



**Session 11**  
**Spring 2016**  
**Primary**

# The good Samaritan

**LUKE 10:25-37**

## prepare



### PRAYER

*God who moved in with us as a neighbor, teach me to be the kind of neighbor whose help does not come as a surprise to others. Amen.*

### PURPOSE STATEMENT

To show care to strangers in need

### STORY SUMMARY

A lawyer asked Jesus how to receive life with God. Jesus asked what the law said. The lawyer said to love God and neighbor, and then asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus told a story about a robbed, wounded traveler. A priest and a Levite passed by without helping. But a Samaritan stopped, taking the man to an inn to recover, and paying his bill. Jesus told his listeners to go and do the same.

### teaching tips for primary

The term *Samaritan* calls for some explanation. If children have heard the word before, it is likely in the context of this story (in which the Samaritan is the hero) or in reference to a real-life passerby who stopped to help and is called a good Samaritan. Thus, from a child's perspective, helping is what Samaritans do! In order to grasp Jesus' point, children will need to understand how Jesus' Jewish listeners would have viewed the Samaritan's actions as extraordinary.

Decide which Explore activities you will do, and check Supplies and To do throughout the session to see what needs to be prepared.

# dig deeper

by Michael McKeever

## Who is my neighbor?

The story of the good Samaritan is probably the best-known parable in the Bible; however, it is rarely read in context. Just prior to this passage, a Samaritan village rejects Jesus and his messengers as they begin their journey to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the hero of this parable turns out to be a Samaritan who is also on a journey. As is often the case in Jesus' teaching in Luke, it is outsiders who model authentic discipleship.

The episode begins with an exchange between Jesus and a teacher of the law. The discussion has two main parts: a question concerning the requirements for eternal life and a question concerning who is one's neighbor. This kind of public conversation was not uncommon in Jewish culture. However, the lawyer's questions are likely a means of testing Jesus' credentials and outwitting him publicly to gain honor in the eyes of the crowd. Jesus' wisdom and mastery of the situation is evident as he shifts the focus of conversation from the lawyer's narrow self-interest to unbounded and enduring truth.

The lawyer's initial answer is not unique in Jewish thought, as evidenced in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. Loving one's neighbor as the fulfillment of the entire law is expressed in other Jewish writing as well. Though the Hebrew Scriptures referenced here typically use the term *neighbor* to refer to fellow Israelites, other passages also apply it to non-Israelites who live in Israel.

## A dangerous journey

The 3,000 ft / 900 m descent on the deserted stretch of road from Jerusalem to Jericho was a fitting locale for this mugging. This journey was dangerous for lone travelers because of robbers who took advantage of the rocks and caves that lined the road. The victim is the only person in the parable without any identifying attributes. His lack of clothing removes all religious or national identification and reduces his plight to that of common human need.

Some have argued that the actions of the priest and the Levite, while not commendable, might not be



unreasonable. Because of their temple duties, both priests and Levites were to avoid the impurity of touching a corpse. However, since they were traveling away from the temple, such concerns would not be paramount.

There has been a great deal of speculation about their motivations, but, in truth, we are not told why the priest and Levite failed to take action. What we do know is that the Samaritan took action because he was moved with *compassion*, a virtue that Luke uses to characterize Jesus in 7:13 and the father of the prodigal son in 15:20. Indeed, the Samaritan pauses on his own journey, risks his own safety, tends to the injured man, and

leaves enough money to provide care for several weeks, with an open commitment for more.

## Who acts like a neighbor?

It was not uncommon to illustrate a point by having an ordinary Jewish person surpass the priesthood by acting in exemplary fashion. Jesus, however, uses the example of a despised Samaritan as the one who embodies compassion. Samaritans were descendants of the mixed population that remained in northern Israel after the invasion by Assyria in 722 BCE. They opposed the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple and built their own temple. Jesus' audience would have thought of the Samaritan as the opposite of the priest or the Levite because of his racial impurity and religious unorthodoxy.

The real crux of the episode emerges when the lawyer attempts to justify himself. After quoting two of Scripture's most expansive love commands, the lawyer introduces a calculating question intending to establish limitations on love. But Jesus responds by proposing a different question. Instead of asking who *is* my neighbor—based upon race, religion, or nationality—he asks which one *acts* like a neighbor. The lawyer may not be able to bring himself to speak of the hero's race in his answer, and so he responds universally: "The one who showed mercy." This may have been Jesus' intention all along. To this Jesus responds, "Go and do likewise."

# gather

## supplies

- *Shine Songbook and CD*
- *Year Two Songbooks* (optional)
- CD player
- Candle and matches
- White fabric
- Paper hearts
- Pencils
- Bubbles (one container per child)
- Reusable adhesive putty (for Sudoku puzzles)
- Whiteboard, dry erase markers, eraser

## poster pack

- Bible memory poster (Isaiah 65)
- Sudoku puzzles

## to do

- Cut small hearts from colored paper, one for each child.

## media connections

- "The parable of the good Samaritan" animated video on Max7 website
- *The Cat in the Rhinestone Suit* by John Carter Cash (retelling of today's story with animals)
- *The Friendly Stranger* by Margaret Williams
- *Horton Hears a Who!* by Dr. Seuss

## BUILD COMMUNITY

Welcome children as they enter. Work on the Peace today sudoku puzzle together. Many children connect well with others if there is a small project to focus on as they get started in their time together.

## WORSHIP TOGETHER

Give a heart-shaped piece of paper to each child. Children can write their names on the hearts. As they write, spread a piece of white fabric in front of you and place a candle on it.

Light the candle and invite children to place their hearts around the candle, saying:

*I come to worship God with all my heart.*

Welcome each child by name and offer the words:

**Peace be with you.**

Sing "The Jesus Way," track 11 on the Shine CD and page 18 in the *Year Two Songbook*.

Pray:

**God, the world has a lot of needs.**

*(Name some needs that you know of in the church community.)*

**Show us how to help you meet the needs we see around us. Amen.**

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Take the group outside if possible. Pass out containers of bubbles. Tell children they can use blowing bubbles as a way to pray for others. Have children blow a bubble and think about a friend. They should pray for that person as long as the bubble lasts (and may blow another bubble if desired). After the bubbles have burst, tell the group to blow another bubble and pray for a "neighbor." Finally, they can blow a bubble and pray for a "stranger"—a person or group of people whom they do not know well but who might need God's help.

### Bible memory

Cover the Bible memory poster and write the verse on a whiteboard. Invite a child to erase a few key words; then say the verse together. Have someone else erase a few more words and say the verse again. Keep going until all the words are erased.

**The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.**

—Isaiah 65:25

# experience

## SHARE THE STORY

Show the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) part of your Bible. Then show the New Testament that has the stories of Jesus. Explain that our story today is from the New Testament. It is a story that Jesus told. Turn to Luke 10 in the Bible and leave the Bible open to that chapter.

Tell the story twice. Tell it once from page 222 in *Shine On*. Then divide the group into three sections and read the story in chorus from page 1 of the Primary leaflet.

Before reading either story say:

**Samaritans lived in a separate part of the land. Many people in Jesus' time looked down on Samaritans. They didn't expect them to do anything good. Priests and Levites worked in the temple. They were the leaders. They should have been the best at helping people. But were they?**

## WONDER AND REFLECT

Ponder the story together using these and other wondering questions.

- Which of the people was a good neighbor to the hurt traveler?
- I wonder who you would be in this story.
- I wonder why some people didn't stop to help.
- I wonder if the priest and Levite thought about the hurt man later.
- Samaritans were looked down on and disliked. I wonder why Jesus made a Samaritan the hero.

## PEACE NOTES

Jesus' story helps us to see that we can show God's love to people who are hurting. We can help them feel better. Read the story on page 2 of the Primary leaflet. Children can then draw things on the blanket that they would like to share. In the word search, they can search for words that show the good Samaritan's kind of peacemaking.



## The good Samaritan

**Luke 10:25–37**

## supplies

- Bible
- *Shine On: A Story Bible*
- Primary leaflets
- Pencils

# explore

## CREATE

Children will create good Samaritan finger puppets from the figures on page 94. Cut them out ahead of time, using a utility knife to cut the finger holes. Children can use colored pencils to add color and details. Children can then work together to create a finger puppet drama. They may want to add details or plot changes to the story. Provide plastic bags for finger puppet sets to be taken home.

### supplies

- Good Samaritan finger puppets (from Additional resources, one set per child)
- Scissors
- Utility knife
- Colored pencils
- Plastic bags

### other ideas

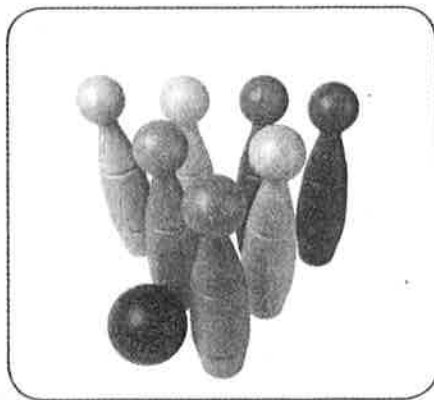
- Put together hygiene kits for a relief organization.
- Have a relay race where teams wrap different body parts of one of their players in cloth bandages.

## MOVE

Play “Bowl for kindness.” Use a toy bowling set if you have one. Otherwise, use ten empty soda pop bottles (any size) and a small playground ball. Copy and cut out the Kindness strips on page 91. Tape one strip to each bowling pin or soda bottle. Set the bottles in bowling formation at one end of the room. Children roll a ball from one side of the room to the other and try to knock down the pins. If they knock down four or more they can choose to act out the message on one of the pins. Others try to guess what the action is.

### supplies

- Kindness strips (from Additional resources)
- Tape
- Toy bowling set, or soda pop bottles and playground ball



## RETELL

Play the “Good Samaritan” game using the Three-in-one game board in the poster pack. Cut apart the game cards if you did not do so in session 10. Instructions for playing are on the back of the poster pack cover. This is a sequence game. Check the order of events with *Shine On* page 222.

### supplies

- *Shine On: A Story Bible*
- Three-in-one game board (from poster pack)
- Good Samaritan cards (with the game board or set aside in a plastic bag in session 10)
- “Three-in-one game board” instructions (back of poster pack cover)
- Die
- Game tokens (one unique button, bead, or stone per child)

## LEAFLET

Children will make Good Samaritan booklets using pages 3 and 4 of the leaflet. Help children cut out and organize the pages. Staple them in the middle. Children will add their own drawing on page 8 of the booklet.

### supplies

- Primary leaflets
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Pencils, colored pencils

# bless

## PRAY

Play “Óyenos, mi Dios,” track 15 on the Shine CD; page 24 in the *Year Two Songbook*. Stand in a circle and invite volunteers to name prayer requests. In between each request, sing a line or two of the song. Close by asking God to help you all watch for opportunities to be “good Samaritans” this week.

## SEND

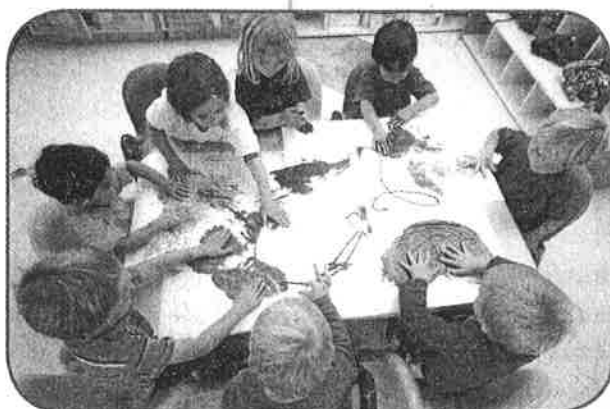
Sing this sending song together to the tune of “Frère Jacques.”

**Jesus blesses, Jesus blesses,  
gives us peace, gives us peace.  
Peace be unto you,  
peace be unto you.  
Be at peace, be at peace.**

Make sure to send leaflets and Good Samaritan finger puppets home with the children.

## supplies

- Primary leaflets
- *Shine Songbook and CD*
- *Year Two Songbooks* (optional)
- CD player
- Good Samaritan finger puppets (from Create)



*Teaching children is always rewarding, but teaching them about our Creator is infinitely more so. Helping shape them into giving, caring persons, sharing with them the hope they can have, showing them how unselfishly loving others can change hearts and open others to God's love, watching them grow as Christians and understand how to be brave and strong in our world—that is why I love it!*

—Bekah Scott  
Kingwood, Texas

## leader's closing prayer

*Loving God, we teach our children to be wary of strangers for their own safety. Don't let that get in the way of their learning to be kind to others. Provide them with opportunities to help people they don't know, and surround them with adults who will model compassion. Amen.*