

LESSON 8

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Jerusalem to Jericho

It was approximately seventeen miles from Jerusalem to Jericho. Even though it was not a great distance, the journey was notoriously dangerous for travelers. The road between these two cities had a descent that started about 2,500 feet above sea level and ended about 800 feet below sea level. In addition, the road ran through rocky and desert country, which made it easy for bandits to hide from unsuspecting and defenseless travelers.

Priests, Levites, and Samaritans

While the man lay injured on the side of the road, there were three people who happened to pass by. The first was a priest, someone who worked for God at the temple. When he saw the man, he tried to avoid him. According to Old Testament law, a priest who touched a dead body made himself ceremonially impure (Lev 21:1-4). The second person to pass by was a religious Levite. He also worked at the temple (1 Chr 23:27-32) and, like the priest, decided not to get involved. They were more interested in protecting themselves. The third person to walk by was a Samaritan. It was well known that the Jews and Samaritans were hostile to one another. The Jews viewed the Samaritans as half-breeds because they were a mixed race produced when Jews from the northern kingdom intermarried with foreigners after Israel's exile. In fact, the Jews despised them so much that they would not travel through Samaria, even if it meant going out of their way. But Jesus used this person to demonstrate that true love does not discriminate.

BIBLE TEXT

Luke 10:25-37

BIBLE TRUTH

A good Samaritan helped a person whom others had ignored.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To be willing to help others, regardless of any differences.
2. To be willing to take risks.
3. To be willing to set aside a busy schedule.
4. To be willing to make sacrifices.
5. To know that Jesus teaches us who our neighbors really are, and what it means to love your neighbor as yourself.

MEMORY VERSE

"Let brotherly love continue."

(Hebrews 13:1)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord Jesus, thank You for guiding us safely through another week. You have chosen us to be your special people, but we know that You want everyone to be saved. Let us learn from today's lesson and be good neighbors to the people around us so that they may see Your wonderful grace and glory. This is one way we can serve and repay You. Please give us the wisdom and strength to do what is right. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

To love your neighbor as yourself is much easier said than done. Granted, it's not hard to be a good neighbor to someone who is known and well-liked. But what about when it comes to an acquaintance or even a stranger? Like in the priest's situation, it is easy to justify a lack of love. "I couldn't have helped because I was a priest and was not allowed to touch him." But Jesus taught two very important principles: (1) a neighbor is anyone of any race, gender, or social background; and (2) love means acting to meet a need.

Your students may easily brush off helping others for a number of reasons. Maybe they don't speak the same language, or the person is a stranger; perhaps they hang

out with different friends, or it might be because they have a special condition (e.g., a physical or mental handicap). Whatever the case may be, your students may come up with excuses to justify why they are not good neighbors to these people. Remind them that Jesus set the best example for them when He ate with sinners and helped the needy. Love knows no bounds. Encourage them to try their best to help others, no matter how different they may be. There should be no excuses when it comes to showing love to others, and the best way to show it is to do something about it! It may not be as grand as what the Samaritan did but Jesus remembers every little good deed.

VOCABULARY

parable: a story containing a moral teaching

priest: someone who performs religious ceremonies and counsels the people

Levite: a person who belonged to the tribe of Levi, which was responsible for looking after the affairs of the temple

Samaritans: a mixed race descending from the northern Jews who intermarried with foreigners; seen as foreigners, not Jewish

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about how Jesus resurrected Lazarus to glorify God. Jesus loved Lazarus very much, but when his sisters Mary and Martha told Jesus that he was sick, Jesus did not immediately travel to Bethany to help him. Instead, what did He do? (He stayed in Perea for another two days and then went to Bethany on the third day.) When Jesus arrived in Bethany, how many days had Lazarus been dead already? (4 days.) Did Jesus stay in Perea longer because He didn't like Lazarus? (No, He stayed because He was going to resurrect Lazarus to glorify God.) How did resurrecting Lazarus glorify God? (It showed that Jesus had power over life and death.) We learned that Jesus loves us and can help us in even the most difficult circumstances and that He has power over life and death; He is the resurrection and the life and can give us eternal life.

BIBLE STORY

Jesus Teaches About Love

One day, Jesus was teaching a large crowd of people. He explained that it was important to love God with all their heart and to love their neighbor as themselves.

After Jesus said this, someone stood up and asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

Jesus decided to answer him by telling an interesting story. Listen carefully.

A Man Is Robbed

Once, there was a man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was on a long and lonely mountain

road—the only road connecting these two cities. During his journey, robbers came out of nowhere and attacked him. They took all his money and clothes and even beat him up. They left him on the road and ran away. The man was in a lot of pain but there was no one there to help him.

A Priest and a Levite Pass By

The man lay on the road, badly hurt from the severe beating. He was in so much pain that he could not get up and go for help. He did not know what to do. But not long after, someone came down the road—it was a priest. The

priest took a look at the injured man, but did not stop to help. He continued to walk down the road as if nothing had happened.

Boys and girls, put yourselves in the position of the priest. What would you do if you were the priest? Why?

Soon, another person came along the road. This time, it was a Levite who passed by. He saw the man lying there, but kept on walking.

Can you imagine the kind of pain and suffering the man was going through? If he was still aware of what was going on, he must have felt very sad that these two holy people did not help him. If even they did not want to help, then who would?

A Samaritan Shows Love

Later on, another person came close to where the man was. This time, it was a Samaritan.

When the Samaritan saw the man, he felt sorry for him. Even though Jews and Samaritans did not like each other, this Samaritan didn't act like they were enemies. He immediately got off his donkey and went to the man's side. He knelt down beside the injured man and gently washed the cuts and bruises. He also took out oil from his bag and poured it on the man's wounds to help him feel better. Afterwards, he bandaged the wounds.

"You can't stay here by yourself," said the Samaritan. "I will let you ride my donkey so that we can get you to an inn where you can rest. I will walk beside you."

The Samaritan carefully lifted the man onto his donkey and they set off. When they arrived at the inn, the

Samaritan told the innkeeper to give them a room so that the man could rest. All night long, the Samaritan stayed by the injured man's side in case he needed help.

The Next Morning

When it was morning, the Samaritan went to speak to the innkeeper.

"Here is some money," he said. "Please take care of the man while I am away. When I come back, I will pay you for whatever more you spend."

The innkeeper took the money and looked after the man for the Samaritan.

The Good Neighbor

When Jesus finished telling the story, He asked, "Who was the good neighbor to the injured man?"

The same man who asked the question in the beginning answered, "It was the person who was kind to the hurt man."

Then Jesus said, "Go and be a good neighbor, too." Jesus wants everyone to be kind and helpful, just like the Samaritan.

In this parable, Jesus tells us to help those who are in need, regardless of their background. We must not base our decision to help someone on who they are. Instead, we need to be like the Samaritan who helped the man, even though their people were enemies. Jesus wants us to be good neighbors, just like the Samaritan, so let us remember to pray to God to help us become one.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Fill in the Blank/Questions to Think About

1. A _____ (priest) and a _____ (Levite) walked by but did not help the injured man.
2. The _____ (Samaritan) was the only one who stopped to help.
3. He poured _____ (oil) on the wounds and brought the man to an inn.
4. Jewish people and Samaritans were very good friends. False; they did not like one another.
5. Jesus taught us to love our neighbors as ourselves. True.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"Let brotherly love continue." (Hebrews 13:1)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

In this parable, Jesus specified the three people that passed by the injured man. Do you remember who those three people were? [Let students answer.] A priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan, respectively. Let's talk about this for a moment. What can we learn from these three people who all came from different backgrounds?

Firstly, a priest was someone who knew the law of God very well. According to the Old Testament law, a priest who touched a dead body made himself ceremonially impure (Lev 21:1-4). When the priest saw the injured man, he didn't know how hurt he was. What if he was already dead? What if he died while the priest brought him to a safe place? All these things went through the priest's mind as he walked by, and at the end, he didn't stop to help the man.

Next, the Levite. A Levite was someone who worked in the temple of God and served the Lord. He may have felt the same way the priest did because he, too, did not wish to make himself unclean by touching a dead person. He decided to continue with his journey and ignore the injured man.

The third and last person who passed by was a Samaritan. During that time, the Jews and Samaritans didn't like each other. In fact, the Jews despised the Samaritans because they were a mixed race of Jews and other foreigners. When the Samaritan passed by the injured man, a Jew, the first thing that came to his mind was probably that this man didn't want anything to do with him—a Samaritan! Yet, he stopped to help this injured man.

Each of these three people had a reason not to help the injured man. But this is not what Jesus wants us to focus on in this parable. Rather, He wants us to learn from the Samaritan to be a neighbor—someone who always sees a reason to love. Let's look into this parable again to see how this Samaritan loved his neighbor.

1. Be willing to help others, regardless of any differences.

As we mentioned earlier, the Jews looked down on the Samaritans and wanted nothing to do with them (Jn 4:9). During the Assyrian captivity, many nations were brought together with the Jews in Samaria. During this time, the Jews intermarried with the foreigners and worshipped their own gods (2 Kgs 17:24-41). And their descendents, being half-Jews, became what we now know as the Samaritans in the Bible. They were despised by the Jews, who had always worshipped God throughout their generations. When the Samaritan saw the injured man, he certainly knew that all the Jews disliked him, including this man lying on the ground. But he didn't think much about that. Before he even thought about the background of this man, he was already filled with compassion. He was willing to help this man regardless of their differences. Being a Samaritan did not make him cold-hearted, nor did the wounded man being a Jew make it more difficult for the Samaritan to show compassion. All this Samaritan saw was an injured man who needed his help.

2. Be willing to take risks.

Did you realize that the Samaritan took a really big risk by stopping to help this injured man? Think about it. Many robbers were hiding along the way between Jerusalem and Jericho, ready to attack harmless travelers like the injured man in this parable. What if the robbers were still nearby? What if other thieves came by this road? They would certainly target the Samaritan—an unsuspecting person trying to help a defenseless, dying man! Yet, the Samaritan was willing to take the risk. He put his own safety, and his own life, at risk for this injured man. Again, this Samaritan saw that this man needed his help, and he couldn't see anything else that mattered more.

3. Be willing to set aside a busy schedule.

Students, why do you think that the Samaritan was traveling along the same road as the injured man? What was he doing at that time? [Let students think and share.] Just like the priest and the Levite, this Samaritan was also on a journey. The Bible didn't tell us why he was on a journey; maybe he was on a business trip or visiting a friend in another town. Regardless of the reason, he had to change his plan because he decided to help the injured man. He was willing to set aside his plans to help this man because he saw a greater need in this wounded man than in his own busy schedule.

4. Be willing to make sacrifices.

In this parable, we can see that this Samaritan was able to put aside all the reasons he had not to help this injured man and show compassion on him. Not only did he sacrifice his time and energy for this man, he also used some of his own provisions to help him. Do you remember what he did? [Let students answer.] He bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him (Lk 10:34). Moreover, the Samaritan even offered an open-ended agreement to provide for his needs. On top of giving money to the innkeeper to take care of the wounded man, the Samaritan told the innkeeper that he would come back and pay for anything extra that he had to spend on the wounded man. He was willing to sacrifice not just time and energy, but also two days' wages and more.

Do we still remember the priest and the Levite? They could not help the wounded man due to their religious duties. But, if they truly had compassion on others, the least they could have done was to inform other people and get help for this man. However, they decided to simply walk on by and ignore the man. On the other hand, a Samaritan, whose people the Jews treated poorly, had compassion on this wounded man. The fact that this Samaritan could put aside all the differences that divided the Jews and his people, and take action to show kindness to a Jew, was more pleasing to God than the priest and the Levite.

5. Jesus teaches us who our neighbors really are, and what it means to love your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors. But who are our neighbors? Are they our friends and family? Are they the people who live in the same neighborhood as us? Or, are they more than just people we know? [Let students answer.] In this lesson, Jesus teaches us who our neighbors really are. Our neighbor is anyone in need that we have the ability to help! Did the Samaritan know the wounded man? No, he didn't, but he helped him because the man was in need; the Samaritan helped him because he had the ability to do so! Jesus wants us to love our neighbors, just as we love ourselves. He wants us to love them by being kind and helpful. The Bible says, "My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn 3:18). The truth is, our Lord Jesus Christ loves us, and we can reflect His love by helping others. Indeed, we can truly help those in need. Jesus used this parable to demonstrate that true love does not discriminate. In love, a person's background is irrelevant; the risks we take, the plans we break, and the sacrifices we make do not matter when we have the ability to help. Lastly, let me share a scenario with you.

Kevin was a businessman many years ago. Unfortunately, after a long period of struggle, his business was finally expelled from the market by his competitors. He became bankrupt and unemployed. After his business closed, Kevin immediately started looking for a new job. However, since the job market had become more and more demanding of higher education, Kevin had a hard time finding a job that would pay him enough to sustain his family. For many months, he worked at a local coffee shop part-time for a living as he was actively looking for other jobs. One day, he came home and found out that his wife had left him. He never found out why she left or where she went, but he figured that she left out of fear that he could no longer take good care of her. Kevin had a really hard time after his wife left. He became depressed and was fired from the coffee shop due to several mistakes he made at work. He lost his home and everything he had. One year after his business had closed down, Kevin became a homeless person who made a living by selling bottles of water on the streets.

One day, a lady whose husband just opened a local computer business approached Kevin. Kevin remembered this lady. She had bought water from him many times; in fact, she did this every time she drove by him! She said to Kevin, "My husband just opened a new business and we are looking for some new employees. Would you like to come to our business one of these days for an interview?" In great surprise, Kevin got all the information he needed for the interview from this lady.

A few years have passed and Kevin has been working for this lady at her husband's computer business. Looking back, Kevin really thanks her for bringing him on board. At that time, the lady didn't know him at all. All she knew was that he was a homeless person who couldn't find a better job. But his background didn't matter to her. What's more, this lady also found a few other homeless people to work at her husband's business. Kevin knew that she had taken the time to find all these people because she really wanted to help those in desperate need. Moreover, she took a risk to hire people she didn't know. What if Kevin was lying about his whole story? What if all these homeless people weren't reliable? But all these factors didn't seem to matter to this lady as much as being able to help people in need. She drove around the city every day and

saw all these people whom she had the ability to help. She had compassion on them and treated them all as her neighbors. Thank God, her husband's business was very successful and they had a great team of employees. It was indeed a blessing from God!

Students, God loves us and it is our responsibility as His children to demonstrate this same love to people around us. His love is unconditional, as ours should be. The Samaritan put aside all the reasons not to help and focused on the wounded man in need. Similarly, we focus on other people's needs the same way. "Go and be a good neighbor, too." Are you ready to do as Jesus said?

HOMework ANSWER KEY

1. Jerusalem; Jericho
2. He performs religious ceremonies.
3. He works in the temple and serves God.
4. Possible answers could be: kind, compassionate, generous, caring
5. The Samaritans were a people that came from the intermarrying of the Jewish people and foreigners.
6. The Samaritan
7. False; he stayed with the man overnight.
8. B
9. Answers may vary.

ACTIVITIES

1**Bible Story Role-play**

Optional Activity

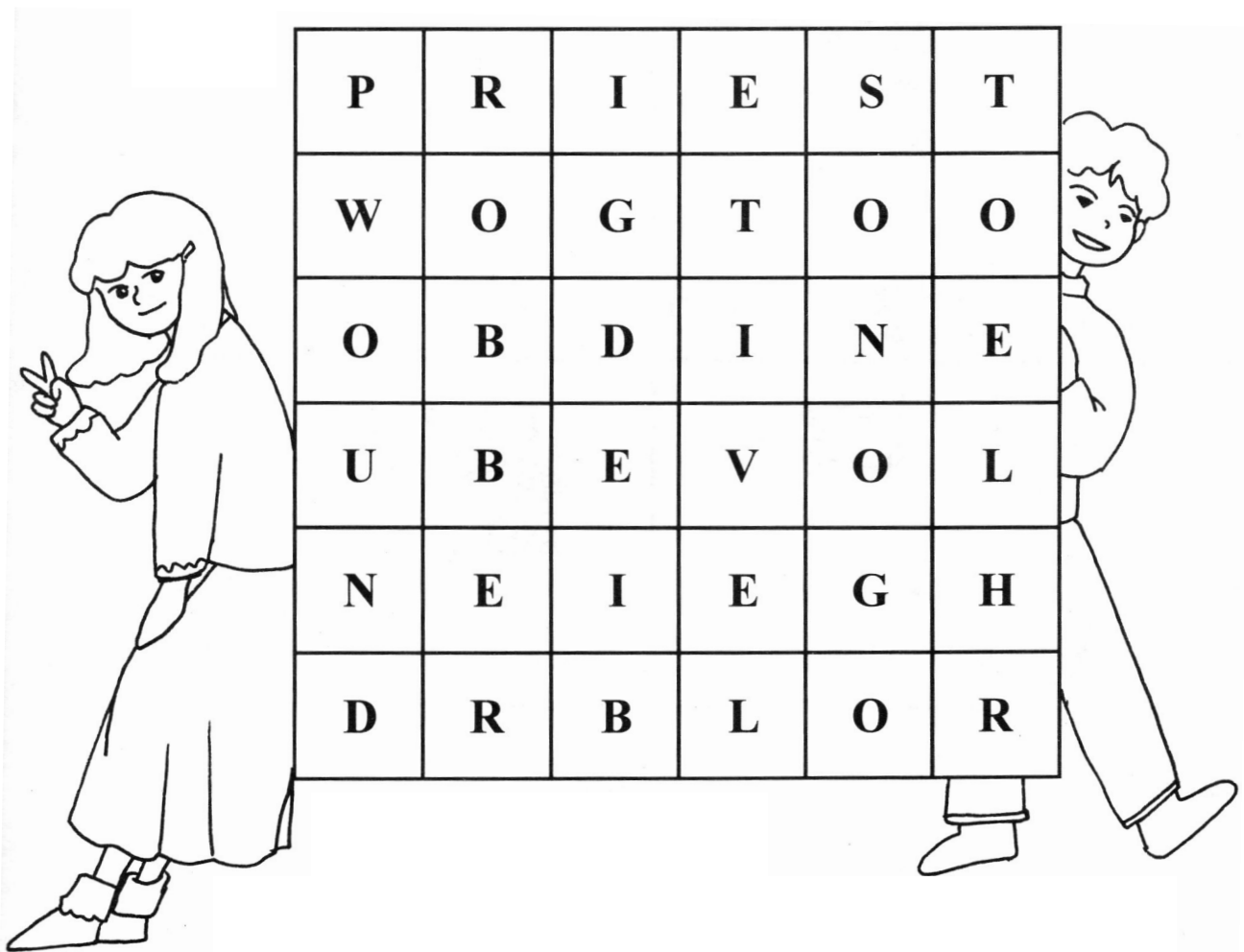
If extra time is available, let the students role-play the story. This is a good Bible story to act out. It has many elements that appeal to the students. Remember to bring in some props to make it more realistic (e.g., a coat for the man to wear, coins, bandages, etc). Let the shy students take on the role of the priest or Levite since it requires little or no speaking. Also ensure that they don't get carried away when "beating up" the robbed man.

2 Good Samaritan Word Search

Objective: To help students recall the events of the story and the lesson aim.

Instructions: Find the following words in the word search puzzle below. They can be vertical, horizontal, or backwards. Then use the remaining letters to spell out what Jesus taught us to be.

priest, Levite, love, robber, wound



Jesus taught us to be a

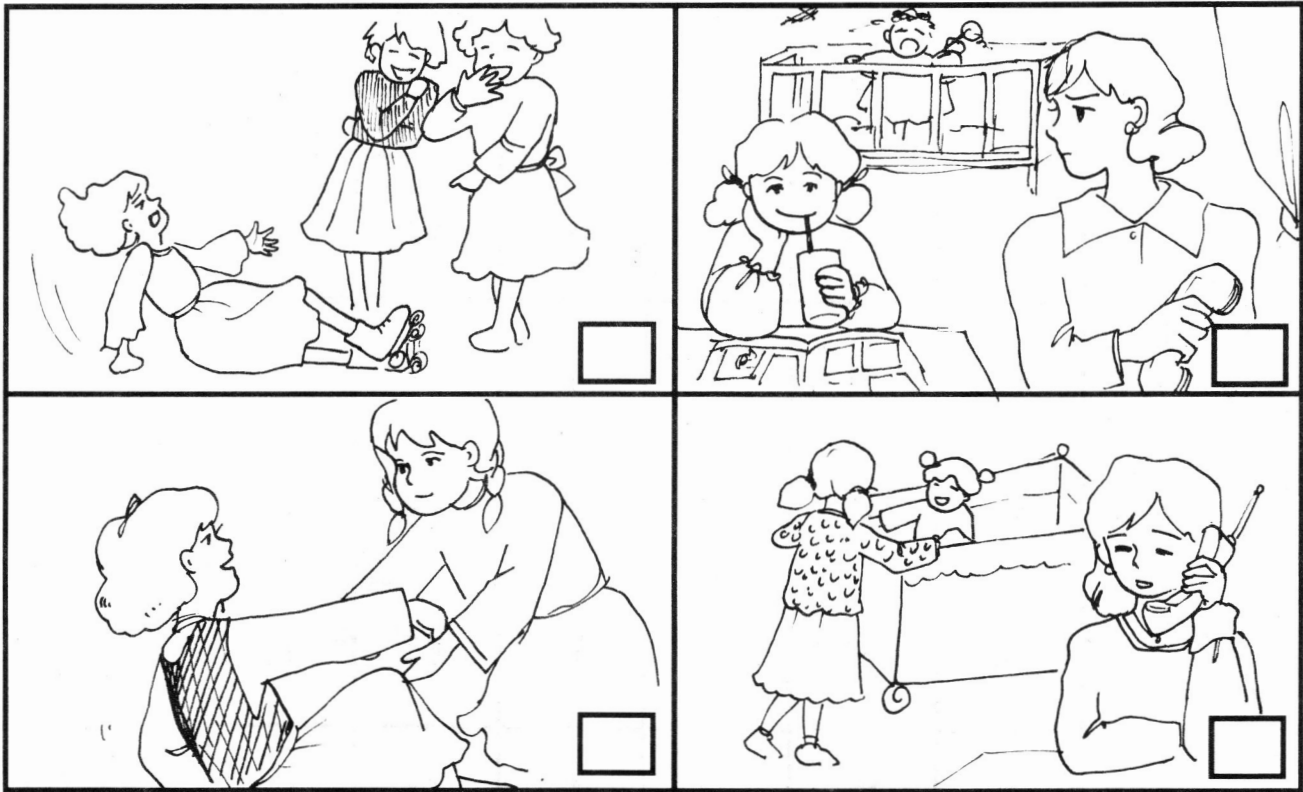
3

Be a Good Neighbor

Objective: To encourage the students to be a good neighbor.

Instructions

Look at the pictures. Compare those who are being good neighbors to those who are not. Put a check mark next to the people who are being helpful and good neighbors. Describe how the other people could change their behavior. Now write down the name of someone you want to help this week. Then write (or draw) how you plan to help.



How can the people who aren't good neighbors change their behavior?

Who I want to help this week:

How I plan on helping this person:

E1 Year 2 Book 4 Lesson 8—Who Is My Neighbor?

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: A good Samaritan helped a person whom others had ignored.

Lesson Objective: To respect and help others regardless of race, gender, culture, or background.

Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Hebrews 13:1)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

1. **Fill In the Blank:** The injured man in the story was traveling from _____ to _____.

Short Answer

2. What role does a priest have in serving God?

3. What role does a Levite have in serving God?

4. List out two good characteristics of the Samaritan: _____, _____.

5. Why did the Jews despise the people from Samaria?

6. Who was the good neighbor to the injured man? _____

7. **True or False:** After the Samaritan took the injured man to the inn, he left immediately and didn't care for the man.

Multiple Choice

8. _____ : Jesus' instruction to the people was _____.

- a. You don't need to be a good neighbor.
- b. Go and be a good neighbor too.
- c. Be a good neighbor only if it benefits you.

Life Application

9. How can you train yourself to always consider the good of others above your own?
