WHAT IS A PARABLE?

Parables function as metaphors challenging or inviting the audience into a new or deeper experience of God’s dominion, a dominion identified with those who are the LAST, LOST, LEAST, LITTLE, LIFELESS.

Over My Dead Body
Parable of the Good Samaritan

Other Resources

Good Samaritan at
http://www.newmediabible.org/1goodsam/

Parable of the Good Samaritan

Who Was That Masked Man
Who Was That Turbaned Man

Over My Dead Body
Parable of the Good Samaritan
When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem.

When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But he turned and rebuked them.
Luke 10.25-28
Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.
“Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

He said to him,
“What is written in the law? What do you read there?”

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;
(Deuteronomy 6.4-5)
and your neighbor as yourself.” (Leviticus 19.18)
And he said to him,
“You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

Luke 10.29-37
But wanting to justify himself, …

Luke 10.29-37
But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus,
“And who is my neighbor?”

What is the lawyer really asking?
WHO is my neighbor?
Luke 10.29-37
But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus,
“And who is my neighbor?”

What is the lawyer really asking?
Who IS my neighbor?

Luke 10.29-37
But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus,
“And who is my neighbor?”

What is the lawyer really asking?
Who is MY neighbor?

Luke 10.29-37
But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus,
“And who is my neighbor?”

What is the lawyer really asking?
Who is my NEIGHBOR?

What is the lawyer really asking?
To whom must I do neighborly acts?

Sirach 12:1
If you do good, know to whom you do it, and you will be thanked for your good deeds.

Jesus replied,

"A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead.

λῃστής / lēstēs (1) robber, bandit, highwayman, one who seizes by violence, in contrast to a thief (κλέπτης / kleptēs), who uses stealth (LU 10.30); (2) politically insurrectionist, revolutionary, rebel who favors the use of force (JN 18.40)
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 the other side.

But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity.

He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them.

Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.'

Then Jesus said to the lawyer,

"Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"
Then Jesus said to the lawyer,

“Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?”

He said, “The one who showed him mercy.”

Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Then Jesus said to the lawyer,

“What is Jesus really asking?

NOT
To whom must I do neighborly acts?

BUT
Who did neighborly acts?

Then Jesus said to the lawyer,

“What is Jesus really asking?

NOT
To whom must I do neighborly acts?

BUT
Who did neighborly acts?

Then Jesus said to the lawyer,

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What does the parable mean?

• Allegory
• A point or moral
• A metaphoric way of teasing the mind into active thought

The parable as an allegory

Augustine

• Jerusalem = heavenly existence
• Jericho = earthly existence
• Man = Adam
• Robbers = devil and his angels
  – Stripping = loss of immortality
  – Beating = persuade to sin
  – Half-dead = being under power of sin
• Priest and Levite = Old Testament priesthood which does not save
• Samaritan = Jesus
• Inn = Church and Innkeeper = Paul
• Two denarii = two love commands
The parable as an allegory

- Ambrose: Allegory allowed for anti-Semitic reading
- Luther: Priest/Levite = Law >< Samaritan = Grace

The parable as a point or moral

Jülicher
This parable provides moral instruction:

Self-sacrificial love of neighbor is of the highest value.

The parable as a symbolic way of thinking to tease the mind...

LAST
LOST
LEAST
LITTLE
LIFELESS

Thinking of the last, lost, least, little, dead

Man
Striped and beaten
Almost dead
Thinking of the last, lost, least, little, dead

We are the Samaritan

Being a neighbor is not simply a matter of doing good but of identifying with the last, lost, least, little, and dead.

Man
Stripped and beaten
Almost dead
JESUS

Thinking of the last, lost, least, little, dead

WE are the Samaritan

Thinking of the last, lost, least, little, dead
The parable as a symbolic way of thinking to tease the mind…

Thinking of the last, lost, least, little, dead

Samaritan
Despised and rejected
One who heals
One who will come again
JESUS

Thinking of the last, lost, least, little, dead

Man
Stripped and beaten
As good as dead
US

What is the Dominion of God like?

Would we even welcome healing / salvation from one who is despised, rejected, and comes in a totally unexpected way?

What is the Dominion of God like?

What if we understand ourselves to be as good as dead?
Now, who will you want as your neighbor?

Over My Dead Body…