



# How Can I Enter Heaven?

People hold different views on how to enter heaven. But what does the Bible say? It clearly tells us the way to heaven: that faith in Christ alone = salvation, which results in good works. Let us look at how Jesus answered this question of how to enter the kingdom of heaven — through the parable of the Good Samaritan.

## The Context of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (LUKE 10:25-29)

A lawyer or expert in the Laws of Moses put Jesus to the test by asking what he should do to have eternal life. He thinks that he can enter heaven based on performance or merit. Jesus knew this and because He loved him, He wanted the man to explore his own belief system by asking back what the Law says. The lawyer responded that one must love GOD and must love others, quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, summarizing the law and the ten commandments. The lawyer got it right, so Jesus told him to do it. The question is: can anyone do that? The lawyer wanting to declare himself righteous asked another question – WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR? He wanted to set limitations on the idea of loving his neighbor. To reveal and correct the lawyer's wrong thinking and self-righteousness, Jesus told the story of the good Samaritan.

## The Parable of the Good Samaritan (LUKE 10:30-37)

The parable tells of a Jewish man travelling to Jericho who fell among robbers. He was stripped, beaten, and left half-dead. A priest and a Levite passed by, but they did not help him. As religious leaders, one would think that they know about the love of God and of loving others, but they did not do anything. The root problem is they did not love God with all their heart, soul, and mind. In contrast, a Samaritan came and felt compassion for the man. He did more than what was required in helping and caring for the Jewish man, even risking his own life, and paying for the cost no matter the inconvenience. It was a demonstration of a lavish, unconditional, and supernatural kind of love.

Jesus then ends by asking the lawyer, “Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands?” The lawyer answered, “*the one who showed mercy*” (vv.36-37). Jesus shifted the question through this parable: from “who is my neighbor?”, He casted a question to the heart of the lawyer – *are you a neighbor to others?*

### this week's memory verse

No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

LUKE 16:13

## Application of the Parable

The goal of the parable is to show us that we are spiritually bankrupt and unable to be like the Good Samaritan. Nobody can do it apart from Jesus Christ. To enter the Kingdom of God, we must:

- **ADMIT** that we are unable to pay the legal requirement for our redemption;
- **BELIEVE** that only Jesus can save us – He alone is the Perfect, Good Samaritan, doing everything lavishly to save us;
- **CALL** on Jesus and surrender to Him as our Lord and Savior. Galatians 2:16 reminds us that we can never be declared not guilty before God by the works of the law — only by faith in Christ.

Where else do we see the ABC of Salvation emphasized? The parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9-14), the 2 criminals beside Jesus on the cross (Luke 23:39-40), and the story of the Converted Jailer (Acts 16:30-31). The purpose of the parable of the Good Samaritan is to show us that **until** we are convicted and crushed by the magnitude of God's love and our utter failure to love HIM, we will never be humble enough. We must receive Christ's extravagant love so that we can be better neighbors towards others and exemplify a life that really LOVES GOD and LOVES OTHERS!

### discussion questions

On a scale of 1-10, how sure are you that you are going to heaven? Why?

Is it possible to be sure? Why and how?

How can you grow in loving God and your neighbor?

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