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~ **The Man Who Was Left for Dead** ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read Luke 10:1-37.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

1. Read the text of the story.

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2.

Luke 10:1-37 NASB	Luke 10:1-37 NLT
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 <i>be</i> 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 <i>in protest</i> 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.” 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	The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit. ² These were his instructions to them: “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields. ³ Now go, and remember that I am sending you out as lambs among wolves. ⁴ Don’t take any money with you, nor a traveler’s bag, nor an extra pair of sandals. And don’t stop to greet anyone on the road. ⁵ “Whenever you enter someone’s home, first say, ‘May God’s peace be on this house.’ ⁶ If those who live there are peaceful, the blessing will stand; if they are not, the blessing will return to you. ⁷ Don’t move around from home to home. Stay in one place, eating and drinking what they provide. Don’t hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve their pay. ⁸ “If you enter a town and it welcomes you, eat whatever is set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick, and tell them, ‘The Kingdom of God is near you now.’ ¹⁰ But if a town refuses to welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹ ‘We wipe even the dust of your town from our feet to show that we have abandoned you to your fate. And know this—the Kingdom of God is near!’ ¹² I assure you, even wicked Sodom will be better off than such a town on judgment day. ¹³ “What sorrow awaits you, Korazin and Bethsaida! For if the miracles I did in you had been done in wicked Tyre and Sidon, their people would have repented of their sins long ago, clothing themselves in burlap and throwing ashes on their heads to show their remorse. ¹⁴ Yes, Tyre and Sidon will be better off on judgment day than you. ¹⁵ And you people of Capernaum, will you be honored in heaven? No, you will go down to the place of the dead.” ¹⁶ Then he said to the disciples, “Anyone who accepts your message is also accepting me. And anyone who rejects you is rejecting me. And anyone who rejects me is rejecting God, who sent me.”

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rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.”

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*.”

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.”

¹⁷ When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, “Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!”

¹⁸ “Yes,” he told them, “I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! ¹⁹ Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you. ²⁰ But don’t rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are registered in heaven.”

²¹ At that same time Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and he said, “O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way.

²² “My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

²³ Then when they were alone, he turned to the disciples and said, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you have seen. ²⁴ I tell you, many prophets and kings longed to see what you see, but they didn’t see it. And they longed to hear what you hear, but they didn’t hear it.”

²⁵ One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?”

²⁷ The man answered, “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

²⁸ “Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!”

²⁹ The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

³¹ “By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. ³² A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

³³ “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. ³⁴ Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he handed the innkeeper two

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	silver coins, telling him, "Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here." 36 "Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. 37 The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."
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2. Discover key cultural and historical insights

The following insights are from Gary M. Burge, *Jesus: The Middle Eastern Storyteller*

- The lawyer was an expert in religious and civil affairs. He stood before Jesus and called him "Teacher" which was a sign of respect.
- He was probably a priest working in the Temple but viewed as an expert in religious legal affairs when not there. His question was, "What must be done to obtain eternal life?" This is a common question among people and a common one in the first century. We have a record of the same question being asked in AD 90 of Rabbi Eleazar.
- When the lawyer asks, Jesus responds just like a rabbi, "What is written in the Law (Scripture)?" This is his challenge for the lawyer to distill the Law into a succinct statement and his recitation of Deuteronomy 6:4-5 is expert, common, and correct.
 - These words were spoken every morning and evening.
 - They were written along with the Ten Commandments on small scrolls and placed on doorposts or placed in little boxes attached to leather straps and worn on the arm or the forehead.
- Because of the Greeks and Romans, the Jews re-defined their neighbor and Gentiles were excluded from this status. Pharisees excluded non-Pharisees. A later rabbi would teach that heretics, informers, and renegades should be pushed into ditches and left to die. Another said everyone was your neighbor except for your enemies. How wide is the definition of "neighbor" for Jesus?
- It is 17 miles from Jerusalem to Jericho. It is remote, difficult, and dangerous. One did not travel alone on this road. It descends 3600 feet in that short span.
- The man is robbed and stripped of his clothes. Because of this, no one can determine his nationality or social status. Because of his unconsciousness no one can hear his speech and make that determination either. He is a "mere human" without ethnic or religious identification.
- The first two men who saw the man had fulfilled their service in the temple because they were going down the road to Jericho.
- Jerusalem had 24 priestly rotations who would serve the temple for two weeks. The priest had social status because he was a priest and probably had an entourage of friends and guards. He probably rode on a donkey for only poor people walk such great distances.

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- To touch the dead man would have made the priest impure – Lev 21:1 – and not able to serve in the Temple. But he was finished in the Temple and should have been less worried about purity. But it would have kept him from receiving tithes and diminished his status at home.
- But this would not have been shocking to the audience. He was a priest and he must remain clean. Sirach 12:1-4 says, “If you do a kindness, know to whom you do.... Give to the godly man, but do not help the sinner.”
- The Levites were aids to the priests. They also had cleanliness rules although this was only during their temple service. After they were finished the rules of touching corpses did not apply.
- The crowd would expect an upright citizen of Israel to be introduced, and perhaps after that a peasant who would be the hero. But Jesus introduces a Samaritan.
- There had been hostility between Samaritans and Jews for nearly 1000 years! The Jews once destroyed a Samaritan temple. The Samaritans once spread dead bones in the Temple during Passover.
- The Samaritan is a business man. He has money, a donkey, wine, and oil. He is a man of means. He travels this road often because the inn keeper trusts him. But he is considered a heretic. He does not accept the Jerusalem temple nor all the books of their Law.
- He gives the innkeepers 2 denarii which would have provided for 24 days!

The following insights are from Kenneth Bailey – *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*

- In the Middle East, robbers beat men only if they resisted. This man must have resisted.
- The priests were the upper class and people of means. He would not be walking but riding and could have easily transported the man.
- Languages – priests spoke Hebrew, the common people Aramaic, the coast was Phoenician, around the Sea of Galilee Syriac, in the Greek cities Greek, government officials in Latin, and in the south Arabic.
- The Samaritan did not take him to the edge of the town and drop him off. It was dangerous for him to leave him at the inn in a Jewish city. The Jewish man is unconscious on the donkey and it has the appearance that the Samaritan has done something wrong that could elicit revenge.
- If a man could not pay his debts, he could be sold as a slave. The Samaritan makes sure the man's debts are paid and will pay more when he gets back.

The following insights are from Dr. Kenneth Bailey – *Poet & Peasant*

- Pompey wiped out brigands near Jericho. The Crusaders built a fort to protect pilgrims on the road. In 1857, a pilgrim fell behind a group of others with their armed guard and was attacked, robbed, and stripped.
- If the priest had defiled himself, he would have been required to return to Jerusalem and it would have been shameful. The cost of purifying himself was the location of a red heifer and reducing it to ashes. This would have also cost time.

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- You cannot go closer than four cubits to a dead man or you would be defiled. He would have to go closer if he were to ascertain if he was dead or alive.
- The text says he was “half dead” which was a Jewish way of saying, “next to death.”
- The Levite was travelling behind but observing everything. The road allows for long distances to be seen. People travelling are paying attention to others on the road for safety or for an emergency. Seeing the priest not offering aid, he would follow his example although not bound by purity rules as tightly as the priest would be.
- Priests, Levites, and lay-people served in the temple. One would expect that after a priest and Levite did not help the man, a Jewish lay person would help. But a Jew is not the hero in the story. Jesus shocks his audience by introducing a Samaritan.
- Ben Sirach 50:25-26 says: “There are two nations my soul detests, the third is not a nation at all: the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and the Philistines and the stupid people living at Shechem.” The latter were Samaritans.
- In the Mishna, it is stated: “he who eats the bread of Samaritans is like to one that eats the flesh of swine.”
- The Samaritans were publicly cursed and a petition made to God that they might not inherit eternal life.
- A Jew cannot receive oil and wine from a Samaritan.
- The Samaritan ran the risk of being rejected by the wounded man.
- The Samaritan leads the donkey to the inn. This is the work of a servant.
- He stays the night to care for him. This was a great risk because of blood revenge. It is assumed that if you stop to help you are probably part of the problem. The family of the wounded man could seek the Samaritan out to take revenge upon him.

Answer these reflective questions.

Read Luke 10:1-16. What indications do you have from these verses that the 70 were to be completely focused on their mission? What was the message they were to bring to the people?

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According to Luke 10:17-24, what are the primary things Jesus tells us we are to rejoice in? Also, what did he mean when he said that the eyes and ears of the disciples saw and heard what prophets and kings longed to see?

Why do you think the religious expert was testing Jesus? Do you think he was trying to trap him?

Based upon the story you have just heard, summarize the different viewpoints about “who is my neighbor” in the ancient world? How would this discussion keep hostilities fresh among people?

Who do you identify with in the story; the priest, the Levite, the Samaritan, or the man who was robbed and beaten? Do you know anyone who is like the Good Samaritan?

How can you apply this story to your life?
