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CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN
LUKE 10:25-37. AND ITS APPLICATION TODAY.

BY
NICHOLAS KILEO

MODERATOR: REV. FR. AELRED LACOMARA C. P

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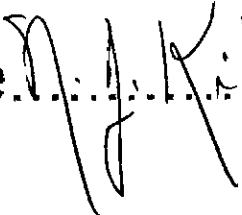
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INTRODUCTION

Parables are one of the ways, which our Lord Jesus Christ used to teach his disciples. This was the method by which Jesus, depicted the vivid examples which were found in the daily lives of his contemporaries. Though the very parables were used by Our Lord Jesus Christ can be dated almost more than two thousand years ago, they still found their relevance and application today in our situations and society, especially in carrying Christ's mission. Jesus fulfilled the mission of his Father by teaching through the words and actions. That is, he was himself the life living example. One of the parables Jesus used was the parable of the Good Samaritan which is the center of our discussion.

The exemplary story of the Good Samaritan ranks as one of the most beautiful and compelling of all synoptic parables. It illustrates the teaching of Jesus on love of God and Neighbour; for there is nothing more central in Jesus' teaching than love, which is necessary for eternal life.[Lk 10: 28]" Not only that, but also, as Mary Warnock comments; "the image of the Good Samaritan is not wholly divorced from the image of the caring government which will provide the necessity to meet the needs of the unfortunate." Perhaps we have a big concern to ask ourselves that, who are the most unfortunates of our day today encounters!

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a hard lesson to hear but all the same it carries a supreme importance. The overwhelming extremes in our society especially that of conformity to the traditions and laws, which are actually highly man-made and are not meant to care for the unfortunates in the society, must be seriously questioned. The story does not just end like that, but with the commission of "Go and Do it". This is a commission, to emulate the Samaritan who teaches how to love God and our fellow neighbour who are in need.

1 Madeleine L. Boucher The Parables. Dublin: (Veritas Publications. 1981), p.119.

2. Mary. Warnock "Exit the Good Samaritan" in Tablet, 19th June 1999, p. 838

Our task in this work, aims at discussing the parable of the Good Samaritan and its application into our lives today. The parable which he used when he was teaching his disciples. This parable as we shall see and read, is centered on the commandment of love. The love of God and our neighbor as a way of attaining eternal life. That is a call for everybody.

The work is divided into three chapters, with their respective subtopics. In chapter one we are going to see what the parable is all about. In this we will define and elucidate the very terminology and answer a question what is a parable. It will be together with offering various definitions as they have been propounded by various theologians. As we shall see, especially from the various definitions, the central point of the explanations about parable, is the teaching of Jesus by examples and stories. The stories which were vivid and concrete to the people. As a matter of fact, we shall also see that, Jesus himself learnt the art of using the parables in the Old Testament.

In the second chapter, I intend to bring the parable into the relevant situation. The parable of the Good Samaritan speaking to us today. Speak to us and visit our situations. The point is to see if, it should find its place in today's life situations. Thus, as we will be discussing the situation and relevance of the parable, we will be trying to answer the question, who are the wounded men and women today in our society? And again, do we have the similar situation or rather incidences and cases which can be equated with the ones in the parable of the Good Samaritan? After exploring this in detail we will automatically admit that the parables of the Lord are still alive and fresh particularly the parable of the Good Samaritan. For the characters and the message of the parable will be solely seen in our context or rather in our situation.

The third chapter, which is the final one, is going to contextualise the work or rather the parable. That is putting it into practical application today. This one is going to be in the line of the mission of the Lord. Again we will see our mission situations. After hearing the message, we should ask ourselves, "then what can we do with it?" Are we just to pocket our Bibles and the preaching?" What we are to put

into practice, is the example of the Samaritan which we are going to learn in the parable. The Samaritan shows the example of loving God and neighbour, by attending our sisters and brothers in need. This will be the call again of putting the message derived from the parable of the Good Samaritan into practice and application.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 WHAT IS THE PARABLE ALL ABOUT?

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I intend to give various definitions of what parables are as they have been approached by various writers and theologians. Such definitions are going to give us a range or rather the variety of meanings of the word Parable.

After seeing briefly the definitions of the parable; we shall get the opportunity to see whether we had parables in the Old Testament because as it can be anticipated, many of us might be puzzled about where Jesus learnt the art of using parables. Was it in the theological institutions if at all there were ones existing? Or Colleges, or in his society and traditions? All these questions will get their answers during the course of the time, that we will trying to explore this chapter.

Then we shall move to the other part, of which we will try to look at the significance of the parables. This is going to answer the question why did Jesus use parables? As we will notice, this is automatically going to give the gospel parables their credibility. That is their present day significance. Finally, we shall see the parable itself and its exegesis. When looking at it critically, we shall discover why Jesus has to tell the parable particularly of the Good Samaritan! This was meant to answer the question which Jesus was asked by the lawyer who is my neighbor? The same question perhaps which you and I are asking today.

1.2. WHAT IS A PARABLE?

The word Parable; *mashal* in Hebrew comes from the Greek word PARABOLE

[specifically meaning a short simple story from which a moral lesson may be drawn] Usually it is an

3. Madeleine I. Boucher op. cit. p. 13.

allegory which is the description of one thing under the image of the other]⁴..

Speaking from its etymology, the word is derived from the Greek verb PARA BALLELWA, which means to throw, to put, of side by side. But literary, the word means juxtaposition whereby metaphorically the word means comparison. Comparing the stories of the parables with the stories found in the normal life.

Looking further, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, describes it: as a fictitious, verbal or written lifelike story explained to illustrate a truth. It continues to elaborate more as the placing of one thing besides another. This is especially for the purpose of comparing or rather comparison. Robert Broderick calls it a concrete method of teaching! The method is concrete because, it picks examples from day to day existence. The instance is the characters.

The Random House Dictionary of English Language defines parable as a statement or comment that conveys a meaning indirectly especially by use of comparison, analogy or the like. 'All in all it means a comparison especially a simile using a presently existing or imagined event or object. From the above definitions and from various scholars, the word which seem to appear so often is 'comparison'. But what is it comparing?. Mostly what is compared is the daily encounters with the reign of God. The reign of God equated with what mankind encounters in his or her daily existence.

That is why, Archibald M. Hunter calls parable the earthly story with a heavenly meaning. This is a comparison drawn from nature or daily life and designed to illuminate some spiritual truth like love, tenderness, forgiveness, reconciliation and caring.

4. Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, (USA: The World Publishing company: 1957), pg.30

5. Leopold Fonck, S.J. The Parables of The Gospel, (Cincinnati New York, Frederick Pustet Co., 1914) p.11

6. Robert Broderick, The Catholic Encyclopedia, (Nashville New York, Thomas Nelson Inc. Publishers 1976), p.448

7. Ibid., p.449

8. Jess Stein and Lawrence Urdang, The Random House Dictionary of English Language, (New York Random House Inc. 1967), p.1045

9. Archibald M. Hunter, Interpreting the Parables, (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, S.C.M. Press), p.8

Wilfrid J. Harrington, calls or rather defines parable as a simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt to tease it into active thought. Listening to the story, it involves letting them speak and challenge our lives and the way we relate with one another. For instance as we shall see the parable of the Good Samaritan, the lawyer was told by Jesus to go and do likewise.

Parable may be developed into a story. That is why Madeleine I. Boucher refers it as gospel stories, especially stories which are drawn from ordinary, everyday life which convey a religious or moral lesson, quite indirectly, intending to convince or persuade, to bring the hearer to decision of acting. Eg. The Good Samaritan in Lk. 10:29-37. The Samaritan had mercy and compassion to the man besides the road. Hence after Jesus told the story, he told the lawyer to go and do it.

After looking at the definitions, let us now see whether parables were also used even before Jesus Christ, or rather if at all we can trace the usage of parables in the Old Testament.

1.3. PARABLES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT?

When we read Jesus' parables, we wonder where did he learn them? Were there any Theological institutes that he had attended? Maybe another puzzle could be: can we trace the usage of parables in the Old Testament? The answer to the above questions is YES! It can be traced especially from the prophets and the Jewish fathers

10. Wilfrid J. Harrington, O.P. A Key to the Parables, (Glen Rock New York, Paulist Press, 1964), p.14

11. Madeleine I. Boucher, op.cit., p.14

To support the pre-existence of parables, Madeleine I. Boucher says, "When Jesus preached so strikingly in parables he did not create a new literary genre. Rather he made brilliant use of a genre, which was already of long tradition and which was familiar to all throughout the Mediterranean world, especially in Greece, and Rome. Rhetoricians, politicians and philosophers used parables. Perhaps the most illustrious among those who made use of them were Socrates, and Aristotle."¹² Thus, there were parables even before the composition of the Bible.

In Israel as an instance, prophets and wise people uttered parables. They appear in the oldest books of the Old Testament. For example, 2Sam 12:1-4 the parable of the Ewe Lamb which was told by prophet Nathan to David when he had arranged the death of Bathsheba's husband on the battlefield so that he might himself marry Bathsheba.

Jewish rabbis who were contemporaries of Jesus also used them. The following of course were the closest in both time and place to those of Jesus. Eg. the Two Builders [Mt 7:24-27; Lk 6:47-49]

Thus, there were parables even prior to Jesus, since also he presumably read the Old Testament which also had the parables. So since he did not use such parables exactly in his teachings, it can be said somehow, he learnt the technique of composing the parables he used; from the Old Testament.

1.4 WHY DID JESUS USE PARABLES?

To answer the above question, we have also to answer another very legitimate question. Why Parables? Or rather, are parables important at all?

Well, from the definitions above, it was depicted that, mostly the story given in the metaphorical way or rather allegorical manner is actually meant to compare. To compare the earthly life and heavenly life. That is to say, the parables are meant to make the kingdom of God vivid, and more concrete.

12. Madeleine I Boucher, op. cit p. 11

13. Ibid.

Joachim Jeremiah says, pictures which are mostly used in the parables leave a much deeper impression on the mind than abstractions.¹⁴ Somewhat, the hearers of the story, find themselves being challenged by the parables to do something. To go and emulate the characters in the story or alternatively rather not to emulate the characters in the parable told. Thus the stories were not only meant for leisure but rather for provoking somebody to reflect on his or her actions to see if they are following the right direction, and are in accordance with the will of God.

As Hunter says, Jesus used parables to quicken understanding¹⁵ especially by putting truth in a vivid, challenging, and memorable way. Let us say when common things, which we are familiar with, are mentioned, we are as a result challenged to check into our lives.

It must be understood that, Jesus' parables were from the real world especially the world around him. That is why Hunter rightly calls them again the everyday experiences.¹⁶ And Jeremias supporting it he says the pictorial stories are drawn from the daily life of the people.¹⁷ The people of the parables are real people. Acting characters. This can be noted in the parable of the Good Samaritan, whose characters and incidence were found on the actual happenings of the people and time. Thus, during his era, Jesus found that, human life with all its faults and frailties could furnish pointers and analogies of the kingdom of God. Hence the image of God in mankind is a reality despite his egoistic bad actions against his creator God.

14. Joachim Jeremiah, The Parables Of Jesus, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), p.11.

15. Archibald Hunter, op. cit., p.16.

16. Ibid., p. 8.

17. Joachim Jeremias, Rediscovering the Parables, (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1973), p.10.

For Herzog R. William II., the hearers find themselves in a familiar scene where everything is so clear and simple that a child can understand because it is so obvious. Again those who hear cannot help saying, that is how it is! For, it touches their very life experiences and situations of which they are part and parcel. So the examples which were so simple one can have no excuse of saying, it is hard to understand.

Through the use of parables Jesus communicated and proclaimed the nearness of the reign of God and spiritual truth, which accompanied his teachings. This as story reveals, was not to be earned by things far away but by those, which were, encountered daily in the societies and lives of the people.

By using parables, his hearers were enabled to get the message which was portrayed in the images and languages which was spoken by people in their ordinary life. Again, people saw themselves in the story and being identified with one of the characters in the story. Thus, by the very self-identification and reflection people were to judge by themselves and eventually make decisions for or against the invitation to discipleship.

The purpose of the parable is not merely to entertain, as may be the case with other folk stories. Their purpose is far more important. It is meant to bring about a change of the mind, or of heart especially in the hearer, perhaps to move the hearer to conversion of Christ within his or her inner self or ego.

One of the most important points to understand about the parables is that they present a challenge. Their message is indeed radical and is not easily ignored. Actually their teaching belongs solely to the sphere of religious or ethical.

1.4. IN LUCAN CONTEXT.

As far as the New Testament's parable tradition is concerned, Luke has what can be called

18. William R. Herzog II Parables as Subversive Speech. (Louisville Kentucky: John Press, 1989) p11

19. Madeleine I Boucher. op.cit., p.16

unique importance in his presentation of the parables.

With Luke we meet what can be called unallegorical. His stories actually are realistic stories, very rich especially in homely detail and characterization. The very good example can be the parable of the Good Samaritan, which is called the central section of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem.

Lukan parables have a characteristic shape of which the most striking feature is that the crisis happens in the middle. For instance the parable of the Good Samaritan, the crisis of the robbery is at the middle of the story.

One thing that can be noticed with characters in the Lukan parables is: people seem to have understandable motives. For, the very characters, have the limited but critical freedom perhaps like most of us have in our daily encounters.

Lukan parables are as mentioned above not allegorical, instead as Drury John calls them: they are genuine parables of Jesus and they tell themselves. When few parables can be examined, it can be seen that people normally interact so intelligibly that only a modest knowledge of human character is all that is needed to grasp the meaning. Hence no need of a key to open or rather as Drury John repeats, no code to break.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke uses historical allegory that is, realistic stories. Specifically this can be seen in the neglect of the temple officials; especially when priest and levite are contrasted with the caring of the Samaritan. Samaritans and Samaria were not considered as, something good according to orthodox Jerusalem

20 John Drury The Parables in the Gospels. (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1985), p 111.

21. Ibid

22. Ibid, p. 116

23. Ibid.

It is only in the Lucan gospel we meet the parable of the Good Samaritan. This parable is set in dialogue especially the dialogue between Jesus and the lawyer. Anyhow, parallel to that, in Matt. 22:34-40, we meet the same dialogue which might tempt us to say, perhaps Luke copied from Matthew. Albeit different from Matt, and Mk, Luke is said to increase the element of dialogue because in Lk, the lawyer is the one who began to ask the question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" But in Mk, the amazing thing is that, it is Jesus who especially asked him in turn especially what is written in the law. In his answer, the lawyer recited the double commandment simply without hesitation. As a result Jesus congratulated him, which he really deserved. But the lawyer went further asking Jesus "and who is my neighbour?" This question led to the narration of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Thus, the parable of the Good Samaritan is the parable of the people, presenting clearly the man who was in crucial need. Again the parable represents central Jewish practice. A Samaritan temple, so Luke, thought was really as central to Judaism as Jewish law. Jesus went there when he was a little boy and taught there at the end of his life.

There are other reasons as to why Luke is the only evangelist who has given the parable of the Good Samaritan. As Pol Vonck points out, this is because Samaritans are pictured in a positive way [Lk. 17:11-19]. Samaria was receptive to the preaching of the good news. This in a way formed a link between Israel and the Gentiles [Acts 1:8, 8:1-25; 9:31; 15:3]. Again the way the Samaritan uses his money Vonck continues to say, he uses as a payment in advance for the injured man's treatment and costs is a paradigm for Lucan sharing [Lk. 12:33-34; 14:33; 18:22.] And finally Luke puts this parable at the beginning of the Great Journey [Lk. 9:51-19:28]. In this episode Jesus is pictured as a homeless one, going along the road. [9:57]. As a result whenever we are presented with such image, one is actually moved with compassion let's say wanting to offer to Jesus the shelter and any kind of help he or she could give.

24. Pol. Vonck, Understanding 42 Gospel Parables, Eldoret Kenya: (AMECEA Gaba Publication 1990) p 78.

Luke's parables are taken from real experience of human existence and not imaginary stories and therefore religion has to combine the concrete with the transcendence.

1.6. THE PARABLE AND ITS EXEGESIS: LUKE 10:25-37

Just before we start looking at the exegesis of the text; it will be worthwhile to read the parable:

And behold, a lawyer stood up to him to test him saying, "Teacher what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" 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 neighbour as yourself". And He said to him, "You have answered right, do this and you will live." But desiring to justify himself said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and he fell among robbers, who striped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on to the other side. But a Samaritan, who journeyed, came to where he was and when he saw him he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two silver pieces and gave them to the innkeeper, saying take care of him and whatever more you spend I will repay you when I come back."

Which of these three, do you think proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers? He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said, to him go and do likewise.

The lawyer, we are told was no doubt a scribe, One learned in Scriptures and law. Jesus was thought a layman because there is nowhere we are informed that Jesus had any formal education in Law or scripture. In addition nowhere are we told about the Curriculum vitae of Jesus. Albeit God would have us believe Jesus as credential were within him. This lawyer as it is seen above asked Jesus about inheriting the eternal life. Jesus invites the lawyer to recite the law, namely the double commandment. Double because it calls one to the love God and neighbour [Dt.6;5, Lev.19;18] Definitely the lawyer knew that Jesus taught the primacy of love repeatedly. As a result Jesus affirms the lawyer's response. Do this and you will live v 28. In this dialogue we can say the lawyer's theological knowledge will gain him nothing unless he puts the double commandment into practice.

The lawyer, in trying to justify himself especially to show Jesus that he has surely observed

25. Madeleine I Boucher *op.cit*, p.119

these laws within their recognized limits, inquired; And who is my neighbor? He inquired Simply because, for him the neighbor included his compatriots and excluded certain groups such as non-Pharisees, the sons of darkness as he understood them, the essenes heretics, and the like. It was meant to define the limits of his responsibility.

Jericho means the moon and it signifies our mortality Jerusalem means heavenly city of peace. Thieves or robbers mean devils and his angels. Robbers stripped off the man and beat him, means his immortality was stripped and he was persuaded to sin. Leaving him half dead means, insofar as a man can understand himself and know God he lives and so far as he is wasted and oppressed by sin he is dead. He is therefore called half dead.

The priests were those of the Temple which was located in Jerusalem; they thought themselves the highest religious leaders in temples and synagogues. On the other hand they were the associates of the priests in the temple. However, they signify the priesthood ministry of the Old Testament, which could profit nothing for salvation. The Samaritans were a people who were mixed both ethnically and religiously. These people who in the central part of Palestine, were the descendants of marriages between Israelites and foreign colonist brought into the region after the Assyrian conquest of KD" in 722B.C.. The Samaritans were strictly speaking neither Jew or Gentiles. They were regarded by the Jews as half-breed and religiously impure people. The Jews did not speak to the Samaritans. certainly a Samaritan would not be expected to show compassion to a Jew. But in this parable the Samaritan is the guardian and therefore the Lord himself is signified by his name.

The binding of wounds is the restraint of sin. Oil is the comfort of good hope while wine is the exhortation to work with fervent spirit. The being set upon the beast signified the belief in the incarnation

26 *ibid.*, p.120.

27 C.H., in The Parables of the Kingdom, London (Collins Clear-Type Press 1971),p. 13

28 *ibid.*, p.13

29 *ibid.*

of Christ. The inn is, the Church, where travelers returning to their heavenly country are freshen after pilgrimage. The two silver pieces are either the two precepts of love or the promise of this life and that which is to come. And the innkeeper is the apostle Paul.

Even today the traveler on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, seventeen miles northeast is in danger of being robbed. It was made very clear that the priest and Levite were simply callous! By the use of merely thinking that the unconscious man was dead, they could conveniently observed the prescription forbidding a priest to defile himself by touching a dead body [except that of near king; Lev. 21:1-3]. Thereby, they abrogated the inner law of love thy neighbour as thyself, the grace of the New Testament was withheld from them.

Oil and wine were used medicinally. Oil to mollify[Isa.1:6] and wine to disinfect. The Samaritan perhaps was a merchant who often traveled the road, since he seems to be acquainted with the innkeeper.

CONCLUSION .

We have just tried to discuss and explore the first section in which we deeply discussed what parable is all about. It true that, we saw different meanings given by various theologians. This was just in a nutshell. Somehow it has given us some insights. We can say at the end of this discussion, we have a clue of what parable is and why Jesus decided to use parables in his teachings. The journey led us to see the specific Parable we are dealing with, namely the parable of the Good Samaritan, which we saw also, its exegesis. With those few insights we got from this section, we now move to the other section, where we will discuss and look at the relevant situation of the parable.

CHAPTER TWO:

2.0 THE RELEVANT SITUATION OF THE PARABLE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we are going to see the relevant situation of the parable of the Good Samaritan. Together with analyzing and elucidating the role of the characters in the parable, it will also see and try to interpret them in accordance with the current situations in our societies today.

By relevant situation I mean bringing the parable to speak to us and see whether it can find in us the same examples as they are mentioned in the parable.

2.2 THE WOUNDED MAN.

The description of the traveler is not very much known. It is simply a man, someone, a certain person who was going along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. This road was lonely, difficult and dangerous because it was occupied by bandits and robbers. What type of a road, that one again we cannot tell. Perhaps rough, lonely and bushy. So it was not a surprising to see the fate of the unaccompanied traveler is almost anticipated.

This man is beaten, robbed and left to die. The man is laying there. The injured man is without any identity of either nationality or social status. He is simply a person in need, whose only claim is his need. This man who had even been robbed, of his clothes perhaps, then seriously wounded and left there to his fate by the robbers, was bound to die miserably if no one was found to help him.

Compared to our situation today, perhaps we might think that it is an outdated story, which has nothing to do with the current generations. Such a conception might appear to be true since means of transport has been so much improved! People nowadays travel long distances and even short ones by cars, airplanes etc. Anyhow, there is no problem to think like that, because, our minds are free to think anything,

30. John, R. Donahue The Gospels in Parable. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), p.130.

provided we are thinking rightly! We can say that the very man in the parable, represents anyone who is in need. We now pause and think, and put the very wounded man in our context by asking ourselves, who are the wounded men and women in our times?

The wounded men and women of today's situation are the ones who are in need of our great attention. These are the people who suffer from various difficulties in their life. They are, likely to be the ones suffering injustice in our life. We have today the so called marginalised, the street children, the AIDS patients, the refugees and people who are suffering from cultural, social, and economic injustices. All these are the wounded men and women of our times. They are in great need and they really need our attention. So we have to become Good Samaritans today towards these wounded and fellow human beings. Thus, such situations are relevant with the parable of the Good Samaritan since they need to be attended with our compassion, love and care.

2.3 THE PRIEST AND LEVITE [JEWS]:

Kevin O'Sullivan refers to the Levite and priests as the officials of the temple of Jerusalem.³¹ It was not unusual to find a priest or Levite on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho or in the reverse direction. This is because Jericho was a priestly city, and every priest or Levite had to appear in Jerusalem when the course was due to which he belonged. There were twenty four courses, of performing the temple worship which was for eight days.³²

As a matter of fact, these people were members of an established religion who would be expected to assist the injured person. As Kevin O'sullivan says: they were expected to carry the commandment of love of neighbour and to help their fellow man in distress.³³ But again it depended upon the idea they had

31 Madeleine. I. Boucher *op.cit.* p. 121

32. Kevin O'Sullivan [*Living Parables*], Milwark: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1970,pg.81.

33 Rita Linnemann [*Parables of Jesus Introduction and Exposition*], London: S.P.C.K., 1966), P.53.

34 Kevin O'sullivan. *op. cit.*, Pg.82.

about who the neighbour was in their context! The first major shock of the parable comes when they simply gaze upon the injured man and pass by on the other side. From the external appearances the injured man seemed to be dead perhaps. He is described as "half dead". It is assumed that, the priest and the Levite were journeying to Jericho, a priestly city, to attend a religious rite. This may have been to offer a daily sacrifice. They had an excuse, they convinced themselves, for by passing the man who seemed to be dead! Contact with a corpse would have made them conveniently ritually unclean. [Lev. 21 1-2]. According to the Jewish law anyone who touched the dead body remained unclean for seven days. [Num 19:11-13] and he could not take part in any religious activities or services. That is why they did not stop, but deliberately went to the other side of the road to avoid contact with the corpse and subsequent condemnation. Here they are caught in a moral dilemma. As John R. Donahue puts it their dilemma was whether to observe the torah on uncleanness or the torah on love of neighbour.³⁵ Let us take the example of a doctor or a nurse rushing to the hospital and he or she meets the presidential escort. Should a doctor be given a priority at the expense of interfering the presidential escort? What are we going to say? Should we say they should trespass the public law and rush to an emergency? Can we speak of an exception as far as maintaining the law is concerned?

From the parable we could infer that the priest and levite who were the religious figures, were busy and very much concerned with the observance of the law and fulfilling their duties. The duty of offering their daily sacrifices. They gave much attention to serving God by attending public worship and by obeying each part of the law but they gave little attention to serving Him by serving their fellow human

35. John R. Donahue. *op.cit.* p. 131

36. Madeleine. I. Boucher *op.cit.* p.121.

37. John Hargreaves. A Guide to the Parables. (London:Hollen Street Press Ltd, Slough Berks. 1979).p.76

beings. We can only show that we love God by loving our brothers and sisters especially by attending their needs.

The priest and levite represent those who are officially religious, devotees and Christians, who fail to observe the commandment to love one's neighbour. It can also be like what today, is known as nominal Christians. Those who are Christians by names but the practices of their faith leave a lot of questions to be desired. The Christians of the Sunday, while during the week, their deeds, are quite contrary to what they confess or rather what they are expected to be.

Luke uses the cultic figures to show that the true religion is not primarily cultic but rather it is the service of one's neighbour in unselfish love. Hence the concern for the law and to neglect the one in need is a violation of love towards one's neighbor. The only way to apply the commandment, is nothing more than to love especially through serving those in need. It is not a matter of saying I am Christian, a catholic, etc. But a matter of doing the will of the Father. Attending the needs of unfortunate, those who are the victims of ongoing unjust structures of our society.

Our present day priests and other religious figures might be having almost the same situation and practices. Priests and religious officials are from the society for the society and as a mediator between the faithful and God. It is true that their preaching is equally important. But on the other hand, they should practice what they teach. It is a fact that there are laws or rather limits as regards their work. But all in all they must be humanly orientated. For laws should be there to serve and to free human beings and never to enslave them. It is not enough to know what the laws promulgate, but rather, it is equally important to put them into practice. Priests and levites as teachers of the law of love of God and neighbour, are to be first and foremost, the practical examples of the laws.

The point here is not to condemn the priest and Levite, but rather to put them in proper context.

38. Edmund Flood, Parables of Jesus, (New York: Paulist Press, 1970)P 7.

39 *ibid.*, p. 6

And ask ourselves, are we not the same as the priests and levite who are described in the parable? How do we prioritize our Christian actions? Can we leave a sick person suffering at home and say we are attending liturgical celebration! We have to know that, all the same by our baptism and our faith in Christ, we are equally called to participate in the same ministry of priesthood by serving others with their immediate needs. So in a way we are to be examples of loving towards our neighbours.

2.4. SAMARITAN.

Historically, Samaritans were a nation who had been the enemies of the Jews for a long time. They were hated by Jews; simply because their ancestors had come from the marriage of Jewish and Non-Jewish parents.³⁸ Edmund Flood calls Samaritans the Essenes, bitter opponents to the religious establishment who lived a kind of monastic life in communities, many of them near to Jericho.³⁹

The Samaritan stands as the center of this parable, especially after seeing the previous travelers neglecting the injured man on the way. When the Samaritan saw the injured man on the way, he was filled with compassion. Compassion of the Samaritan is the bridge between looking upon the injured and half dead fellow human being and entering their world with saving care. Compassion is that divine quality which when present in human beings enables them to share deeply in the suffering and needs of others. This virtue enables them to move from one world to the other from the world of the helper to the one needing help.

This compassion is the virtue, which motivated the Samaritan to enter into the world of the other forgetting his own self by risking his life. The Samaritan knew very well that the place was dangerous and risky. The robbers who had just beaten the other man might have been still around, and they could come

38. Eta Linnemann. *op. cit.* p. 53-54

39 Madeleine. I. Boucher *op.cit.*, p. 120.

and attack him too. But all the same he took the risk and was ready for anything.

The Samaritan attended the man, pouring oil and wine on his wounds. Because he is seriously injured he cannot walk and so, the Samaritan carries the victim on his donkey. He brings the injured man to the inn, takes care of him and stays overnight. On departure he pays all the expenses. When he leaves he asks the inn keeper to take care of the sick man and assures him that when he comes back he will pay all the expenses which the injured man might incur. According to the law of the time, a person with an unpaid debt could be enslaved until the debt was paid. Because the injured man was robbed and stripped naked perhaps, deprived of all resources, he could have been at the mercy of the innkeeper. By taking responsibility for all the bill the Samaritan assures the injured man's freedom and independence.

The action of the Samaritan is a major lesson and example to the Jesus' hearers of today. It is surprising and instructive that it should be a Samaritan that was given the role of the merciful man. Between the Jews and these heretical mixed people there was an implacable hatred. [The Jews had nothing to do with Samaritans [Jn 4:9]. On the Jewish side it went so far that they uncharitably cursed the Samaritans publicly in the synagogues, and sinned by praying to God that they would not share in eternal life. They would not believe the testimony of a Samaritan nor accept any service from a Samaritan. This hatred was fully reciprocated by the Samaritans. Between 9th and 6th century B.C for instance, they managed to prevent a Jewish Passover by scattering dead men's bones on the temple area thereby defiling it. It is like putting a dead pig in the Muslim's mosque today!

But why does Jesus mention a Samaritan as an example instead of at least a Jewish layman? The Lord's listeners were certainly expecting as an example a priest or Levite to have been the one who attended the injured man. Others would have expected the same too. This expectancy in a way, shows that the only thing the Samaritan had in common with the Jews in the eyes of the listeners was humanity and that he too, was a human being. Because if it is he who shows mercy this mercy is something that

man as such shows to man! Any other categorization in terms of race, nationality or religion is excluded. It means, the limited question of determining one's fellow man by nationality or religion is converted into the question of the neighbor who can meet us in every human person.⁴⁰ As Madeleine puts it, Samaritan stands for those who are outside the official circle of God's people but who nevertheless truly do God's will.⁴¹ Where are we as Christians of today?

At the end of the story, Jesus asked the lawyer another question, "who do you think was neighbor to the wounded man?" This was really a hard question to answer. For the lawyer, held that Jews were the neighbours to Jews. But after hearing this story, he had to say that the Samaritan was behaving like a neighbor to the wounded man. And Jesus said "yes" this is what you yourself must do if you want eternal life.

Love of God and neighbour is the greatest commandment for any true disciple of Jesus. In telling the story above Jesus answers the question of who is my neighbor and how to love him. Jesus does not simply answer, "who is my neighbor by saying it is so and so!" But he continues to show how that neighbor should be loved. It is not only knowing but showing love in action. That is why even the lawyer himself asked the question, "what must I do to inherit eternal life". Jesus' story gave him the right answer which showed love in action.

So we can see the practical examples which are given by the Samaritan that; the commandment of love is twofold. That is loving God and loving neighbor. The parable of the Good Samaritan has explained clearly how to love ones neighbor. Now what we need to know is how to love God. In order to explain how we can love God we are called to follow the example of the Good Samaritan.

40) Eta Linnemann. *Op.cit.* p. 53-54.

41) Madeleine. I. Boucher *Op.cit.* p 120

2.5. ETERNAL LIFE

Eternal life is the very life of God himself given to those who believe in Christ. Thus, it is a life of communion with Jesus and in him with the Father and the spirit. That is our goal here on earth. To be in union with God, especially by being in union with others, loving them and serving them.

The way to eternal life leads through the imitation of Jesus who lived in the presence of God and manifested that presence in his deeds seeking and saving what was lost. Lk. 19:10. Following Jesus on the way involves compassion for the and attention of the suffering neighbour.⁴²

2.6 .WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

The above question led Jesus to give the parable of the Good Samaritan. This is actually how we can trace the parable of the Good Samaritan .

Jan Lambrecht says, if many Christians are asked to comment or rather to give the meaning of the parable of the good Samaritan, definitely their answer will be the love of God and neighbor.⁴³ But now by asking who is my neighbor as the lawyer asked, Jesus; it means who should and must one regard as a neighbor. Is it the wounded, the traveler and the beaten, the Samaritan, or the priests and levites or robbers?

42. John. R. Donahue. *op.cit.* p.138.

43. Jan Lambrecht. Once More Astonished. The Parables of Jesus. (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company. 1981). P 57

With the dialogue, Jesus asks: which of the three do you think proven neighbor to the man who fell amongst the robbers? But when we turn to the one who offered the help to the traveler we can say that, actually it was the Good Samaritan. Jan Lambrecht says, at the beginning the neighbor is the object of the action: while at the end the neighbor is the subject of the action. Hence we get the two meanings of the word especially: the lawyer's question and also the quotation of the commandment "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" vv 29 The neighbour is the other person. Anyone in need of help. My neighbour is the person whom I encounter and ought to love well as a human. In a Christian way one is called to make a neighbor of the other person who is near me in a local sense and in a global sense.

The second part of the parable is Jesus' attention that goes beyond local sense unlike the above one. Jesus' emphasis was precisely on my becoming a neighbor to the other. According to Jan Lambrecht Jesus defines a neighbor as actually equivalent of brother and sister and a friend. To become a neighbor means to act in a loving and compassionate, helpful and sympathetic way.⁴⁴

Thus one must feel with the other. Becoming a friend, a brother and a sister to the other person. The shift of meaning especially from neighbour to the other as object of my action to neighbor that which I myself as a subject must become. This makes whoever reads this parable to stop and reflect. According to Jesus, the attention involves an active and self-commitment

CONCLUSION

In this topic we have been looking at the relevant situation of the parable. Maybe that, is what we are and what we do. At least we can say we have the clue of the parable. The relevant situation shows that the parable of the Good Samaritan is not an ancient story, but the daily practices in our lives. These are the realities which are actual in our societies and our lives.

Let us now shift to another important section of putting what we have seen into practicality. Hence the practical application of the parable.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE TODAY:

3.1. INTRODUCTION:

Hearing the word of God and professing our Christian faith is not enough! Here comes the moment whereby we have to apply and practice, what we have heard and professed. In this chapter, we are going to discuss the practical application of the parable in our mission today. After hearing, it is time to ask ourselves, what next? To apply it into our day to day life encounter. The Samaritan has already shown us who is our neighbour and how we can treat him or her. Finally we have to go and do likewise as Samaritan did.

We admit that, in our mission today, we are facing a lot of problems. As how to overcome those, problems could be I suggest is by being the good Samaritan of today. Loving God and our neighbours. The application of the parable calls for the putting the faith into action.

3.2. OUR MISSION:

Our mission is the mission of Jesus Christ whom we are following His very mission was the mission of the Father. The mission which was based on the Salvation of mankind. Jesus came and lived among us. He taught by his example and his lifestyle. So we proudly know who the Father is through Jesus. He himself taught us how to love God and our neighbour. Especially by being at their service and needs. This is now our mission which springs from Christ himself.

Jesus himself especially by what he was and did, gave the commandment of love which summarized the ten commandments which were given to Moses in the Old Testament. One of the examples, was that one of being like the Samaritan. By following it we will be colored by love of God and neighbour. We are called to carry the mission of preaching his word especially through our correct lifestyle and actions. Regarding everybody as sister and brother and our neighbour.

3.3 MISSION SITUATIONS.

Just as in the parable where a division among the Jews and Samaritans was predominant, we also live in a world that has similar situations. In these days, there are just, so many divisions between people in various parts of the world. There are many other divisions in the world which are less well known. We think of the division between the Arabs and Jews, between groups of Negroes in the USA and certain groups of the whites and Africans, between Sikhs and Hindus in some parts of India. There are divisions between one ethnic group and another ethnic group in the same country. For example Hutus and Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi. In addition, there is a division between tribes. For instance; Pokoti and Maraquet, Kikuyu and Luos etc. Furthermore in the towns there are divisions among the poor and rich between the elite and illiterate. It is not surprising to find division among the members of the same family who neither greet or talk to one another for many years because of the hatred that exists among them. Slum dwellers and the Rich ones can hardly live and stay together. Thus Kuwinda the slum area and the area for the rich is clearly defined. In some towns we most of the time meet the people of different kinds. Some parts of the town are called "Uzunguni"⁴⁵ while others are known as "Uswahilini."⁴⁶ Can Uswahilini people mix with the Uzunguni people? Or rather how do they receive each other? "Slum dwellers are looked upon with a suspicious eye, lamented Justin"⁴⁷ Others Forget that they are human beings with dignity created in the image of God. In all of these situations the tendency of people is to relate with the ones who belongs to the same group, category, or class.

45. Uzunguni is a place which was occupied by the Whites especially during colonialism. Hence no other race was allowed to be seen roaming around in those areas. In these days the place is occupied by the elites who are mostly government officials.

46. Uswahilini contrary to Uzunguni, is a place for the poor which is characterised by simple living, poor sanitation, and overcrowded population and even poor and simple buildings.

47. Justin Kimani is a Kuwinda dweller.

This is called *egoism*⁴⁸ The rich ones go for a drink at Royale Health Club⁴⁹. While the poor ones go to Mti ni Dawa Bar.⁵⁰ These are the groups whom they are friendly with ! And when it comes to help, we tend to help those whom we love and we care less about the rest. It happens also that people who think that they are good refuse help from those whose lives are considered to be hopeless or bad. The tendency is to show love, only to those who are considered lets say good. We receive charity from those who are friendly to us. Our mission situations have no difference when we compare the same situations with that of the Good Samaritan Parable. The Samaritan overcome the extremism of the situation by showing and practicing the love of the God and neighbour. Hence we are also compelled to go and do the same in our difficult situations and daily problems in our day to day existence

3.4. CAUGHT UP BY THE SAME SITUATIONS

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the lawyer was caught in dilemma when he was asked the question who do you think behaved like a neighbour to the injured man. As a matter of fact he was ashamed to mention the name Samaritan because he could not believe that a Samaritan could be a hero in the story. This was especially because of the knowledge he had about the Samaritans. Definitely, he had already been biased that nothing good could come from a Samaritan. And if the injured man was a Jew, there is another big challenge too. How could he receive charity from a person who was considered to be his enemy? But at first did he know that the person who was helping him was a Samaritan? Neither was he in the position to say I do not want any help from this Samaritan!

48. It is from the Latin root ego. I am ism and egoism is the same world disease. This is the cause of double mindedness. Until we gain a glimpse of the single mind without egos presence we remain locked in egoism and *illusion*. *Profound* humility and perfect obedience to our higher self our real self our christself is the only way the ropes and chains can be broken.

49. Royale Health Club is one of the drinking Pubs around Langata.

50. The famous drinking Pubs in the Slums

What Jesus told his followers 2000 years ago is also what he is telling us today! The Lord teaches, we ought to be more loving; that we should show love not only to those who belong to our family, community, clan or our nations, and congregation, but also to love those who are in need! In need of our help. No doubt, at all, by our baptism we are followers and disciples of Jesus. The only way we can practice the true discipleship is to show love not only to those who are good but also to those people who are also considered bad including outsiders. That is why Jesus said if we only love those who are friendly to us; who are good to us; we will be doing actually nothing because even robbers love themselves.

To love God goes hand in hand with love of neighbor. It is ridiculous for one to say he or she loves God and at the same time hates his or her fellow human being. One cannot claim to love God, whom he does not physically see, unless he or she loves people whom she or he encounters in her or his daily life. These are the ones who are created in the image of God. Even though people believe in God some are sometimes tempted to think that they can love and serve God without loving and serving people on earth. As such, the love of God and neighbour as we learnt it in the parable, should extend not only to our friends, those people we consider to be the good ones, but even those who are considered to be our enemies. Those who even oppose us

3.5 THE WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN ACTION

When we look for instance in the Old Testament we read that, Prophet Amos told the Jews of his days, that they spent much time worshiping God but they forgot to treat the poor people with justice. God hates this kind of worship [Amos 5:21-24]. Again saint John in his epistles has so much repeated many times saying; if a man does not love the brother whom he sees it cannot be that he loves God whom he has not seen physically. And in the parable of the sheep and goats it is clearly stated that the last judgement will

be based on how we treat one another in different situations. When I was hungry you gave me some food." They amazingly say or rather reply, when did we do that Lord? And the Lord will say, anything you did for one of my little ones; you did it unto me! [Matt. 25:31-46]. It is at times, so difficult to conceive that the Godhead is within those whom you have denied salt, denied education, denied milk, denied a lift, denied sukumawee and maize flour etc. Actually the eternal life whether we like it or not is built in small right actions which includes things done to our immediate neighbors.

As a matter of fact even leaders are very much tempted to forget this. Just like the Jews in the parable of the Good Samaritan, a Christian priest may want to show love to God by conducting the service reverently and preaching well. Yet they ignore and do not speak to a person who had done him some injury. He does not know that it is not only [that person] whom he is failing to love that he is also failing to love God in him as well. How practical is the preaching of priests on Sunday? Does their preaching present their life style of unity, love of God and neighbor? Or does their preaching instigate hatred and chaos in the society?

In our practical world a religious person is very much preoccupied with saying the breviary, meditation, and spiritual readings. As a result, he or she has no time to speak to the fellow religious members in the community who have problems. This kind of practice is no different from that one of the priest and Levite we have just met in the parable who ignored the injured man because of observing the law of worship. All such activities and practices are not bad but only when they replace the attention of the people, that is where the problem comes.

Looking around we also see that some of the church leaders are so busy buying large tracks of lands and building churches, shrines and places for worship they discount the people living around them who have nowhere to step even one foot. Are they not neglecting the needs of the people around them? Many rich people are doing such practice and at the same time forget the needs of the poor people around them. Sometimes we do things so convincingly that we impress ourselves that we are doing the right thing!

Just like the priest and levite did not think that they had done any wrong. It is true they did not steal from the wounded man or harm him in any way. But they failed to take care of him and this was as bad or worse than a crime. This can be termed as a moral crime.

Many a times we get chance to examine ourselves to see if we have done any wrong but we forget to ask ourselves what good have we failed to do? Were there people whom we could have helped today but failed to help? Was there a word of encouragement which I could have spoken but I did not? How was I good Samaritan today.

As a matter of fact charity needs to go in hand in hand with acts! Love without action is an empty word. Sometimes we do charitable acts for selfish reasons. But the true love should be a self offering just like the good Samaritan who offered himself even to a point of risking his own life.

3.6. OUR BOUNDARIES, A CHALLENGE?

We may have created boundaries between different people according to race, nation, religion and social ranks' Between what we call good and evil people. In this situation there is a tendency to maintain the status quo. The parable should challenge us to move beyond our social and religious constraints of good and evil. It should subvert our tendencies of dividing the world into insiders and outsiders. It makes us realize that goodness may be found precisely in those most often call evil or enemies. For example how could the lawyer be convinced that even the Samaritans can do good? Well even Samaritans are created in the likeness of God. Even the street children, beggars, poor, neglected, marginalised etc. In our more balanced situation, we wonder how can something good come from Kuwinda and Korogocho⁵² for instance? This mode of thinking stems from egoism manifested by doublemindedness and untutored mind.

51 John Gargreaves. *op.cit.*, P. 74.

52. Kuwinda and Korogocho are ones of the major slums in Nairobi characterised by the big number of population, poor sanitation, high cases of crimes and uncertainty of daily living.

By applying the parable of the Good Samaritan who broke the walls of hatred, and neglect which was built between the Jews and the Samaritans we will also overcome our boundaries of race, and ethnicity religion etc. Christians have to be moved by the call of the Samaritan to break all obstacles which are dividing people in the society. Normally what appears to bring divisions among peoples are providential. Such as our culture, colors, status, but egoism is the real cause. These divisions are providential because nobody chose to be in a certain tribe or, culture, color. But essentially and providentially we are all human beings created with dignity and in the image of God. This essential element should be the one to be guiding us in entering into the world of the others. The Samaritan when he looked at the injured man did not question himself; "Who is this man? Which tribe does he come from? Or Which culture does he belong to?" But rather when he looked at him he said in his innermost, that he was simply a human being. A certain man, who was in need. That Human need is what moved his Christ self, and high self to help him. It was the compassionate heart which the good Samaritan had, that enabled him to see the need and feel the suffering of the injured man. Therefore compassion as it is shown in the parable is another quality needed for a true Christian. Compassion is needed in order to break the egoistic shackles of culture, tribe, and ethnic group in order to enter into another person's world.

All over the world, the boundaries which put divisions in today's contemporary world, are manifested when one feels, "I am a Tanzanian, I am a Kenyan, I am an Indian, I am an American, et cetera et cetera. So anybody outside of the "I am..." does not count at all. If one cannot speak my language, egoism says, he or she is automatically an out group! If we are going to live by the example of the good Samaritan, we must think through the mind of Christ without ego being present. We have to eschew doublemindedness and put on the mind of Christ who gave the example of the Good Samaritan.

3.7. LOVING OUR ENEMIES.

We can assume that, there existed enmity between Jews and Samaritans. The Samaritan was never overwhelmed by such vice. Instead what guided him was the love of Christ. The only way of winning the

hatred of the enemy is by loving him or her. Returning the harm or insult with a smile. As the good Samaritan did to the injured man supposing the man was his enemy, automatically that could have changed the attitude he had towards any Samaritan. The love, which Jesus portrays in the parable, is the love which we ought to practice to even those considered to be our enemies.

3.8 MOVED BY COMPASSION AND LOVE

We have read in the parable that the priest and the Levite, when they saw the injured man: they passed by. But when the Good Samaritan saw him, he had compassion. A disciple like any other person has an eye, can gaze at something in the same way but the perception is different. A true disciple looks not only with physical eyes, but also with the eye of the compassionate love. It is from the deepest part of the heart that he sees the suffering and the needs of the other person.

Compassion is a divine quality that comes from God himself. Out of compassion God sees the suffering of his people and sends a liberator. [Exodus. 3:7-8.] Jesus when he saw the widow going to bury her only son felt compassion too. [Lk. 7:13]. In the parable for instance of the Prodigal Son, again Jesus tells us that, the father sees the returning son and had compassion. So, in order to enter into the world of the other and share deeply in the suffering of the others a disciple needs to have a compassionate heart, and leave the unreal superficial world of egoism and its double minded unreality.

In the society where we live today, we meet people who are suffering from different problems. For instance, the sick, the destitute, the depressed, those who have lost hope in their lives, the homeless, the starving and the street children etc. What do we do when we meet such People? Do we really care to look at them with compassionate love and enter into their situations with caring hearts? Or do we just simply look at them and pass-by?

Entering into another person's situation for the sake of sharing the other's suffering involves a self-denial and renunciation of oneself. And this means that one has to be ready even to risk his or her own life

for the sake of the other. It often happens that ego can deceive. But with compassionate love we can manage.

Definitely by being compassionate, we gain one of the many virtues needed to keep us on the straight and narrow path, towards eternal life. This is what it means to follow Jesus. This is what we can do and so much more to inherit eternal life. As Donahue says, following Jesus on the way involves compassion for the suffering neighbor and attention to the word of God. "The wounded man was as Mary Warnock puts it, the object of compassion!"

3.9 RISKING OUR LIVES

The question we can ask ourselves as we read the story of the Good Samaritan is, should a Christian risk his or her life? In going to help the injured man the good Samaritan took a great risk with his or her own life. Asserting the situation, where the injured man was; supposing the robbers were just hiding nearby? What could have happened to the Samaritan? Perhaps he could have encountered the same fate. For sure the Samaritan was not ignorant about such situations. He knew very well that what happened to the other man could as well happen to him too. In spite of this he took the risk to help the man. He did this because of the love he had. The love for its own sake, for he did not expect any return from that man who was totally helpless and poor because of the robbery.

In our life we meet some circumstances which are very similar to that one of the Samaritan. Walking in the town of *Dar es Salaam* the capital city of Tanzania, for instance; one can see a group of people who have caught a man suspected as thief and they shout "*mwizi, mwizi...*!"⁵³ Most likely such a man ends up being burnt alive. You see them seriously preparing the petrol or tire ready to burn him or her! We can clearly see here that, the human animal at its worse is a beast. The thief burners become murderers during such barbaric act.

53. John R. Donahue, *Op. cit.*, p. 138.

54. Mary Warnock, *Op.cit.*, p.838.

55. *Mwizi* is Kiswahili word for a thief!

As Christians we know that what can be called mob justice is thoroughly evil. It is possible such a man who is claimed by murderers to be a thief is an innocent! Even if he had stolen something he should never ever forfeit his life. If one tries to save him one might likely also be conveniently suspected as being a thief and the undeveloped animals will burn him or her too. What are we going to do in such situation? Will we leave the man to be burnt alone? Or Will we try to rescue him and risk our life too? Risking our lives for the sake of our brothers and sisters is one of the example which Jesus himself showed us by himself offering his life for our sake. So as Christians we should prepare to risk our lives.

For example in the community or society, in which it happens or it could happen, there might be a person who is suffering from a contagious disease and is helpless. If we take care of him there is limited danger that we will contract the disease as well. Perhaps we should ask ourselves how we can avoid being contaminated with such diseases? Will we not start saying we need prevention? We should be ready as Christians to take limited risk and get involved in helping the sick! There are many cases of this nature in our society today; there are people who are suffering from leprosy, AIDS, Tuberculosis, etc. What do we do with AIDS patients? Do we ostracize them? Our Christian commitments involve taking risks as Jesus himself took a great risk. The Lord has as well given us a very good example. Because Christ is the good Samaritan. Today our eyes are turned to what the good Samaritan showed us to do and be in the parable! We should strive to be like the Samaritan

3.10 OUR WORLD OF EXTREMISM!

How are we going to love God in this world of ours with all of the contradictories? One can easily ask himself or herself that question! I am a protestant she is a catholic. I am a slum dweller he is Uzunguni dweller! He is a Kalenjin I am a Kikuyu! He is a Priest and I am a lay person! He is a religious and I am a

lay or a social worker? Now where is our way? Well, all in all we need to balance these extremes! The world of extremes can be overcome only when we strike balance for ourselves in our activities both religious or social activities.

3.11 RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

In our society there are those who hold that religion is more important than anything else. They consider religious practices like meditation, contemplation many hours of prayer, worship etc. as the best way of loving God. Some kind of people dedicate most of their time in performing different rites and ritualistic working in order to please God. There is no or little time for doing other social activities like works of justice or works of charity, like helping the poor or visiting the sick, and sheltering the homeless. The works of worship takes the first priority. It does not matter for some even if a person is in great need! If by helping him first will hinder the works of worship, he will be forgotten! Just like the way the Levite and the priest did. They were so much concerned with worship as it might seem, that they could excuse themselves from offering their help to the injured man.

This false practice is still true in our times; it is not infrequent and surprising to see that a Christian community will hire a bus and go a long journey far away and pay a lot of money for a recollection! Whereas people around that community are forgotten and starving. They hypocritically and self-seekingly use the money acquired through the poor people for parties and picnic. Or hiring a preacher or retreat mistress/master from abroad and purchasing him or her an air ticket! Can this expenditure be justified to preach for only one week, whilst outside children are seen with bellies bloated with malnutrition. Is this not self seeking in religious activity? Most of the retreat centers appear to some extent to be actually very expensive and not spiritual generating but rather money generating centres! And just around these centers so many people who do not have food to sustain their daily life. Some do not have anywhere to lie their heads. They can be in a way a source of income for some of the religious communities! Are they

necessary? With wonder, one can ask, does His majesty Jesus Christ require us as a Christian body and brotherhood to build more and more temples of Solomon?

3.12. SOCIAL ACTIVITY

This is another extreme all together. In this position one thinks that the only way to love God is to do social works, charitable works. We forget anything else to do with prayers and worship. Those who hold this position have no time for prayer or meditation and going to the church. They are busy doing works for justice and charity. That is doing the work and at the same time forgetting the Lord of the work. The great Lord who has given them the strength to do the work.

Many missionaries, religious and priests and the laity have fallen into this temptation. When they go in mission fields they are very much busy with lets say economic projects and social affairs. Consequently at the same time forgetting completely their primary aim of evangelization. As a result people are attracted to the humanitarian benefits they get from organizations. The consequences of these is evident in that many parts of the world have very big churches, built of stones, but they are empty ones, because the church of the Christian community was not built. The community which will put God at the center of their lives.

3.13. STRIKING A BALANCE

At all times, there is a need of what can be called hearing and doing. We need to listen to what God is telling us inwardly and after hearing this put what we have heard into practice. However, it is the word of God which gives illumination to what is good and what should be done according to his will. We should do like Jesus our model who listened to what his Father told him and put the intuition into practice. Be compassionate as our Father in heaven these were the words of Jesus. Hence Christ himself becomes the good Samaritan who binds and pours the oils of consolation into troubled souls. He has appointed the church to be the innkeeper who is charged to look after all his afflicted ones until he comes again.

3.14 WHOM SHALL WE TREAT AS A NEIGHBOUR?

The duty to love is a call to all of Christians! It is without limits. As we read the notion and the understanding the lawyer had in his mind as far as a neighbour was concerned, it includes one's compatriots. Actually on the other hand especially depicted from the story, it can never be limited to that. But rather all those in need of our help. Thus, anybody in need of our help even our enemies. *ANYBODY IN NEED* of our help is our neighbour regardless of his or her culture, tribe, race, and status. Him, her, them, we are required to love and treat as our neighbour.

3.15 CHRISTIAN LOVE:

Understanding the parable of the Good Samaritan, we can assume and say that the very parable leads to what directly can be called the Christian love. This love should respond directly to human need. Christian love permits no barriers of class, race, and condition. For every human being is potentially and actually everyone's neighbour.

We can openly admit that, as Christians we should practice love not only to those who act as our personal enemies but even towards persons who even make it difficult for us to live with shame and humiliation. Let us recall Jesus' day, the tax collectors even helped to perpetuate the Roman oppression of Israel. They despised Jesus. The Lord invited Mathew the tax collector! Just to ruminate a little through our experiences we are truly to find that, there have been those that tried to prosper by the betraying of their own people. Loving such people requires the uprooting of the bitterness of betrayal.

So Christian love is the love which regards everybody as a person. The love that acknowledges the image of God. That all of us are created in the image and likeness of God. This will prompt someone to regard everybody as actually a potential member of a community. The example of the Good Samaritan should lead us to practice what can be called the Christian love.

CONCLUSION

We have seen some insights which have been proposed in this ending topic , that meant to lead to the application of the parable.. We are now left with one task. That is to "go and do" it or rather do likewise as Jesus told the lawyer. Jesus himself who is the parable of the Lord, will be with us guiding us especially when we acknowledge the presence of his spirit in our lives.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

After our discussion, we can ask ourselves, what then? We have read and discussed the parable can we say, at the end of this project that, we have to come out with some insights. These insights will be the guide to our lives and can be used as a method of evangelization. The parables are not the old tale stories. As such they are still useful in our lives. They are one of the best method of passing the message across in a easier way. They provide with us the concrete examples which are found in our world and our encounters. Perhaps they are part and parcel of our practices as we read in the parable of the Good Samaritan, that our neighbours are the people in need whom, we meet in our daily encounters.

We have seen how Jesus answered the question who is my neighbour. By visiting the aspects of lawyer's life, through the story or rather the parable of the Good Samaritan. The neighbour to anybody is ANYBODY IN NEED. In need of one's help one's attention, presence and a hearing heart. No matter who that person is or where does he or she comes, from and which ethnic group does he belong to anybody is our neighbour. This is the spirit which has been shown by some missionaries who leave their countries to fulfill this mission. This is what the parable has provided us at the end of our discussion.

All the same we are called to do the same To be at everybody's service through our presence and listening ear. Also to be good examples through our teachings and actions. If we are preaching love, we should be lovable, if we are preaching peace, we ought to be peaceful. Anything we preach, we should first and foremost be ready to put them into practice. Today we are called to be the good Samaritans especially by attending the needs of those in a great need in our midst

Our strive is to make the gospel of the Lord alive, and relevant into our lives. Hence the parables should speak in our lives. Particularly the parable of the Good Samaritan should be our model if we really want to become the Samaritans of today. When we emulate or go and do likewise as the Samaritan did, no doubt, the parable will find its application today in our lives. This will bring us to the practical application of the parable of the Good Samaritan

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