

CAPITOL STUDIES

MAY 7, 2025 • WEEK 17



LUKE FOR LEGISLATORS

Contents

Introduction	2
Ambassadors	2
Neighbors	4
Worshippers	6
Conclusion	7
About Capitol Studies	8



Theme Verse

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man has come to **seek** and to **save** that which was **lost**.



What is the Greatest Commandment?



AMY CARMICHAEL WENT TO INDIA where, in the name of Christ, she took in many homeless and unwanted children. One prospective donor made it clear that his money would go for evangelistic work, not for buildings. Amy sighed, “Well, one can’t save and then pitchfork souls into heaven. There are times when I heartily wish we could. And as for buildings, souls (in India, at least) are more or less securely fastened into bodies. Bodies can’t be left to lie about in the open, and as you can’t get the souls out and deal with them separately, you have to take them both together.”¹ How should a Christian determine what is the most important thing to do?

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INTRODUCTION

“The three scenes in Luke 10 illustrate the threefold ministry of every Christian believer. To begin with, we are the Lord’s *ambassadors*, sent to represent Him in this world (Luke 10:1–24). We are also *neighbors*, looking for opportunities to show mercy in the name of Christ (Luke 10:25–37). But at the heart of all our ministry is devotion to Christ, so we must be *worshippers* who take time to listen to His Word and commune with Him (Luke 10:38–42).”²

I. AMBASSADORS

Luke 10:1-3

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. ²And 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. ³Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.”³

In Luke 9, Jesus sent out his 12 disciples to share the good news of the kingdom of God and also to heal. The disciples’ ministry at that time was to people in Galilee. In Luke 10, Jesus sent out 70 men who were not “apostles,” but they *were* sent by Jesus, represented Jesus, and prepared the way for Jesus in each of the towns and places in Judea, where Jesus would be going. They were Jesus’ ambassadors. He gave similar instructions to both groups of His “ambassadors.” Jesus knew that they would face adversity as they strived to bring in “the harvest,” but He wanted them to face it with meekness and gentleness.

Luke 10:4-9

Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way. ⁵Whatever house you enter, first say, “Peace be to this house.” ⁶If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay 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. ⁸Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; ⁹and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, “The kingdom of God has come near to you.”

They were not to carry baggage of any kind. They were not to greet anyone. “A greeting in that culture was an elaborate ceremony, involving many formalities, perhaps even a meal, and long delays. A person on an extremely urgent mission could be excused from such formalities without being thought rude. *Everything in Jesus’ instructions speaks of the shortness of time and the great urgency of the task.*”⁴ Once they were in the city, the apostles were to stay put, to be content with their meals and lodging and not worry about being an imposition because they were representing the kingdom of God. How does this relate to us as ambassadors for Christ?



Luke 10:10-16

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.” ¹²I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city. ¹³Woe 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. ¹⁴But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades! ¹⁶The 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.

The preaching of the Kingdom of God was to be the main thing, regardless of the reception. It was common for Jewish people to shake dust off their feet in disgust after they had been in Gentile regions. Sodom and Gomorrah’s judgment was swift and thorough. The fact that Jesus said it would be more tolerable for some cities than others seems to indicate that there will be degrees of punishment in hell. Even Capernaum, the base for Jesus’ early ministry, was condemned for rejecting Jesus. “[T]here is no record that the people of that city ever mocked or ridiculed Jesus, ran Him out of town, or threatened His life. Yet the sin of that city—indifference to Christ—was worse than Sodom’s gross wickedness.”⁵ Rejecting Christ’s servant was (and is) the same as rejecting Christ, which is the same as rejecting God the Father.

Luke 10:17-20

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

When the seventy joyfully shared the fact that even demons were subject to them, Jesus reminded them that He had seen Satan cast out of heaven fast as lightning, and it was Jesus’ power and protection that had allowed them to subdue the demonic powers. It was more important to Him, and them, that their names were recorded in heaven. “(The verb, [*recorded*], means ‘they have been written and they stand written.’ It is a statement of assurance. See Phil. 4:3; Rev. 20:12-15). As wonderful as their miracles were, the greatest miracle of all is still the salvation of a lost soul. The Greek word translated ‘written’ means ‘to inscribe formally and solemnly.’ It was used for the signing of a will, a marriage document, or a peace treaty, and also for the enrolling of a citizen. The perfect tense in the Greek means ‘it stands written.’”⁶

Luke 10:21-24

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. ²²All 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.” ²³Turning to the disciples, He said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, ²⁴for 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.”

“There is sarcasm in these words as the Jewish leaders are ironically identified as wise and [intelligent] and followers of Christ as the infants (cf. Matt. 18:3-10)—yet God has revealed to those followers the truth of the Messiah [the Son] and His gospel.”⁷ The disciples were blessed that, in the sovereignty of God, they were chosen to be in the group that saw and heard firsthand the works and words of Jesus.

II. NEIGHBORS

Luke 10:25-27

And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” ²⁷And 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.”

This man asked Jesus the question to which every person in this world wants the answer: “How can I have eternal life?” Notice that Jesus took the lawyer back to the Law, which is where we all need to go. Keeping the Law does not save anyone. Our failure to keep it, however, shows us our need to be saved. “There can be no real conversion without conviction, and the Law is what God uses to convict sinners (Rom. 3:20).”⁸ In response to Jesus’ question, the lawyer repeated the *Shema* (Deut. 6:4-5). Two times each day, the Jewish people repeated this: “Hear, O Israel! The LORD (Yahweh) is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” Here’s how Bruce Hurt describes the “with all” phrases as the Greeks of Luke’s time would have known them:

- **With all your heart** (*kardia*) – The heart, not only as the seat of the affections, but as the centre of our complex being—physical, moral, spiritual, and intellectual.
- **With all your soul** (*psuche*) – Soul is often used in the New Testament in its original meaning of life. (See Matt. 2:20; 20:28; Acts 20:10; Rom. 11:3; John 10:11.) Hence, as an emphatic designation of the man himself.
- **With all your mind** (*dianoia*) – The faculty of thought: understanding, especially the moral understanding.
- **With all your strength** (*ischus*) refers to possession of qualities required to do something or to get something done. A muscular man’s big muscles display his might, even if he doesn’t use them. God was to be loved with the entire being.⁹



This lawyer also included the command from Leviticus 19:18, “[Y]ou shall love your neighbor as yourself.” None of us have much difficulty loving ourselves, but loving our neighbors in the same way is often another story. “Love of God means love of man.... We must first be right with God, or we never can be right with man. If we begin by endeavouring to get right with our neighbour, we shall fail. But if we begin by establishing right relations with God, according to the conditions which He Himself has laid down, ...our whole life is elevated and all social relationships are redeemed from error, and our neighbour is loved with a lofty and pure charity.”¹⁰

Luke 10:28-29

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?”

Jesus commended the man for his answer and charged him to do all that he had just said. “The lawyer [wanting to justify himself] wanted to discuss ‘neighbor’ in a general way, but Jesus forced him to consider a specific man in need. How easy it is for us to talk about abstract ideals and fail to help solve concrete problems. We can discuss things like ‘poverty’ and ‘job opportunities’ and yet never personally help feed a hungry family or help somebody find a job.”¹¹

Luke 10:30-36

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.”

Jesus used the parable of the Good Samaritan to illustrate the kind of love one should have for his neighbor. A Jewish traveler following the treacherous road from Jerusalem to Jericho was brutally attacked by thieves who basically took all that he had and then left him for dead. Traveling the same road were a priest and a Levite, religious people who facilitated worship in the temple. When they saw the half-dead man, they immediately got as far away as they could and continued their travel. A Samaritan followed. Samaritans typically avoided any interaction with Jews, but this Samaritan was moved with compassion. He used what he had to ease the hurt of the broken man. He gave of himself to see that the wounded man would be restored to health, even committing himself to continued follow-up. When Jesus asked the lawyer who proved to be





a neighbor, the answer was obvious: “The one who showed mercy.” Jesus again challenged him to do likewise.

“It all depends on your outlook. To the thieves, this traveling Jew was a victim to exploit, so they attacked him. To the priest and Levite, he was a nuisance to avoid, so they ignored him. But to the Samaritan, he was a neighbor to love and help, so he took care of him. What Jesus said to the lawyer, He says to us: ‘Go and *keep on doing it* likewise’ (literal translation). *The Samaritan’s one deed of mercy has inspired sacrificial ministry all over the world.*”¹² What can we use from the Samaritan’s example to help us be better “neighbors”?

III. WORSHIPERS

Luke 10:38-39

Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. ³⁹She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord’s feet, listening to His word.

Jesus and his disciples were traveling to Bethany (cf. John 11:1). Martha, the quintessential hostess, welcomed Jesus to the home she shared with her brother Lazarus and sister Mary. This Mary can be seen three times in the Gospels. Every time she is at the feet of Jesus. Here, Luke tells us she *sat* at Jesus’ feet listening to Him. In John 11:32, she *fell* at Jesus’ feet, weeping because of the death of her brother. Then in John 12:3, she humbly *anointed* Jesus’ feet with oil.

Luke 10:40-42

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.” ⁴¹But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; ⁴²but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

Martha’s desire to provide the perfect meal for Jesus caused her to become very stressed. This made her upset and particularly critical of Mary, and Jesus, because of their lack of help in preparation. Her thought was only of herself. “Whenever we criticize others and pity ourselves because we feel overworked, we had better take time to examine our lives. Perhaps in all of our busyness, we have been ignoring the Lord. Martha’s problem was not that she had too much work to do, but that she allowed her work to distract her and pull her apart. If serving Christ makes us difficult to live with, then something is terribly wrong with our service!”¹³

Can you hear the gentleness in Jesus’ voice as He says, “Martha, Martha”? Contrary to Martha’s thinking, Jesus did care and wanted to help her. His reminder is one that we often need to hear: “You are worried about things that don’t really matter. There is one necessary thing. Come. Spend time with Me.” “The most important part of the Christian life is the part that only God sees. Unless we meet Christ personally and privately each day, we will soon end up like Martha: busy



but not blessed.”¹⁴ “[W]hat we do with Christ is far more important than what we do for Christ.”¹⁵

It does appear that this talk with Jesus instigated change in Martha’s heart, for we read in John 12 that she later made a feast for Jesus, His disciples, her sister, and her brother. This time there is no indication of any bitterness or complaint.

“Mary and Martha are often contrasted as though each believer must make a choice: be a worker like Martha or a worshiper like Mary. Certainly our personalities and gifts are different, but that does not mean that the Christian life is an either/or situation. Charles Wesley said it perfectly in one of his hymns: ‘Faithful to my Lord’s commands, I still would choose the better part; Serve with careful Martha’s hands, and loving Mary’s heart.’ It seems evident that the Lord wants each of us to imitate Mary in our worship and Martha in our work. Blessed are the balanced!”¹⁶

“Worship is at the heart of all that we are and all that we do in the Christian life. It is important that we be busy ambassadors, taking the message of the Gospel to lost souls. It is also essential to be merciful Samaritans, seeking to help exploited and hurting people who need God’s mercy. But before we can represent Christ as we should, or imitate Him in our caring ministry, we must spend time with Him and learn from Him. We must ‘take time to be holy.’”¹⁷

CONCLUSION

Can we truly love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength? “[I]n the natural state of man, it is impossible. There is no greater evidence of the inability of man to obey God’s Law than this one commandment. No human being with a fallen nature can possibly love God with *all* his heart, soul, and strength 24 hours a day. It’s humanly impossible. But to disobey any commandment of God is sin. Therefore, even without considering the sins we commit daily, we are all condemned by our inability to fulfill this one commandment.... Without the cleansing of sin that He provides, and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit who lives in the hearts of the redeemed, loving God [and man] to any degree is impossible.”¹⁸ If you have not received the cleansing of sin that can only come through Jesus, today is the day for you to do that. Ask Jesus to forgive your sin and cleanse your heart. He’s waiting and wanting to do just that.

Chaplain Arin Hess



FOOTNOTES

1. Elisabeth Elliot, *A Chance to Die*, Revell, pg. 247.
2. Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Volume 1, Victor Books, 1996, pg. 209.
3. All Scripture quotations, unless noted, are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, 1995 Update.
4. John MacArthur, *MacArthur Study Bible*, pg. 1534.
5. *Ibid.*, pg. 1412.
6. Wiersbe, pg. 211.
7. MacArthur, pg. 1412.
8. Wiersbe, pg. 211.
9. Bruce Hurt, "Luke 10 Commentary," <https://www.preceptaustin.org/luke-10-commentary>.
10. Joseph Parker, "Inheriting Eternal Life," https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/parker/inheriting_eternal_life.htm.
11. Wiersbe, pg. 212.
12. *Ibid.*, pg. 213.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. Hurt, "Luke 10 Commentary."
16. Wiersbe, pg. 213.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Hurt, "Luke 10 Commentary."



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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Meeting during the
109th Legislature's
First Session

SENATORS

6:45 – 7:45 A.M.
Wednesdays
Capitol Office #1004

STAFF

12:00 – 1:00 P.M.
Wednesdays
NE State Office Building
Morrill Room