sup>

This was part of the passage of scripture known as the Shema, which faithful Jews repeated twice a day.<sup>5</sup>

He also includes the passage from Leviticus 19:18:

“You must not take revenge nor hold a grudge against any of your people; instead, you must love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.”<sup>6</sup>

When Jesus hears this he gives a pretty short answer.

Jesus says, “You got it!”

“Do this and you will live.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Illustration: Considering Eternal Life**

Eternal life is not something we might think about every day.

It might seem difficult to consider what eternity might be like.

Yet there are times and places when the question “What must I do to gain eternal life?” is right at the front of our mind.

- At a funeral service of death and resurrection for a family member or friend
- Lying in a hospital bed waiting for surgery or treatment

Even outside times like that, the answer to this question makes a difference.

### **Transition**

In this case, Jesus says that the legal expert has right answer.

More often, Jesus followers don't get it.

We don't understand, don't have the right answer or our assumptions about the purpose of our lives are turned upside down by God's love for us in Jesus Christ.

So let's take a closer look at the response which the legal expert gives.

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## **The Great Commandment**

We know this answer – to love God and love neighbor – as the Great Commandment. In the gospel according to Matthew and Mark, these words are given by Jesus in response to the question: “Which is the greatest commandment?”

Love God.

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<sup>4</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5, CEB.

<sup>5</sup> Leander E. Keck, ed., *Luke*, vol. IX of *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002, 227).

<sup>6</sup> Leviticus 19:18, CEB.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 10:28b, CEB.



Love Neighbor.

## Love God

The importance of the command to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength is that “God’s claim on us reaches to every area of our experience,

- to our innermost being (heart);
- our lives—what gives us our individual identity (soul);
- our energy, strength, resolve, and resources (might); and
- our understanding and intellectual capacities (mind).

No part of ourselves is to be withheld from God.”<sup>8</sup>

## Love Neighbor

Love of neighbor is not separate from love of God.

The author of 1 John reminds us that “this is how the love of God is revealed to us: God has sent his only Son into the world so that we can live through him. ... if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other. ... We love because God first loved us.”<sup>9</sup>

We also see that we are expected to love ourselves. These three go together:

Love God.

Love neighbor.

Love self.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, spoke about perfect love of God and neighbor as the goal of the Christian life. This is where are journey of worship, growing, giving, serving and sharing is taking us—toward perfect love of God and neighbor.

## Transition

So, “What must I do to gain eternal life?”

Love God.

Love Neighbor.

That’s it, right? Easy enough.

We know the right answer.

Not quite...

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<sup>8</sup> Leander E. Keck, ed., *Luke*, vol. IX of *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002, 227.

<sup>9</sup> 1 John 4:9, 11, 19 CEB

## Illustration: Driver's License Test

Do you remember when you first got your driver's license? I was living in Salina at the time and I decided not to take Driver's Ed. It wasn't offered during the school year and it did not work in my schedule that summer.

I studied the book hard and practiced in the school parking lot with my parents when no one was there. Then I went in to take the test. The written exam was first and I remember having a bit of a challenge on only a couple questions. For the most part, it was easy. I knew, in my head, all the answers.

Then, you go out and take the actual driving test.

This would be a little bit more difficult.

I focused hard and did everything that I practiced and was going well, until the instructor told me that the next thing would be to parallel park between a set of cones. I had practiced this a little bit, but not too hard. There wasn't a place in town where I would need to parallel park. Why did I have to demonstrate this to pass the test?

It took me a couple times, but I was able to get it done.

I received my license.

## Transition

Like that exam, it is not enough to know all the right answers in our faith. We have to put into practice.

It is one thing to know that I am to love God and neighbor.

It is another thing to actually do it.

This is where the scripture takes us next.

The legal expert pushes Jesus and asks, "And who is my neighbor?"<sup>10</sup>  
To whom, do I need to show compassion?

In response to this question, Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan.

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## The Good Samaritan

"The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was notoriously dangerous. It descended nearly 3,300 feet in 17 miles. The road ran through narrow passes at points, and the terrain offered easy hiding for the bandits who terrorized travelers. This unfortunate man had been stripped, beaten, and left for dead."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Luke 20:29b, CEB.

<sup>11</sup> Leander E. Keck, ed., *Luke*, vol. IX of *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 229.

A priest passes by.

A Levite passes by.

Both might have been expected to stop and help, but they see the man by the side of the road and pass by on the other side. Then we read this in Luke 10:33-35

“A Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day, he took two full days’ worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, ‘Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.’”

Samaritans were on the outside of society and considered to be unclean.

Yet, that day, the Samaritan was moved with compassion and took action.

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## Love is an action

### We are the man on the side of the road

We like to imagine ourselves as the Good Samaritan in the story.

Yet, the truth is, we are more like the man on the side of the road.

We mess up and turn away from God and sometimes end up spiritually half-dead along the side of the road of life.

### Good News

The good news is that God’s love is an action and knows no boundaries.

“...God shows his love for us, because while we were still sinners Christ died for us.”<sup>12</sup>

“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won’t perish [by the side of the road] but will have eternal life. God didn’t send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him.”<sup>13</sup>

God sees us and is moved with compassion.

God is ready to pick us up, heal our wounds and set us back on the path.

### Call to Action

Then, as we are healed by God’s love, our next steps are to share this love with others by making compassion an action and caring for anyone who is in need.

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<sup>12</sup> Romans 5:8, CEB.

<sup>13</sup> John 3:16-17, CEB.

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## Invitation

So, today, whether you feel more like the Samaritan or more like the man on the side of the road, know that God shows compassion for us.

We can show compassion, love God and love our neighbor, because of God's great love in action through Jesus Christ.

Will you pray with me?

## Closing Prayer

O God, we confess that we are often like the man on the side of the road – beaten down, bruised and spiritually lifeless.

I am sorry for the ways that I have contributed to this truth of my life.

Forgive me.

O God, thank you for Jesus and for your compassion and love shown in his life, death and resurrection.

Send your Holy Spirit to pick us up, heal our wounds and set us back on the path to follow you all of our days.

In your holy name,

Amen.

	8:30 AM	11:00 AM
Sermon Time		