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| **The Temptation to Justify Ourselves**  *Promise: by Christ’s wounds we have been healed* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Lev 18:1-5; 19:9-18; Ps 41; Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37 (5th Sunday after Pentecost, Pr. 10), 7/13/25)  *But [the lawyer], desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”* – v. 29  **Lead In –** I like the term “old Adam” when describing our sinful nature. It is fitting. The term alludes to Biblical Adam, the first human, and the sinful nature we inherited from his transgression. It refers to the unregenerate, fallen state of humans before we are redeemed by our Lord Jesus. Even after we come to faith in Christ, it describes our tendency in this age towards sin. So, in relationship to our Gospel Reading, let me say, the old Adam is always trying to justify himself. He is always trying to dig out of the hole he dug for himself.   1. **Two Verses That Are Helpful Interpretive Keys** – 25, 29    1. The expert in the law was putting Jesus to the test…    2. Jesus plays along with the lawyer’s legalism…    3. Trying to justify himself, and who is my neighbor?...    4. Post exile Judaism not the same as ancient Israel… 2. **Consideration for How We Got into a Predicament**    1. The phrase “you are digging yourself in deeper”…    2. Nearly driving dad’s John Deere tactor into the drink…    3. This tendency goes all the way back to the garden… 3. **Moral of the Story (Parable) is Not Doing, but Showing Mercy**    1. Parallel language of Israel’s sin in Hosea 6…    2. Jesus is the “Good Samaritan” figure …    3. We are the wounded and terminally ill…   **Final Word –** Now of course, as believers we should imitate our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. As he showed mercy, so should we be merciful. And without a doubt the law with all its commandments is a reliable guide on how God would have us operate. And love is the fulfilling of all God’s commandments. No doubt about it. There is also no doubt that we fail to love God with our whole heart and to love our neighbor as ourselves. So where does that leave us? Desisting from justifying ourselves, I hope! And in repentance confessing our sins, including trying to justify ourselves, and believing Christ’s promise to forgive and heal repentant sinners. Put your trust in Christ’s mercy, and share this with others.  **Ga 3:10-11** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”  **Ro 4:13** For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.  **Ro 4:2-3** For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”  **Ge 15:6** And [Abram] believed the Lord, and [the Lord] counted it to him as righteousness.  **Ge 3:4-6** But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be | **Luke 10:25-37 ESV**  *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*  25Behold, a lawyer stood up to put [Jesus] to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” 26He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?” 27And 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 neighbor as yourself.” 28And he said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.”  29But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” 30Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. 31Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. 32So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. 34He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ 36Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” 37He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”  like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.  **Ho 6:1-2** “Come, let us return to the Lord; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.  **Is 53:5** But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.  **Ho 6:9-10** As robbers lie in wait for a man, so the priests band together; they murder on the way to Shechem; they commit villainy. In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing; Ephraim's whoredom is there; Israel is defiled.  **Ja 2:12-13** So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. |