

03.08.26

Luke

Chapter 10 - An Unexpected Evaluation

Testing Legitimacy of Heirship (vs. 25-37)

Luke 10:25-37: And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” And he answered, “YOU SHALL 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.” And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.” But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other

side. But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

Ah, one of the most endearing passages of all of Scripture; one that is known by so many people: Good Samaritan. Where did that come from? It comes from this particular passage. And what a wonderful truth it is.

When we look at this, what we're dealing with is the lawyer's question about the inheritance into the kingdom of heaven, and then as Jesus ultimately tops it off at the

end with this focus on mercy. I would say this, that what the passage is going to be doing is revealing that the two are inextricably tied together; your concept of mercy as well as inheritance in heaven. And so, just keep that in mind as we go through this, because that's where we're heading. It's kind of letting you know where we're heading, sort of like in Revelation. We win! So, I'm letting you know that's how the book ends. But the in-between is what we're going to talk about within this passage.

When we come to this in verse 25, we come with a certain lawyer that is coming up to Jesus, and he begins questioning Him, interrogating Him in some way. And the passage actually says to test Him or to try Him, to see the legitimacy of this person that is referred to by many as a rabbi, referred to by some as a teacher. And so, who is this person? And so, we're going to see if He's legitimate. We're going to see if, in fact, there's veracity to the things that He's saying. What better person to do this than a lawyer? Now, if you realize that we're in a context of, as the passage starts off in verse 25, we're almost surprised, "Behold, now a lawyer shows up." And what we see is it's

in the context of the fact that Jesus has been sending out His disciples and apostles at this point which are being sent out for the purpose of proclaiming this wonderful message of God's peace to all mankind. The question is, are you going to receive the peace? What causes a person to be receptive to the peace of God? And He's been laying this foundation all the way.

In fact, if you were to go back in Chapter 8, you see this interesting parable that Jesus tells us about the parable of the soils. And it is the parable of the soils that kind of gives a picture of receptivity. In other words, who's receptive? And then He talks about that you have these different soils and the seed is broadcast out. He actually goes on to explain the seed is the word of God, so He gives the analogy of this and sort of a metaphor that's used; the seed is that which is going to grow in your heart and bring everlasting life to you. How wonderful it is that God is doing this. Nevertheless, there are different soils, and the ability of that soil to receive; one is on firm, packed down soil in which people have been trotting. It kind of gives you the picture of a road that's been well

trod on, and it's basically, as Jesus would say, the road is broad and the gate is big, and many there are that go to hell. It's a broad way to go to hell. But the fact is that by virtue of a lot of people going there, they pack down the dirt, it becomes hard, seed is thrown on it, and the ground doesn't take it. Another is thrown on rocks. The rocks won't let the ground take it. The same thing is true with one thrown in an area where there are weeds, and though it may grow up, the weeds choke it out; the cares of the world begin to take it. But then ultimately, there is a good soil.

And it's the good soil I want you to look at in Luke 8:15, if you back up with me.

And it says this,

(Luke 8:15) “But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.”

In other words, all the soils up to this point, nothing. This one, good. It's the only one defined as good, and it's the one that receives. Now, the question is, what made it good? And the answer is really seen throughout the

Gospel of Luke that those that God is calling are not necessarily those that have had an easy life. I mean, when you look at the women that are ministering to Jesus, you come to the beginning of one of the chapters, and it begins to introduce us to these women that are surrounding Jesus, and they begin to minister to Him, actually giving out of their own means. And you say, "Who are these women?" Well, demon-possessed women. Women that have been working for Herod. So, these are not necessarily your upper echelon or your paragons of the world. These are the ones that have suffered tremendous pain and sorrow, and suffering. When He calls one, He calls an average labor guy that fishes, and He does this great miracle, and Peter falls flat on his face, and he goes, "I'm a sinful man." I mean, he calls himself sinful. And Jesus says, "I want you to go with Me." And then He walks in an office in which this guy is collecting taxes, and He goes, "You, out." And Levi goes with Him. Matthew (Levi) becomes one of His disciples. What Luke begins to show us is that it's not the people that you would think, and that's why we give you the title,

“Good News for the Unlikely,” because these are people that have had rough lives, people that have, in many cases, had to deal with loss and pain and sorrow. I mean, even the very beginning of Luke, it opens up with Elizabeth, who's an old lady, who hasn't been able to have any children. And God says, “We're going to open up your womb and you're going to have John the Baptist.” And you go, “Wow.” So, all the way through, it's not a surprise then at this particular passage that we have a Samaritan who, strangely enough, in this particular story, it was the Samaritans that were actually seen as the people that would usually do the robbing. So, this is a good Samaritan, which is an anomaly in and of itself that you would actually perceive. Besides the fact that Samaritans were mixed breeds, they don't belong in the country, you know, they argue about where God's temple is, “It's supposed to be up in this region, it's not in Jerusalem,” and they're just a big bother. And of course, the Pharisees would do everything they could to go around and not pass through Samaria because of that acrimony between the two of them. So, you have this hostility that's always there.

What's interesting within the story, as Jesus begins to tell it, is you have this guy that is walking through from Jerusalem to Jericho. So, that was a common place in which they would walk through. It's an interesting track because it's basically all downhill, and it just goes deeper and deeper into a great valley. And from what I understand, Jericho is 850 feet below sea level. And so, Jerusalem is like 2,500 above. So, you start walking to Jericho, you start walking down, and then it kind of weaves in between cliffs. Some of it's pretty treacherous, and some places it gets down to one lane as you're going through, and it's a perfect place to get robbed. Because there are all kinds of rocks to hide behind; there are all kinds of places that you could find yourself, and this person doesn't have any place to go. And if you're by yourself, you're going to get knocked off. And they had a lot of people which that was true. So, as Jesus tells a story that somebody would get beat up and had all their money taken from them, it was a familiar story, especially on this particular road, going in this particular way. As Jesus begins to tell this story, He begins to relate to this lawyer.

Now, I want to talk about the lawyer just a minute. And as we come into this lawyer, he begins to talk about his concern for being a part of the kingdom of heaven or inheritance into heaven. How do you inherit this? And I think it's very interesting that he makes the statement, "What do I need to do to inherit this everlasting life?" And I don't know if the lawyer was thinking or not, but anyway, if you think about it, if you inherit it, you don't do anything. It's an inheritance. So, it's not something that you work for. Nevertheless, his first question is, "What do I have to do in order to do this?" My point of the whole thing with the parable of soils is, in order for a good soil to be good soil, it has to go through a lot of tilling. It has to be rid of its weeds and all the things that are there. You start getting rid of the rocks. You take the hard ground and you make it soft. What's the fundamental point? The fundamental point is that in order for soil to be good, it's got to go through a lot, a lot of hardship. And what it does is it loosens, it causes the person to be softer. You know, when you've gone without, you can feel for somebody that's going without. When you've had loss, you can feel for somebody that's going through loss. You think that in

some ways it's for them, but it's actually for you. Because there's a saving process that takes place. Every time God puts a trial in your life, God's saving you. It's why James will say, "Consider it all joy when you encounter these various trials," knowing that it's testing your faith, but it's telling your faith. It's causing a receptivity. James will actually go on and say that "Because of this, you'll receive the word of God," listen to the word he uses, "implanted, which is able to save your souls." He'll use the word "humility," "With humility, you receive the word of God." So, the point is that, as Hebrews says, hardship for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful. And I know we all wrestle with that, but God is saving us. And He's saving us from ourselves, and He's saving us from the callousness of our heart. So, the very sense that we have a care for somebody else, that very thought is also going to make us receptive to the word of God. This is going to be one of the fundamental points.

Now, as the lawyer comes on the scene, of course he feels like he's going to adjudicate; he's going to in some way put Jesus on the stand. And Lawyers have a way of going

into jurisprudence, defining things, defining words. I think it's interesting as I was reminded again in Isaiah 29:21, that the lawyers would oftentimes cause the innocent to be indicted by a word. It goes on and says they do this with meaningless arguments. So, "If we could just focus on things that aren't important and kind of catch them off here." So, we're being lawyerly within the passage, and of course he's trying to catch Jesus.

A little historical background in this, there were fundamentally two trains of thought at this time with Pharisees and the lawyers. You had two schools of thought. One was a school of Hillel; one was a school of Shammai. It actually was formed about a about 100 years before Christ. These two would oftentimes debate. They actually, in the Talmud, have 300 debates that were done between Hillel and Shammai as they would begin to debate. Hillel would come from the perspective of compassion and empathy. Shammai would come from the aspect of, "It's the Law." So, the rigidity of the Law, "You've got to go by the Law." And so, there were always these two heads kind of brunting each other. And they

would always debate. And the different lawyers would say, "Do we go with the compassion?" Well, I think the Kabbalistic group of the Jews finally came up with this idea, well, the train of thought of Hillel, of compassion and all that is for this world. But the world in which the Messiah comes will be Shammai, and will be strict and rigid. So, it doesn't give you a whole lot to look forward to when you think about it.

Jesus comes on the scene, of course, and I think in some way he's even testing from what school He's coming from. And for those of you who are Bible students and are pretty acquainted with different passages in Scripture, I think you'd be relieved to know that in some respects, most of those that were trained that come into following Christ, of the Jews, were from the school of Hillel, which is compassion and empathy. We know that because he had a grandson, and the grandson's name was Gamaliel. Here again, a lot of us probably don't know who that is, but in Acts 5, you'll read about Gamaliel, who will go in and actually, there's a riot, and he goes, "Look, if it's the hand of God, we can't stop Him." So, we have the historical

Gamaliel within that particular passage. And if you go to Acts 22, you have Paul saying, "Gamaliel was my teacher." So, just to kind of throw that out. So, I think what's interesting is that even Paul had this teacher that was coming from the perspective of compassion, and yet he was killing Christians. But you can see the fact that there was debate on these things.

If you look in verse 25,

(Luke 10:25) "And a lawyer..."

It doesn't tell us who it is. When it uses the phrase, "stood up," it tells us that he's kind of going in an adversarial stance. He's coming against Christ in this.

"And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test..."

Once again, to prove his veracity.

"... saying, "Teacher..."

It's interesting, it doesn't use the word, "Lord," but just simply uses the word, "*didaskalos*," a teacher of the word of God.

"... "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?""

Now, once again, I just want to focus on that one point. What can you do to inherit something? You can't. And Romans 4 will make reference to this very clearly. I mean, if you work for something, you didn't inherit it. You didn't receive it as a gift. It was something that was given to you. Nevertheless, Jesus plays into it. Pretty interesting. Of course, I think He knows what the lawyer is going to do.

(Luke 10:26) “And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? ...”

Because He knows he's going to the Law, “So, what's written in the Law? How does it read to you?” Now, my initial thought would be that He would go to Exodus 20 and just go through the Ten Commandments. Right? I mean, that just makes sense to me because those would be like the greatest commandments. He doesn't go there. He goes in Leviticus and He goes in Deuteronomy. And in those kinds of obscure passages, it makes reference to God's love and that you need to love Him with all your heart. And then in Leviticus, of all places, Leviticus says, “You need to love your neighbor as yourself.” So, this lawyer knows the Law and he's able to pull this stuff out

and he goes to obscure passages. What he's saying is right on.

So, the passage reads this way in verse 27,

(Luke 10:27) “And he answered, “YOU SHALL 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.””

Well, I mean, by the time you get to the end, you go, “Who can do that?”

Ecclesiastes 7:20 reads this way,

“Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.”

Job 9:2, which, by the way, the lawyer is familiar with these verses, will read,

“... But how can a man be in the right before God?”

It's a good question.

In Psalm 143:2 David says to God,

“... For in Your sight no man living is righteous.”

(Galatians 3:11) “Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident...”

I mean, who could be right before God? “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, no, not one.” Scripture repeats this over and over again. So, you can just imagine, you know, God says, “Well, how does the Law read? What are you supposed to do?” And he quotes a passage like, “You need to love God with all your heart,” which means not just at a point in time, but consistently. Put Him first in everything. Who does that? In all their thoughts, in all their minds, in all their heart, who does that? It would be an impossible feat for anybody to do this. This is why the lawyer comes back, and he does what a lawyer does. He comes in the realm of, “Yeah, but what does it actually mean?” And I think that's one of the problems that we see oftentimes with people as they read Scripture. Because they know that they can't do certain things, they use jurisprudence in the fact that they begin to redefine what certain words mean. They go, “Well, what does a neighbor mean? You know, love your neighbor as yourself?” I think it is interesting

that he just seemed to gloss right over, “love God with all your heart,” and he just goes, “Okay, let's talk with the neighbor thing. You know, how do we do that?” And so, they begin to, through legalese, there's kind of a sense of rejection. And they rest on their ability to reinterpret Scripture. This is why Peter says, “No Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation. Men are moved by the Holy Spirit and spoke.” It is the Word of God. It's absolute. So, it's not up to an interpretation. It's not up for you to go, “I think it means this way or it means this way. Maybe Hillel would see it this way. Maybe Shammai would see it this way.” It has nothing to do with that. It's God's word and it's how He sees it; what He sees is righteous. So, Jesus says to Him, “Great verses; great Law.” You know, of course Jesus is there going, “I wrote it.”

(Luke 10:28) “And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.””

Love God with all your heart all the time, with all your strength, with all your might. Love others the way you're supposed to, the way God would. If you would do that, you enter into life. Because you enter into the Spirit and

the heart of God. This is who He is. Well, what are you thinking at this time? I know what the lawyer's thinking, "So, what's a neighbor?" I mean, you've got to go into the definitions, right?

So, verse 29 reads this way,

(Luke 10:29) "But wishing to justify himself..."

Now, once again, our salvation has nothing to do with your ability to justify yourself. You can't justify yourself. Only God can justify you because you're standing before God. Think about the picture of the great white throne of judgment. Heaven and earth disappear. There is no universe. You're before God, just you and God. Nothing else there. He opens a book of all your deeds. Now, we're going to see if you match up to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might, and love your neighbor as yourself in everything you do." Anybody want to stand there? I don't want to be there. And that's a wonderful thing, Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation of those who are in Christ Jesus." He paid it all. I don't want to be standing there. But those that think they belong there and think

that they can wiggle their way out will sit there before the throne of God and try to justify themselves. It's not going to work. Of course, He knows whether they're lying or telling the truth.

(Luke 10:28) “And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.”

(Luke 10:29) But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?””

The word “neighbor” that's used is a very general term. It actually comes from a root word which means “near”. So, who is your neighbor? Whoever is near you at this time, at any time. Very general term.

So, Jesus tells this interesting story. And as He tells the story, once again, He tells of familiar things, something that he had probably seen from time to time. Maybe he was one of the ones that passed by an individual that had been beaten up and robbed. But He tells this interesting story of a man that was beaten up. Now, what's interesting, too, about it is He doesn't tell us what kind of man this man was that left Jerusalem to go to Jericho. But the fact that he was going from Jerusalem to Jericho is

probably telling us he's a Jew. How would you know who he is? Well, you wouldn't, and I'm going to tell you why. Because his clothes had been taken, and he had been beaten up. So, he's unrecognizable. This could have been one of this guy's friends. It could have been another Pharisee, another lawyer. You couldn't know. A certain man. And he was beaten up. Well, there were two that were walking by, right? Isn't that what the passage says? One was a Levite, which, you know, those come from the priestly lineage within the passage. In fact, one was a priest.

And I like the way it's put in verse 31, "and by chance" a certain priest comes, by chance a certain Levite comes along the road. Now, once again, just to kind of give you a picture, these are curvy little roads, cliff's hanging over here, cliff's up this way, and you got maybe 4 feet, maybe 8 feet at the most of a path. If somebody gets beat up, you would almost have to step over their body to miss them. Now, Scripture says they walk on the other side of the road, but that's not that far. And you can see the person bleeding. Why in the world would these religious

people walk by? What's happened to them? And Scripture's revealing, Christ is revealing to us, that they have hard hearts, they're callous. I wonder why they're callous. They've always been thinking about themselves, they never thought about anyone else. So, Scripture is going to inextricably tie together the concept of perceiving with mercy to inheriting the kingdom. And once again, it has nothing to do with works.

So, the story goes on, and of course, you have this Samaritan. And I'm sure at this particular juncture, Jesus is throwing the Samaritan in, and he's thinking, "Well, that's the robber. That's the guy that robbed him. That's the guy that beat him up." And Jesus goes, "No, this is the guy that helped him." And he pulls out 2 denarii, and he gives it to the innkeeper. Scripture makes reference to the fact that he begins to care for the individual. He wraps him up. And it shows more than an interest. It shows a compassion for the individual. Some actually say that 1 denarius is 1/32nd of 1 night stay. But I don't know if that's true or not, but all I'm saying is when he gives him 2 denarii, that's a long stay in a place of rest. And he gives

that extra money as well to the innkeeper and he says, "And if he needs more, I'll be back." So, this shows an interest that he's actually going to come back and minister to him besides that.

Jesus turns to him, and He goes, "Okay, so you're having a hard time with the whole neighbor concept. So, I gave you 3 people." Now, I almost feel like the lawyer's on the stand. "Of the three people, which one was the neighbor?" He goes, "The guy that helped." "You said right. If you'll do this, you'll live." Now, Jesus isn't saying that by virtue of you showing mercy to people, that's salvation. What He's showing is that heart of mercy is that which will bring you to salvation. In other words, when you begin to see things from that perspective, and this is what the cross is about. It's very interesting when you get the understanding of the tie. There's going to be a time when this same Jesus that he's arguing with is going to be on the cross. He's going to be wrongly treated. He's going to be beat up. People are going to take His clothes and they're going to bargain for them. Scripture tells us this. You're going to be standing at the foot of the cross. The

question is, how do you feel about that? Isn't that an interesting question? If you're callous and you're casting lots for the clothes, you're too hard. You'll never receive this gift. But if you look at that cross, and you go, "He did that for me." Do you know what you'll do? You'll be broken over it. This is why James will say, "Weep and howl over your sins, you adulterers." Why does he put it in that context? You have been treacherous towards Him. You don't feel that? And if you can't feel that, you won't be saved. But what God is looking for is a heart that will embrace His love. And this one is ready. What a wonderful picture when you think about that.

Let me show you a passage in 1 John just to kind of tie some of these things together. 1 John 3. You want to see how salvation and altruism are almost hand in hand? The compassion of a heart, the softness of a heart is that which literally describes receptivity. And once again, what would make you soft? You've been through a lot. You know what it's like. Now, a lot of people go through hardship and turn out hard. I remember my dad used to say, "Through the hardship, you'll either grow better or

bitter.” But those who allow those hardships to do that tilling of the soil will become more receptive and will be more compassionate, so that when somebody starts sharing to them about, “Do you know that God loves you and died for you on the cross?” Tears will start flowing down their cheeks. “For me? He did that for me?”

(1 John 3:10) “By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: ...”

Of course, John gets right to the meat of it.

“... anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

(1 John 3:11) For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

(1 John 3:12) not as Cain...”

So, just in case you're thinking, “What does love look like?” You might be one of those lawyers. Okay, let's just get simple. You don't kill them.

“Not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil...”

Let's put it another way. His heart was evil. People don't kill people because the other person deserves to die, even though they may deserve to die. People murder people, and I'm using the word “murder” instead of just killing, because they're evil inside.

“... and his brother's were righteous.

(1 John 3:13) Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you.”

Watch verse 14. It's a great passage. You know, it's like the lawyer going, “What do I need to do to inherit this eternal life?”

(1 John 3:14) “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren...”

That's interesting, isn't it? That he actually tied the two together?

“... He who does not love abides in death.

(1 John 3:15) Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

I was talking to Connie. I said, “I am so glad that God changes us into His image when we get to heaven, because heaven wouldn't be heaven with a lot of people going to heaven that I know, including me.” (I have my bad days.)

But it says,

(1 John 3:15) “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

(1 John 3:16) We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

(1 John 3:17) But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?”

That's a good question, isn't it? Like Proverbs says, how can you say, “Well, I didn't see that”? How can you walk

by him? The heart of mercy is the heart that's receptive. You've been made receptive. You thought all the hardship that you went through was just God torturing you, but that wasn't God torturing you, it was God saving you.

Let me show you a passage in the Book of James, James 2.

Without going to a lot of explanation of the passage, if you just pick up with me in verse 12, James will say,

(James 2:12) “So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty.”

Which ultimately, is the law of love.

It says this in verse 13, and if you don't have the verse underlined, you might want to underline it because it really is a crucial verse in Scripture,

(James 2:13) “For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.”

See, the reason why Jesus is putting these two together is to demonstrate the heart that is receptive to the Word of God, and is receptive to what Christ has done for them, are those hardships and those difficulties; the very things that have brought us to this particular point.

And James will say in James 4, if you just turn the page, you know, verse 8, I love the way that it's put,

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...”

Now, if you just remember in verse 9, what is necessary for you to draw near to God? Just read it with me.

(James 4:9) “Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.

(James 4:10) Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord...”

What is he saying? Be sorry over your sin. Well, who's sorry over their sin? Somebody that knows what it's like to be hurt. The difficulties in your life God has been using to plow that soil so that when you hear the gospel, you are touched by the message, and you just grab onto it because you love mercy. You know what it's like to need it. And you love it; you won't let it go. And you'll persevere, and Scripture says you'll grow in the fruit. God saves us. He does all the work, there's no doubt about it. But from the very beginning, He's been tilling the soil. He

knew us before the foundation of the world. You thought that you were a victim. You were being saved.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness to us, for Your mercy upon us, clearly undeserved. Lord, we couldn't thank You enough. In all of eternity, I'm sure we're just going to be saying, "Thank You" all the time, coming to a realization of just how gracious and how kind You were to us. The difficulties that You've brought into our life, what a blessing they've been. You've kept us from getting hard, from getting callous, from not caring. You've brought us into a thought and a process in which we'd be receptive to Your grace and Your sacrifice for us.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, perhaps you've never received Jesus as your Lord and Savior. The Bible says, "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who

believe in His name.” But what would make you receive a message of One crucified for you, unless you could really comprehend, by His Spirit moving in you, just how loving He was to you? It'll bring you to tears. It'll cause you to cry out, “Why me? Why be merciful to me?” It'll cause you to embrace His love. You won't let it go. You can't let it go. There is salvation in no other. How wonderful God is to us.