



When you hear the word *neighbor*, whom do you think of? Jesus told a parable (story) that shows us exactly who our neighbors are and how we should treat them.

One day as Jesus was teaching His disciples, a man stood up to ask Jesus a question. He said, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Like many religious people in Jesus' day, this man was not asking an honest question, but he was trying to trick Jesus.

This man was a lawyer, someone who knew well the Law of Moses and would often explain the Law in schools and in the synagogues (*SIN-uh-gogs*). Jesus knew this. So He said, "What is written in the law?"

The lawyer told Jesus what the Law said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus said that the lawyer "answered right."

The lawyer wanted to "justify himself." He wanted others to see how good and righteous he was. He kept the Law; he loved his neighbor. So, he asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

When the Law spoke of treating one's neighbor right (Leviticus 19:15-18), the Jews (God's people) considered their neighbors to be other Jews. No doubt, the lawyer thought Jesus would answer his question by saying, "Your neighbors are your family and your friends." Then the lawyer could say, "I do that!"

Jesus knew what was in the lawyer's heart. (He knows what is in your heart also.) He knew the lawyer wouldn't treat everyone as his neighbor.

So, Jesus told a story about a certain man who traveled from Jerusalem to Jericho. This distance was about twenty miles, and it was a steep, downhill journey. The land was rocky and full of mountains, cliffs, and caves. Very few people lived there, and there were many places for thieves to hide. People often traveled this road in large groups for protection.

Church of God Sunday School

PARABLES OF JESUS: THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Luke 10:25-37

However, the man in Jesus' story was traveling alone. He was robbed, beaten, and left for dead.

As the man lay by the side of the road, "half dead," a priest came along. A priest was one who served in the temple, offering up sacrifices. Surely the priest would help, but the priest did not stop. He may have feared that the robbers were nearby and would attack him also. He may have been in a hurry. Whatever the reason, he "passed by on the other side" of the road.

Next, a Levite came along. A Levite was one who helped the priests in the temple. The Levite "came and looked on him," but he did not help. Why? Perhaps he, too, was in a hurry. Maybe he wondered what people would think if they saw him with this injured man. Just as the priest before him, the Levite "passed by on the other side" of the road.

The third person to come along was a Samaritan. More than likely, the wounded man was a Jew, and the Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans (John 4:9; John 8:48). Yet, the Samaritan "went to him." He bound up the man's wounds, "set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn." He paid the innkeeper two pence (equal to two days' wages) to care for the wounded man.

Jesus ended His story by asking the lawyer, "Which now of these three . . . was neighbor unto him that fell



among the thieves?" That may seem like a simple question. Of course, the Samaritan was the neighbor!

Then Jesus said, "Go, and do thou likewise." It is one thing to know what we should do and how we should treat others. But God wants us to put actions to what we know is true and right.

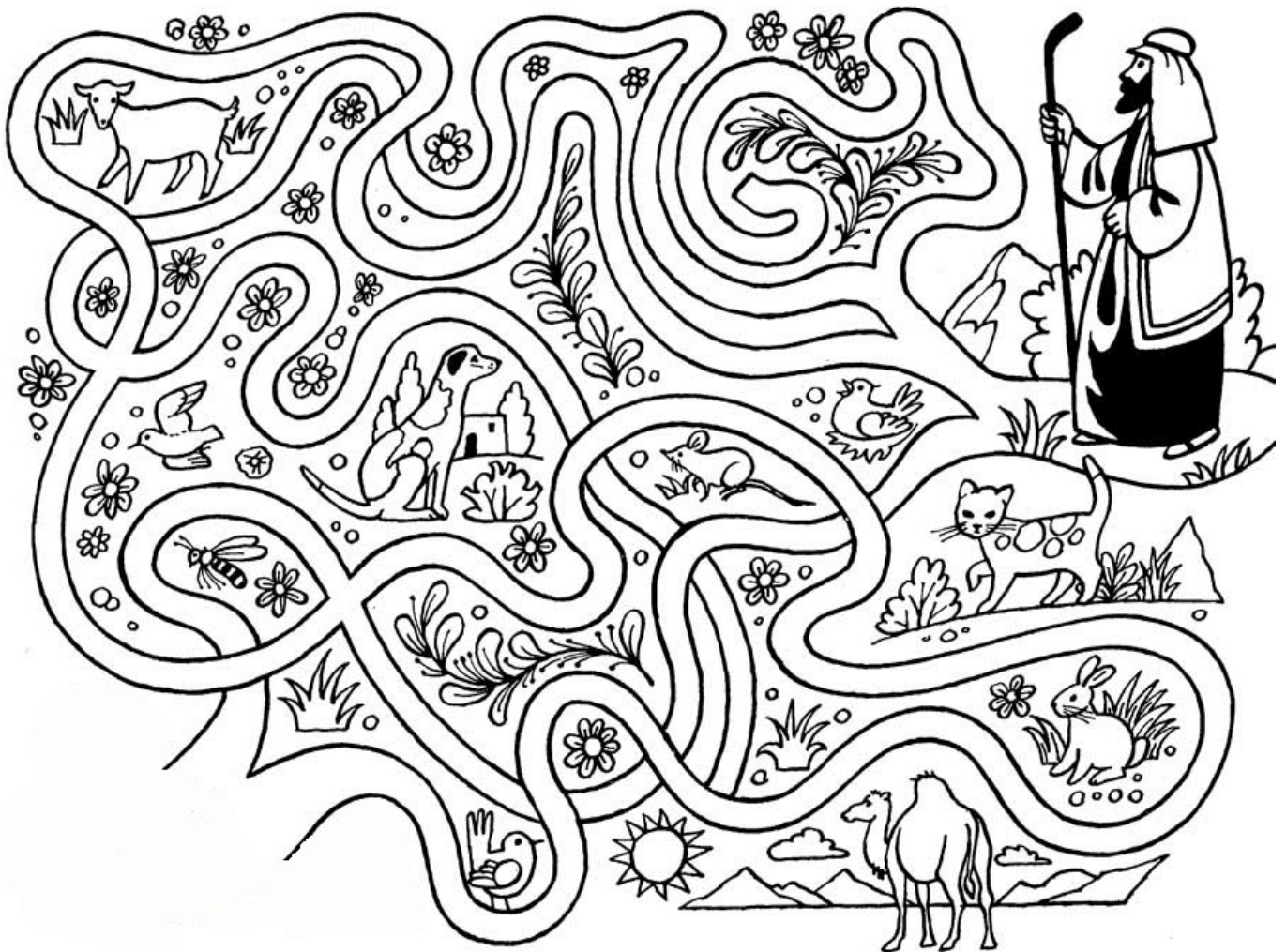
People have many excuses why they cannot help others. Do you allow what other boys and girls think stop you from being friends with someone who is a

little different or someone who is shunned by others? A true Christian has love in his or her heart for everyone. Your neighbor is not determined by race, color, or nationality. Your neighbor is anyone and everyone.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."
—Luke 10:37

Guide the Samaritan to the Wounded Man



Use your Bible to complete the sentences below.

(Luke 10:25-37)



"A _____ man went down."



". . . and fell among _____."



". . . there came down a certain _____ that way."



"But a certain _____ . . . had compassion on him."



". . . and brought him to an _____."