

The Whole Armor of God *Ephesians 6:10-20*

Breastplate of Righteousness

Good Samaritan

Luke 10:25-37

Jesus spent two years of His ministry in Galilee. Jesus performed miracles and began His teachings in Judea and Perea, territories near Jerusalem. It was after Jesus healed a blind man that an expert on the Law of Moses asked Jesus about eternal life. Jesus answered his question by telling a story. The story Jesus told was a parable about a Samaritan who helped an injured traveler.

Introduction

Samaria was located in the middle of Israel, Judea being to the south and Galilee to the north. When the Assyrians captured the city of Samaria in 721 B.C., they deported many Israelites and populated the area with foreigners captured from other lands. The Israelites, who remained, intermarried with the foreigners. When the exiled Israelites returned to Samaria, they did not accept the offspring of the intermarried as true Israelites. It was believed that this mixed race did not adhere to the same rules of Judaism as the people in Judea and Galilee. Consequently, the lack of acceptance of this race brought about an intense hatred between the Samaritans and the Jews. The road traveled from Jerusalem to Jericho was known as “The Way of Blood.”

The road was a steep, rugged and rocky road. It was the perfect road for criminals and thieves to hide and take advantage of the unsuspecting traveler. Jesus told of a priest and a Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan because they lived

in Jericho and would travel to Jerusalem to worship in the temple.

Progression of Events

What does it mean to be a good neighbor? Is it easy to be kind to someone you do not particularly like? In order to truly love God, each of us needs to show His love to others and this is the lesson we learn from today’s story.

- One day there was a lawyer who decided to test Jesus about the law. He asked, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” A lawyer was an expert in explaining God’s law. The lawyer’s question was not sincere. We know this because the scripture says the lawyer stood up and “tested Him.” This lawyer may have thought that he could earn eternal life by doing good works. We know this is not true because the Bible says, “for whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it” (James 2:10). While we should always strive to do what is right and good, it is not our good deeds that will get us in the kingdom, but rather Jesus who paid the ultimate price for our sins. Jesus paid the punishment for the sins of mankind.
- Jesus answered the lawyer with a question. “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?”
- The lawyer answers Jesus by quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. “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 love your neighbor as yourself.”
- Jesus tells the lawyer, “you have answered correctly, do this and you will live.”
 - Next the lawyer asks, “Who is my neighbor?” He did not ask about how he could go about loving his neighbor but instead he wanted Jesus to define whom his neighbor was.
 - Jesus answered the lawyer with a parable.
 - “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.
 - A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.” A priest who served God by offering sacrifices and leading worship services in the temple did not stop to help his neighbor.
 - “So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him (the hurt man), passed by on the other side.” A Levite would assist the priest in the temple. Just as the priest would know the law so too the Levite would know it.
 - “But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.” The Samaritan, whose people were despised by the Jews because their race was Gentile and Jewish stopped to help the injured man.
 - “He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.” The Good Samaritan did more than just help the wounded man he paid for all his expenses that were incurred as the innkeeper took care of him. Inns

during Bible times were not like we have today. Their purpose was first and foremost to protect you from the environment. Some inns did not have innkeepers.

- Jesus now asked the lawyer, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

Climax

The expert in the law answered Jesus, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus brought the lawyer to the realization that it wasn’t the priest or Levite who obeyed God’s law and loved their neighbor, but the Samaritan. Jesus then encouraged him to do likewise.

Conclusion

A neighbor is not just the person you like or who looks or believes just like you do. A neighbor is anyone and everyone you come in contact with. If you truly want to show love and obedience to God, you must show God’s love to all people.

Breastplate of Righteousness

What important part of the body is covered by a breastplate? Correct, the heart. A Roman soldier’s breastplate would cover him from his neck to waist both the front and back. We put on the breastplate of righteousness when we live our life right before God. God made us with the ability to choose between right and wrong. When one chooses to tell the truth and not lie, to be kind and not hateful, to obey and not disobey, he chooses righteous living. It is the choosing the right way of life that protects ones heart with the breastplate of righteousness.

Memory Verse

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).

Questions

For class discussion ask your students any of the following:

1. Why didn't the Jews like the Samaritans?
2. Why was the road to Jericho known as "The Way of Blood?"
3. What does Deuteronomy 6:5 say?
4. Why do you think Jesus used parables to teach lessons and answer questions?
5. Who was a neighbor to the lawyer—only someone that was Jewish?
6. Do you think it was easy for the lawyer to admit that the Samaritan was the good neighbor? Why?
7. Is it easy to show love to your enemies or those who are different than you?
8. What does it mean to put on the breastplate of righteousness?

Lesson 2

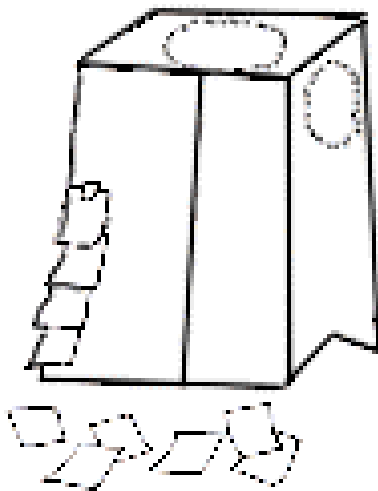
Craft

Materials

- Brown paper grocery bag for each student
- Scissors
- Aluminum foil
- Transparent tape

Directions

1. Cut the aluminum foil into 1x2 inch strips. Each student will need approximately seventy of these strips. If you have a large number of first—or second-grade children, make the paper bag tunics ahead of time.
2. Give each student a pair of scissors and a brown paper grocery bag.
3. Demonstrate how to cut down the center of one of the 'wide' sides until the bottom of the bag is reached.
4. Show the students how to cut a wide circle in the bottom of bag. Explain that when the bag is upside down it looks kind of like a vest. Have students cut circles on the narrow sides of the bags to make armholes.
5. Set out the foil strips and transparent tape. Show students how to tape the top of the strips to the bag to create 'scales' of armor. Encourage students to tape their foil pieces as close together as possible and to cover the bag with scales.



Lesson 2

Craft

Materials

- Construction paper
- Pencils
- Felt tip pens
- Scissors



Directions

1. Fold construction paper horizontally so one side is about 5 inches wide and the other side is about 7 inches wide.
2. Children place their hand on the 7 inch side with their wrist at the fold and their fingertips near the top of the paper and trace around their hand.
3. Then each child carefully cuts around the outline of his hand and fingers and along the fold line.
4. The hand and fingers should stand up with the 5 inch side of the paper serving as a base.
5. On the palm of the hand, the children should write: "I promise to help with the..." and on each finger, they should write a daily or weekly task they will do at home. They should also write neatly the Bible verse listed above, Ephesians 6:1, on the wrist area of the hand.

