



# He Is Our Righteousness

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PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

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## Session 1:

Introduction/The Parable of the Good Samaritan in Context



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### Session 1:

#### Introduction/The Parable of the Good Samaritan in Context

Luke 10:25–29

Does our Lord teach justification by grace through faith? We all immediately answer, “Yes, of course.” But, where does He teach it? And how? We may find ourselves uncomfortably ill-prepared to answer those two questions. In this study, we’re going to look at how Jesus used one of His parables to teach about justification.

### Introduction

**1.** What has happened and is happening in Luke’s account of our Lord’s life and ministry in chapters 1–10 of his Gospel?

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**2.** Read together Luke 18:9–14, another parable that has to do with justification. What does “justified” mean in verse 14? How might verse 9 provide help in understanding verse 14?

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**3.** Why does Jesus teach with parables? See Luke 8:8b–10.

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**4.** What difference will it make for our reading of Luke 10:25–29 if we assume that the lawyer was present to hear Jesus’ words in verses 21–22 or even 21–24?

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**Luke 10:25–29 — Leading Questions**

**5.** When studying a parable, it is always important to notice what situation or question serves as the occasion for the parable. As we read verses 25–29 we see that several questions are raised. Note them below.

Question 1: \_\_\_\_\_

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Question 2: \_\_\_\_\_

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Question 3: \_\_\_\_\_

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Question 4: \_\_\_\_\_

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**6.** When you find yourself thinking about your salvation, which of the questions above are you most likely to ask? Do you think in terms of a standard you need to meet, of a minimum entrance requirement? Do you simply wonder what can be done?

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**7.** What question should the lawyer have asked?

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**8.** Why do you think the lawyer felt a need to “justify himself”?

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**LOOKING AHEAD**

In our next session, we will carefully read through the parable together, but this is most likely a very familiar parable to most of us. After our discussion in this session, where do you think these “leading questions” are leading us? What would you say the parable is about? What is its message for us?









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## Session 2:

A Story to Answer Questions and to Reframe Them



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## PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

### Session 2:

### A Story to Answer Questions and to Reframe Them

Luke 10:30–35

Read Luke 10:30–35.

**1.** Try to imagine yourself in the lawyer's place. How would you expect the story to answer your question? (Because we know the parable so well, we usually don't take the time to ask about what the *lawyer* would have been expecting and how *he* might have heard it.)

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Are you beginning to think differently about this parable? What questions do you have about what was covered in this session? What questions do you still have about this parable?







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**Session 3:**  
Another Question and Another Test



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# He Is Our Righteousness

## PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

### Session 3:

### Another Question and Another Test

Luke 10:36

**1.** Does the Parable of the Good Samaritan teach that the way to inherit eternal life is to keep the Law?

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**2.** How does Jesus' question in verse 36 differ from the lawyer's question in verse 25?

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**3.** What do you think of this summary of the message of the parable? Any guesses as to whose summary this might be?

In this Samaritan, Christ pictures and shows the kindness, help, and comfort which he provides in His kingdom through the Gospel; this is just what He initially spoke to his disciples: “Blessed are the eyes which see what you see,” etc. [Luke 10:23]. He paints most comforting what faith has in Him, and how very different His Gospel is from the teaching of the Law (which the priests and Levites also have). I have previously spoken about this abundantly. But in this picture we need to look at how we have fallen into sin against God’s commandment, lie under God’s wrath, and must die eternal death—and also at how we have been rescued by Him, so that we receive God’s grace, comfort, and life for our conscience and even begin to keep the Law.

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**4.** What points from the text can be offered in support of such a reading of the parable?

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e. \_\_\_\_\_

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## LOOKING AHEAD

In light of this session's discussion, what do you think the parable is about? What is its message for you? What difference would it make if the passage ended at verse 37a, after the lawyer's response but before Jesus' final words?







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**Session 4:**  
"Go and Do Likewise"

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## PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

### Session 4:

### “Go and Do Likewise”

Luke 10:37

**1.** Rather than a single act of neighborliness, what does Jesus' command require?

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**2.** Read 1 John 4:13–21. What connections do you see between our parable and this passage from 1 John?

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not satisfy the Law itself, it takes comfort that He fulfills it and gives and imparts to the heart His fullness and strength. In this way He always remains our righteousness, redemption, holiness, etc. [cf. 1 COR 1:30].<sup>2</sup>

## CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

**1.** How does Jesus answer the man's questions about salvation and the requirements of the Law? Or, to ask it another way, how does Jesus teach the lawyer that he is asking the wrong questions?

**2.** Two common misunderstandings about justification are: (1) "Whether it's my works or my faith, it doesn't matter — in the end, the deciding factor in my salvation is still *me*"; and (2) "Because I'm saved by grace, I don't have to do anything for anybody. I have no neighbor but Jesus, and I know He always loves me." How does the parable of the Good Samaritan challenge these two misunderstandings? (The two concluding Luther quotes should help here.)

**3.** How does the message of the parable as presented here impact the way you read the following passage, the story about Martha and Mary? Read Luke 10:38–42. Does that episode raise similar questions about the relationship

We let Luther have the final word among us:

This is our chief article, the doctrine of faith, which tells us that we cannot help ourselves, nor can any works or teaching of the Law, but He must begin it in us. He does not drive us with the Law if we perceive our sins and misery (for that belongs to the secure spirits such as this scribe, who do not want to be called sinners), but He sincerely takes pity on us, befriends and comforts us through His Word, Himself binds up the wounded, puts us on His animal, nurses and tends to us. He Himself had to carry out our redemption by Himself, take our place, and bear on His body our sins and need. He Himself also proclaims this to us and gives us the comforting words through which we are bandaged and healed.<sup>1</sup>

And again:

Look, this is the teaching and power of the Gospel and the treasure by which we are saved. It brings us to the point of also beginning to fulfill the Law. Where the great, unfathomable love and kindness of Christ are known and believed, love both for God and for our neighbor also flows from it. Through such knowledge and consolation the Holy Spirit moves the heart to be friendly to God, gladly to praise and thank Him as we should, to guard against sin and disobedience, and willingly to submit to serving and helping everyone. Wherever it still feels its weakness, it fights against its flesh and the devil by calling upon God, etc. Thus the heart always lifts itself up to Christ in faith; if it does

<sup>1</sup> LW 79:62 §40. Cf. Luther 53 §40.

<sup>2</sup> LW 79:63 §43. Cf. Luther 54 §43.

between serving God and being served by Him? How do the two passages teach mutually reinforcing messages about the “one thing necessary”?

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**4.** What have you learned about the doctrine of justification by grace through faith from this study?

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