

Published based on [Samaritan Grace -- Devotional](#)

Samaritan Grace -- Devotional

This is based on the story Jesus shared about the Samaritan who rescued the guy who had been robbed and beaten and left for dead.

What a powerful story it is! What makes it more compelling is the fact that Jesus awarded the starring role to a Samaritan. This was hard to swallow for his Jewish audience since the feelings toward the Samaritans ran so deep and were so critical.

We will pick up at verse 30 of Luke 10.

Luke 10:30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. (The next verses go on to describe how the Samaritan came along and cared for him and we will address this in a following post).

Jesus told this story in response to a lawyer's question as to who their neighbor was. We are not told anything particular about the man beaten other than he was in route from Jerusalem to Jericho. From this we can safely assume he was a Jewish man. While on his journey, he was attacked by a bunch of thugs.

- They stripped him naked
- They wounded him
- They left him to die

This is what thieves and thugs do. In one way or another, we all face occasions when we are confronted by thieves who desire to take what we have.

To spiritualize it, there is an enemy of our souls and he has cohorts who do his bidding. Just as the thieves planned their attack on the unwary traveler, these spiritual thieves do likewise. And there are also times when we make it easier for these thieves. We travel in dangerous territory. We take a route we should not take. At other times, we are right where we are supposed to be when the attack is sprung. In either case, the wounding is real.

When the Samaritan came along, he did not decide on whether or not to help the guy based on how the man ended up in the ditch. The story is about the heart of the Samaritan.

Note again, that the thieves stripped Him This is the nature of the thief. To strip us. To unclothe us. To expose us. He revels in leaving us exposed for the world to see. Jesus was hung naked between two thieves. He became our sin. He took upon himself all that sin would bring on us.

The enemy's purpose is to steal our covering from us.

- He wants to take a husband away from a wife or vice versa
- He wants to take a child away from a parent
- He wants to take us away from a spiritual father or mother
- He wants to take a pastor away from his flock

He strips us of our covering. The result - we are left unprotected from the elements. Parts of our lives that we would desire to remain private are put on public display. In every such situation, this exposure takes place because the person is in the enemy's territory.

Now there are usually two reasons that this would take place. The first is the person beaten is in the dark place where he should not be. The second is that he is walking through the shadows as he is walking God's path. The valley of the shadow of death so to speak. There have been times I have been beaten for each of these reasons, and most likely, so have you.

However, regardless of the reason behind the "Why it happened?" the man was wounded and needed help. Those who came aware of his situation had a choice to make. Would they become involved or not? Their decision was not based on *why* the man was there, but what they were going to do *since* he was there. We have a subtle way of making something inconvenient into something we consider a compromise.

Jesus told of two religious men who came by and decided not to help the hurting man. One was a priest. The priest were very concerned about personal holiness and being separated from anyone unclean. He served God. Yet it is obvious in the story Jesus tells that his intention was to reveal how the priesthood was missing the mark if they were not serving God in a way that would help their fellow man.

In today's culture, the Christian community rants and raves about how animals are given more rights and protection than human beings, particularly the unborn. We should be angered by this. Jesus also knew that even the Law gave men the license to get an ox out of the ditch when it otherwise might be unholy to do so on the Sabbath. Now there was a man, a human being, a person. A person with feelings and a future. A person who would gladly do it differently if he could take the trip over. A person who is hurting and bleeding and has suffered loss and in need of help.

His groans went unanswered by the priest who was likely on his way to "Church" to serve God. Doubtless when he arrived to do his temple service, he prayed his prayers, he lifted his hands, he made his offering to the Lord, he ministered to the other people who came where he was and could see him in his official role as priest. Yet, behind him in his journey earlier in the day, lay a man half dead who was severely wounded. He made the trade off because he may not have wanted to be late for "church" or he did not want to become unclean by touching this dirty person. His other responsibilities and plans were far more public and too important for him to risk loss by getting in the ditch and helping the wounded man. He saw the man and moved to the other side of the ditch in order to avoid a beckoning finger that might have bid him to come help. He dared not risk the accusing fingers of his religious leader buddies who would see him as engaging in an unclean activity by helping the man in the ditch. They all thought, "Leave him there; he got what he deserves for going through that area when he did."

Likewise the Levite came through. of course, the Levite was also from the priestly tribe of Levi. These guys were also students of the Law, the Word of God. This one came and saw and then passed by. We all choose to walk on one side of the road or the other. One side is filled with hurting and wounded people that will require sacrifice out of us. The other is away from the hurt on the way to "serve" God.

This Levite may have been on his way to teach a Bible class. He certainly would have been capable of it. It was his Levitical heritage. Yet, he became aware of the need of a wounded man, thought briefly about it and took off. He may have done a Bible study later that day on "loving your neighbor."

Since I am in a season of pruning and recovery, I am questioning a whole lot of what I have done and what I see done in the church today. It sure seems that like the religious leaders of Jesus time, we also can caught up in doing things only for the public value they offer. We will help if we can mileage out of it. Will it help our ministry grow by telling how many people we help? Will it make us look really in touch with God if we put it in the paper? We have big celebrations because we decided to do something that Jesus said we are to do all the time. We need a big SPANK on our butts instead of a big PAT on our backs. We are fooling ourselves when we only do things to be seen among men. I could have avoided the ditch had I chosen not to be a hypocrite and a betrayer. The enemy knows if he can get our feet to go where they should not go, he can find plenty of hands to strip us down and wound us and leave us for dead.

Question--In the eyes of God, will the Priest and Levite carry blame for their lack of response? We all need to beware! There are times, we will hear a cry. We will be positioned to see something God wants us to see. What will we do? I know of 27 orphans in a building in Honduras who need help right now. What will I do? I know there are many cries, but I am speaking about those that God positions you to hear and you know it. You hear, you come and you look and then you....

There are people all around hurting and wounded. The thieves work hard to expose them, strip them, beat them and leave them for dead. The goal of the enemy is for us all to die in a ditch somewhere----or to live on the

"sterile" side of the road serving God and busy with church stuff.

Jesus was willing to lay aside all his reputation to come get in the ditch with us. I will follow with further posts on this powerful story Jesus told. No, I am not being cynical. I am just throwing some truth around.

You can also find this article published on [Samaritan Grace -- Devotional](#), and on the tag pages [forgiveness](#), [good samaritan](#), [Grace](#), [Healing](#), [involved](#), [luke 10:30](#), [restoring](#).