

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD + -

THE GOOD SAMARITAN: HOW A STORY SHAPED OUR WORLD

This segment comes from **EPISODE 3: RICH + POOR**.

From decadent medieval popes to modern televangelists with private jets, religion and money can make for an unsavoury mix. But why do we think of charity – care for the poor and the sick – as a good thing in the first place? People in the Graeco-Roman world didn't think so: they mostly thought the poor and suffering deserved what they got. This segment traces how one of Jesus' stories – the parable of the Good Samaritan – profoundly shaped our world.



THEME QUESTIONS

1. What are some motivations people might have for looking after the needy?
2. Why might some people not make it a priority to care for the needy?



ENGAGE

1. Would you ever go out of your way to help an enemy? Why or why not?
2. Find an image that relates to the idea of a "Good Samaritan". Explain your choice.
3. In what circumstances might someone tell you to be a "Good Samaritan"?
4. On each line, mark how much you agree or disagree with each statement:

Statement	Agree	Disagree
Jesus' most significant teaching was that we should love and care for the needy.	○————— —————○	
Christians are known for helping the poor.	○————— —————○	
Religious people should spend more time helping people and less time talking about their religion.	○————— —————○	
People should prioritise helping those in their own cultural group.	○————— —————○	



UNDERSTAND AND EVALUATE



WATCH the segment: “The Good Samaritan: How a story shaped our world”

(cpx.video/samaritan)

1. Why did Jesus make the Samaritan the hero of his story? What point was he making?
2. Describe how the parable of the Good Samaritan shaped the way the early church cared for the poor.

“The best kind of care that the church has provided for the world is when it’s not out of power and it’s not worried about ruling but more worried about being on the ground, taking care of the poor and vulnerable.”

William Cavanaugh

3. What is your reaction to this quote from William Cavanaugh?
4. What did Roman officials find in the basement of the church of Circa? What might this show us about the priorities of the early church?
5. Joel Edwards says that “added benefit to your neighbour” is an “essential feature of what Christian faith looks like”. Do you agree? Why or why not?



BIBLE FOCUS

READ Luke 10:25-37.

CONTEXT: The word “Samaritan” means a person from Samaria. However, the term is more religious and cultural than just about the place where somebody lived. This religious group had shared heritage with the Jewish people, but their adherence to the Law of Moses had some differences. The Samaritans were not considered to be wholly Jewish. As a result, there was a rift between those in Judea (Jews) and those in Samaria (Samaritans).

1. What question prompted Jesus to tell this parable?
2. In the parable, who ...
 - a. Ignored the man who was attacked?
 - b. Helped the man who was attacked?
3. Describe the relationship between Jews and Samaritans (use the Context Box and the video to help you).
4. Explain how v.27 links with the meaning of the parable.
5. Look at the artwork below, “The Good Samaritan (after Delacroix)” by Vincent van Gogh. Explain how the artwork reflects the parable as recorded by Luke.



APPLY

1. Create a modern re-telling of the parable of the Good Samaritan. Use a setting and characters that are relevant to your own context.
2. In the video segment, John Dickson states that “Jesus expected his followers to care for people in need, regardless of race, religion, or morality”.
 - a. Outline why Jesus’ followers today might not always do this well.
 - b. Explain why it is important for Jesus’ followers to continue to care for people in need.
3. In NSW, the Civil Liability Act has a section which protects those who act to try to help others in need from being sued if anything goes wrong. For example, administering first aid to a stranger who has had a fall in a shopping centre. This section of the law is called “Good Samaritans” (cpx.video/liabilityact). How do you think the language of “Good Samaritan” ended up in a non-religious legal document?
4. Make a poster showing some of the other ways that the parable of Good Samaritan has influenced our society.
5. Rowan Williams says that an important application of the parable of the Good Samaritan is “looking out for the interests of the people who’ve been forgotten”.
 - a. Who do you think are some of the “forgotten people” in your school, community, and/or country?
 - b. How could you help respond to their needs?

EXTEND

1. Write an essay in response to the following question:

To what extent has the parable of the Good Samaritan influenced practices of aid and social justice in Australia?

2. Listen to the episode “Guess who’s not coming to dinner” (cpx.video/dinner) from CPX’s Life & Faith Podcast (from 9.30 - 22.57). Write down some examples of how the parable of the Good Samaritan has been used (and misused) by politicians.