

What does the Lord require of you? To

Act Justly...

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Social Action

WORD

‘ So he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?"' (Luke 10: 29)

Read Luke 10:25-37.

The testing of Jesus by an expert in the Jewish law forms the backdrop to one of the most famous passages in the Bible. The legal expert gives the classic summary of the law. Jesus agrees with him, but tells a parable, which invites the lawyer to think about how it applies to his own life.

Discuss some or all of the following questions.

- Q1 What motives do you think lay behind the legal expert's question?
- Q2 What is the significance of each of the characters in the parable?
- Q3 What reasons can you think of for the Levite and Priest not helping?
- Q4 Why is the Samaritan such a good example of loving one's neighbour?
- Q5 What effects might this parable have had on the thinking and actions of the legal expert?

Consider the information below about HIV/AIDS projects. In what ways are the volunteers in the projects loving their neighbours? What challenges are there for us?

In sub-Saharan Africa an estimated 28.1 million people are living with HIV/AIDS out of a world total of 40 million (which is said to be rising at a rate of 15,000 new infections per day).

In Uganda, there are about 820,000 people living with HIV/AIDS and 1.7 million children have been orphaned. The good news is that the infection rate has dropped to around 8 per cent, compared with 30 per cent in 1992.

In Soroti in rural Uganda, Christian Aid supports work by a team known as FACE (Facing AIDS with Compassion and Education) which is part of its partner organisation Youth With A Mission (YWAM). The team trains local volunteers to become community-based health workers, supporting people living with HIV/AIDS. They also undertake educational work in schools and communities and run mobile clinics which offer basic medication and counselling.

Isaiah is a pastor in the Church of Uganda who has recently completed his health worker training. He says: ‘ I did the training because I wanted to know how HIV/AIDS is transmitted and I wanted to know whether it could be spread by shaking hands with people and so on. I go out to people to teach them and offer help with protection. I also give them spiritual advice. The church is responding to HIV/AIDS through prayer and practical help. I encourage people in that and get a good response from them.’

Further study

- Read Matthew 4: 23, 9: 35 and Acts 10: 38. Give examples of how Jesus showed a concern for physical as well as spiritual needs.
- How do faith and deeds relate to each other (see James 2: 14-26 and 1 John 3: 16-18)?
- Read Matthew 25: 31-46. What does the King challenge us to do in our lives here on earth? What does the King mean when he says ‘ whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me’? (v40)
- Read Acts 11: 27-30, Romans 15: 25-27 and 2 Corinthians 8: 14. In which ways can those who have, share with those who do not?