

# Racial Justice Sunday

## The Parable of the Good Samaritan

### Luke 10 v 25-37

#### Context:

Racial Justice Sunday is marked in February each year, having been introduced 30 years ago as a response to the callous and racist murder of Stephen Lawrence not far from us in Eltham, SE London. Racial Justice Sunday is a day to invite Christians to incorporate racial awareness and justice into their daily lives. It is a day to acknowledge and address racial prejudices that divide people and to pray for healing, justice, and strength for those who have experienced racism. Sadly, racism isn't a new or recent phenomenon – it is an evil that has scourged the human race for millennia and was part of life in the societies and communities that feature in the biblical story. One of the oldest and deepest racial divides in the New Testament era was that between Jews and Samaritans and our study today picks up on this ancient prejudice in a stunning and challenging way. So, let's dig in!

#### Observation:

1. Who stood up to speak to Jesus and why (v 25a)?
2. What did he ask Jesus (v 25b)?
3. How did Jesus reply in v 26?
4. What was the man's response in v 27?
5. How did Jesus react to the man's answer (v 28)?
6. What further question did the man ask and why in v 29?
7. Where was the man travelling from and to in Jesus' story and what happened to him (v 30)?
8. Who were the first two people to come across the man and what did they do (v 31-32)?
9. Who came along next and what did he do (v 33-35)?
10. What question did Jesus ask at the end of the story in v 36?
11. How did the man reply in v 37 and what was Jesus' final command to him?

#### Meaning:

1. Why do you think the expert in the law wanted to test Jesus and in what sense do you think his question was a test (v 25)?
2. There were 613 commands in the Jewish Law, which were condensed at Mount Sinai into the big 10. In the man's reply to Jesus in v 27 he quotes two OT verses from the Torah (Deuteronomy 6 v 5 and Leviticus 19 v 18) as a way of further summarising the big 10 commandments in just 2. So, read the 10 commandments in Exodus 20 v 1-17 and discuss how these 2 commands quoted by the expert in the law are a perfect summary of the 10.
3. What do you think Jesus meant by his reply in v 28?

4. What do you think was behind the man's further question in v 29 and how do you think most Israelites would have answered that question?
5. Why do you think both the Priest and the Levite passed by the man who had been attacked in Jesus' story (v 30-32) and what do you think would have been the reaction of those who were listening to the story when they heard this?
6. Samaritans were descendants of Gentiles who had been transplanted into Northern Israel from surrounding nations by the King of Assyria hundreds of years before Jesus' day. They replaced Israelites who were taken into exile, and they brought with them their own culture and religion. They intermarried with the remaining Israelite population and their descendants, known as Samaritans, lived in great hostility with the Jews, who regarded them as being of dubious racial and religious heritage. With this background in mind, how do you think those who listened to Jesus' story would have reacted when Jesus introduced the Samaritan to the story in v 33 and how would they have reacted when they heard how he treated the victim (v 33-35)?
7. How would you articulate the moral of the story (v 36-37) and how is this an illustration of the second great command (v 27)?

#### **Application:**

1. The expert in the law was probably trying to limit the extent and scope of the command to love our neighbour as ourselves with his question in v 29. How might we be guilty of doing something similar to him and to what extent does Jesus' story undermine the man's attitude and approach?
2. How does this parable challenge the kinds of racial prejudice we see in our world today?
3. Can you retell Jesus's story in a modern setting, using different characters? Who would be the victim and the equivalent of the Priest, the Levite and the Samaritan?
4. How is God challenging you through today's study?

#### **Pray:**

- Pray for God's grace to love our neighbour as ourselves whatever the cost.
- Pray for those who have experienced racism or continue to do so.
- Pray that St James would be a community where racial differences are celebrated as gifts to be welcomed and embraced as part of the body of Christ.