

## **\*\*Vid bumper**

Welcome to Redemption Church. A body of believers that is striving to keep Love First.

My name is Chris Fluitt. I am blessed to serve as Lead Pastor here at Redemption.

To you here in the room I greet you. I am so glad you are here.

To you that are watching or listening on our podcast, website, or some social media venue like Facebook or Youtube, I greet you. I wish that you were here with us so I could greet you in person. Take a moment to leave us a comment. We love to hear from you.

## **First Love**

We are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of our First Love sermon series. Quick recap-

We talked about the intensity of falling in Love. When we first fall in love we give gifts of love, but as time goes on we may fall into the expectation trap. When we start acting from the expectation motivation instead of a love motivation it causes problems.

It robs us of receiving Love, giving love, and leads to deal keeping.

It is possible to forsake your love... your relationship in marriage, family, friends, even God.

**If we are operating from some other motivation than love, we have lost our first love.**

Today I want us to look at a well known passage of Scripture in Luke 10. If you have your Bibles or a smart phone go ahead and look it up.

Today we will be studying..

**Lawyers, Loopholes & Love**

In Luke 10 Jesus has a meaningful conversation with a lawyer and gives a well known parable – The good Samaritan.

Luke 10:25 And then a certain lawyer arose to try (test, tempt) Him, saying, Teacher, what am I to do to inherit everlasting life [that is, to partake of eternal salvation in the Messiah's kingdom]?(AMP)

Luke wants us to know that someone acquainted with the Law is asking this question. A LAWYER. So let's really focus on the mindset of a Lawyer.

If you bring a problem to a Lawyer, he or she will ask about the specifics. "Did you sign anything? Did you make an agreement and to what did you agree?" The Lawyer will seek to know the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved.

And of course, a good Lawyer wants what is best for his client. I don't know if you know this but Lawyers aren't seeking to know the truth usually, they are trying to get the best result for the person they represent.

So who is the Lawyer representing in Luke 10:25? HIMSELF! "What am I to do to inherit everlasting life."

The Lawyer asked the Lord, how can I have Everlasting Life... The Lawyer has a vested interest in this outcome doesn't he?

Luke 10:26 Jesus said to him, What is written in the Law? How do you read it?(AMP)

Jesus hits him with something he understands. Do you know what the law says? Have you read the contract? Do you know what God's Word says?

Luke 10:27 And he replied, You must 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.(AMP)

Luke 10:28 And Jesus said to him, You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live [enjoy active, blessed, endless life in the kingdom of God].(AMP)

**The Lawyer** had the right answer. He quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 & Leviticus 19:18. This is actually what Jesus Himself answered when He was asked what the greatest command was. Jesus gave this exact answer in Matthew 22 & Mark 12.

According to Jesus the greatest command is LOVE FIRST. Love God with everything & love your neighbor at the same level that you love yourself.

Love is the greatest command according to Jesus.

And this Love is the key to everlasting life. Do this and you will live!

Now let's really think about what Jesus says here.

- Love God with everything. All your heart, soul, strength.
- Had the Lawyer fulfilled this command? Have we fulfilled this?
- It ought to be easiest to love God right!? He has only been good and loving toward us... but surely you would agree there has been a moment where you haven't loved Him with all your heart.. soul.. strength.
- Everlasting Life weighs in the balance – Worried Lawyer.
- Love you neighbor as you love yourself.
- Had the Lawyer ever not shown love to someone? Had he ever thought hateful thoughts or said hurtful words? Had he ever stolen or lied? Had he ever put himself above others?
- Everlasting Life weighs in the balance – Worried Lawyer.

When things aren't looking good for lawyers.. When their client is not in good standing with the law.. what does a Lawyer do? They look for a Loophole.

## The Loophole

A loophole is an ambiguity or inadequacy in the law or a set of rules.

Loopholes in court can be ridiculous.

The burden of proof of guilt is "proof beyond a reasonable doubt." So Lawyers will ask... "What is reasonable doubt? Sure my client is 99.9% likely to be guilty... but there is that .1% that they didn't massacre the state of Rhode Island. So surely the jury will vote innocent."

This is what the lawyer in Luke 10 does. Check out his loophole.

Luke 10:29 And he, determined to acquit himself of reproach, said to Jesus, And who is my neighbor?(AMP)

What do you mean by... "neighbor?" "Who is my neighbor?"

People only look for loopholes when they don't have the law on their side. They only use loopholes when they are guilty. Right!?

Everlasting life weighs in the balance and this lawyer is guilty. The scripture says "determined to acquit himself of reproach" he brings up the "who is my neighbor" loophole.

You can probably understand what the Lawyer is thinking here... "I love some people.. my wife, my kids.. but there are some people I don't really love... Hopefully those people are not my neighbor."

Here is Jesus' answer to the Lawyer's loophole... The Parable of the good Samaritan.

Luke 10:30 Jesus, taking him up, replied, A certain man was going from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him of his clothes and belongings and beat him and went their way, [unconcernedly] leaving him half dead, as it happened.(AMP)

Luke 10:31 Now by coincidence a certain priest was going down along that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.(AMP)

Luke 10:32 A Levite likewise came down to the place and saw him, and passed by on the other side [of the road].(AMP)

Luke 10:33 But a certain Samaritan, as he traveled along, came down to where he was; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity and sympathy [for him],(AMP)

There is a man left half dead. He was coming from Jerusalem so we can assume that he was Jewish. This Jewish man was robbed, stripped, and left for dead on the side of the road.

Then a Jewish Priest walks by.. This guy was a minister in the Temple. Surely he, being a religious man who knew the Neighbor command, would help a fellow Jew... No. He kept walking.

Then a Levite walks by.. Also a Jew. Also religious. The Levite tribe (which consisted of priests) worked within the temple. Surely he, being a religious man who was close to the Temple and the Holy work of God would help a fellow Jew... No. He kept walking.

Then the Samaritan... At the very mention of Samaritan there may have been a negative sound in the audience. The Samaritans represented bad history for Israel. They were half breed Jews that came out of times of exile. They represented years of slavery to Babylon. Israel felt stuck with this group of people called the Samaritans.

The audience and the lawyer knew what Jesus was going to do before the story ended. They knew Jesus was going to make the hated Samaritan the good guy of the story... Jesus was going to make the Samaritan the neighbor.

The story continues that the Samaritan bound the wounds of the broken man, carried him into town on his own animal, paid for his lodging in an inn, and provided whatever cost the man would require.

Then Jesus asked the Lawyer... and He asks us today...

Luke 10:36 Which of these three do you think proved himself a neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?(AMP)

Luke 10:37 He answered, The one who showed pity and mercy to him. And Jesus said to him, Go and do likewise.(AMP)

The Lawyer though he had a loophole. Jesus showed him...

## **Love has no Loopholes**

God is Love. (1 John 4:8; 16)

We are God's people. Created by Him to do good works. (Eph 2:19)

God's command to us is to love like He loves.

His love has no loopholes.

The Lawyer's loophole was that he could choose who he would show love towards. Jesus' parable pointed at the Samaritan and declared HE IS YOUR NEIGHBOR. LOVE HIM AS YOU LOVE YOURSELF.

God wants us to put LOVE FIRST.

## **Does your love have loopholes?**

If you choose who you are going to love you have loopholes.

Race, skin color, Social economic background, level of education, outward appearance, how people vote, their religion or denomination, how they treat you, what they give you... these are loopholes.

Christians are not called to discriminate but to Love.

Let me be real direct... If you have trouble showing love to people of a different skin color you need to be in this altar today. You need to ask God to remove the loopholes. If you have trouble loving people because their lifestyle is different than yours, I want to see you in the first 2 feet of this altar so we can pray these loopholes off. If you have never forgiven that person that hurt you, then your love has loopholes.

Our marriages are suffering because of loopholes.

We gave vows that said FOR BETTER OR WORSE... TIL DEATH DO US PART... But there is an unspoken loophole...

- Unless they cheat on me...
- Unless I don't feel the same way I use to..
- Unless I decide I deserve better...

Husband & Wife take the loopholes out of your love. Love them with the same love God has given you. Love them like you love yourself.

The Lawyer and the audience did not understand the most important part of Jesus' parable.

## Jesus is the Good Samaritan

Jesus is the one that was looked on in disgust.

Jesus is the one that was rejected by Israel.

Jesus is the one who didn't cross to the other side of the road, but knelt beside the half dead...

YOU SEE YOU AND I ARE THE BROKEN PERSON WHO HAS NOTHING TO OFFER IN THE STORY.

Jesus came down to where we were... when he saw us Jesus had mercy and compassion.

Jesus bound up our wounds.

Jesus carried us.

Jesus paid the price.

Jesus will return for us.

Who is our neighbor? Jesus is.. **Here is what I want you to do today as you come to this altar...** #1 receive the Love of Jesus. #2 Ask Him to help you remove your loopholes.

