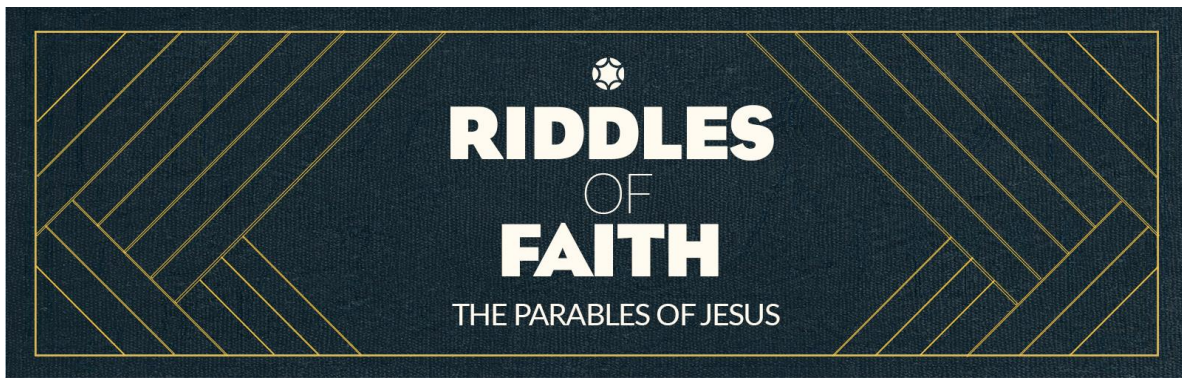




Group Guide

Week Seven // Overtaken by the Unexpected

Scripture Focus

Luke 10:25–37

Big Idea

Jesus challenges us to move beyond asking who deserves our love and instead become people who show mercy to those God places in our path. Loving our neighbor often interrupts our plans and crosses the boundaries we would naturally create.

Read Together

Read Luke 10:25–37 aloud.

Setting the Scene

The parable begins when an expert in the law asks Jesus, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus turns the question back to him, and the man responds by summarizing the law: love God with all that you are and “love your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus tells him that he has answered correctly.

Luke tells us that the man wants to justify himself, so he asks another question: “And who is my neighbor?” Instead of answering directly, Jesus tells a story about a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho who is attacked by robbers, stripped, beaten, and left for dead.

Digging Deeper

A priest comes down the road and sees the injured man but passes by on the other side. Then a Levite does the same. Jesus does not tell us why either man

passes by. Whatever their reasons, both see the man's need and continue on their way.

Then Jesus introduces the person his listeners may have least expected to become the person to help, a Samaritan. Jews and Samaritans shared a long history of religious and ethnic hostility. Yet when he sees the wounded man, Jesus says that “he took pity on him.”

Jesus then returns to the original question, but he changes it. The expert had asked, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus asks, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert answers, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus responds: “Go and do likewise. Sometimes loving our neighbor means allowing another person's need to interrupt our schedule, cross our boundaries, or challenge our assumptions.

Group Discussion

Getting Started

- What stood out most to you from the sermon?
- When you hear the phrase “Good Samaritan,” what immediately comes to mind?

Digging Into Scripture

- Why do you think Luke tells us that the expert in the law wanted to “justify himself” when he asked, “Who is my neighbor?”
- How does Jesus change the expert's original question at the end of the parable?

Personal Reflection

- Who is easiest for you to think of as your “neighbor”? Who is more difficult?
- When has someone's unexpected kindness or mercy made a difference in your life?

Looking Forward

- Who might God have already placed in your path that you have been too busy, distracted, or uncomfortable to notice?
- What would it look like for you to “go and do likewise” this week?

Individual Application

This week, pay attention to the people and needs that interrupt your normal routine. Instead of immediately asking whether you have the time, responsibility, or obligation to help, pause and ask yourself the following questions. Then, choose one opportunity this week to move toward someone rather than passing by.

- What am I noticing that I might normally pass by?
- What assumptions am I making about this person?
- What would mercy look like in this situation?

Consider memorizing:

Luke 10:27

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Closing Prayer

God, thank you for the mercy you have shown us. Forgive us for the times we have been too busy, distracted, uncomfortable, or judgmental to notice the people around us. Give us eyes to see those who need compassion and the courage to move toward them rather than pass by. In Jesus' name, amen.