

Continuing in the Word, "The Mystery," Ephesians 3:6
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A Jewish man was traveling between Jerusalem and Jericho. The road between these two cities was difficult and dangerous. It was known as the "Way of Blood" due to the many attacks on travelers by robbers. It literally became the way of blood for this particular man as he was attacked, robbed, and left for dead. Without help it was most probable that he would die.

But the man's poor fortune looked like it might take a turn for the better. A priest was coming by. Surely a priest of Israel would stop to help one of his own people! But no, the priest moved to the far side of the road and passed by. All hope was not gone though, for the next man to come by was a Levite. Certainly a Jewish Levite would help this Israelite who was in such dire need. But no, though he looked, he too passed by on the other side of the road.

Was there any hope to be found? Who was this third man who approached? Would he help? No, he would never help. He was a Samaritan. A Samaritan would never help a Jew. If a Jewish priest and Levite would not help, surely this Samaritan wouldn't. But he did. The Samaritan stopped, cared for the Jew's wounds, and brought him to an inn where he could recuperate. Not only that, but the Samaritan took all the expense of caring for the Israelite on himself.

We see the priest and Levite did not care for their own the way they should have, and we see the Samaritan cared for one whom no one would have expected him to care for. What a powerful parable that Jesus spoke recorded for us in Luke 10!

As we read this we must ask ourselves if we care for those who are our fellow believers in Christ, or do we neglect and ignore them, in our hearts following in the footsteps of the priest and Levite on the road to Jericho? We must also search our hearts to see if we are caring for those who are outside of the faith as the Samaritan did for one outside of his nationality.

In Ephesians 3:6 Paul tells us that Jews and Gentiles are *"fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel."* In looking at what we as Christians share together we must realize that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, and as God's children we should please our heavenly Father by caring for one another. We can't walk by. We shouldn't neglect or ignore.

Also, we must not be selective about who we reach out to. The gospel is offered to all. No portion of humanity is left out. As the Samaritan tended to the physical wounds of the Jew so we as Christians are to tend to the spiritual wounds of non-believers. Love one another and care for the lost. The "mystery revealed" calls us to this. May we faithfully live it out!

Pastor Jim