

Title: LAWYERS ARE US, LUKE 10:25 – 37
(Chatham, NJ; 07/14/13, AM) [SP – Topical, Four-Point Outline]

Theme: In the mind of the lawyer we see the workings of the mind of sinful man that seeks its own justification but ultimately is separated from the mind of God.

Purpose: To demonstrate that all people are prone to self-justification, but that the Gospel provides the power to change our thinking and thus our lives.

I. The Conflict

A. The lawyer

1. Let's focus on this man rather than the Samaritan
2. We are drawn to the Samaritan, and we stereotype the lawyer
3. He is one of those we love to hate, like the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees
4. We like to think we are not like him, but we sometimes are
5. To "put Jesus to the test" (25), and to "justify himself" (29)
6. We are sometimes guilty of the latter (comment: not every defense of one's actions is an attempt to evade responsibility; sometimes it is legitimate)

B. To mask our behavior

1. We like to believe we are right or on the side of right
2. But there is a gap between feeling right and being right when compared to God
3. Not hypocrisy until we keep rationalizing or justifying ourselves when it can be demonstrated that we are truly in the wrong
4. Too easily we use God-language without seeing the discrepancy between what God says and how we actually behave
5. God's thoughts are not ours, Isaiah 55:6 – 9
6. God not like us, Ps. 50:16-21
7. "Pro-Choice" a fine sounding mantra for the evil of abortion, but it is the language of self-justification (see article)
8. How can we best use words to serve our own agenda? This is what we do. (note the utter intolerance of those who demand tolerance of others)

II. How does this resonate with us?

A. David's desire to be cleansed of wickedness

1. Ps. 51:2-3, when he finally admitted the sin that he somehow justified for months
2. He also asked God to look into his heart, Ps. 139:23
3. And to cleanse him of secret faults, Ps. 19:12

B. Aware of our own tendencies to mask evil behind our words

1. Fear of exposure, John 3:19-20
2. A description of human sinfulness
3. Not wanting to be exposed we resort to justifications
4. We use God language
5. We evade confronting the laws of morality
6. We change the language to make ourselves appear righteous
7. This is a characteristic of sinful humanity, not just a few (even the disciples deserted Jesus at the last moment)

III. The Good News in this text

A. The Good Samaritan

1. He demonstrates the possibilities
2. He is a symbol of neighborly compassion and has even inspired heroic deeds

3. When even the religious representatives (priest, Levite, the lawyer by implication) failed, he obeyed the commandment to love thy neighbor
4. The person in need was his neighbor
5. He has made this sort of behavior almost commonplace

B. Jesus even redeems possessions

1. The Samaritan had money (we talked about this weeks ago)
2. God gives resources and talents to everyone; what we do with them affects where we go in the next life
3. Mt. 6:20 – lay up treasures in heaven
4. 1 Timothy 6:17-19, Paul exhorts those with money

IV. The bridge between the Gospel and the world

- Repentance bridges the gap between us and God
- Humility opens our eyes to our distance from God
- God demands both
- Yet God opens up a way to commune with him and to cleanse our conscience, Heb. 10:19-23

Conclusion:

1. The Gospel redeems our minds, our possessions, and our lives from despair.
2. We have hope.
3. We can live the Good Samaritan life.
4. We have the power of the Holy Spirit within us.
5. We can come to God without fearing reproach or rejection.
6. These are part of the Good News inherent in the Good Samaritan story.
7. Go forth and love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and your neighbor as yourself.