

# Loving Priests

*Pam Buchanan*

**PURPOSE:** This lesson will emphasize that God’s people, whether Jews or Christians, are called to be God’s priests every day, serving him by loving others, as our holy calling.

**MUSIC:** All from “Hymns of Heritage and Hope” – “I Will Serve Thee” (#515); “Channels Only” (#518); “Make Me a Blessing” (#520); Make Me a Servant (#527). If it is not possible to sing, read the words together.

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 10:25-35 (emphasis on vs. 31); Matthew 5:17; Matthew 22:37-40; Exodus 19:4-6; 1 Peter 2:9

**PREPARATION:**

**Skit:** Run off a copy of the opening skit and assign the needed readers. You may choose to make signs for the various characters to wear during the skit. Keep these signs to use in all the other skits.

**Music:** If using music, acquire enough hymnals for each person to have one. Have a recording or an instrumentalist play accompaniment.

**Scripture:** Have Bibles ready for use. Assign Scripture pieces at the start, to make reading through them smoother. Ask someone to have the Scripture Hebrews 13:1-3 open to read when asked.

## Hook

Invite the people who are in the skit to go over to the side of the room and come in as their part is read. If you have a small group, you may ask them to stay seated and just get up and act out their parts as appropriate and then be seated. The person who is acting out the man who is beaten does not have to get on the floor but may sit in a chair or recline on a couch. The point is to have each person walk by, and then go to the other side.

This devotional will focus on priests. In this passage of Scripture from Luke 10, we do not have much information about the Priest. We do know that priests were supposed to be holy men of God, and thus were respected and esteemed. As we begin our lesson, listen carefully as the Scripture is being read. At the end of the passage, let’s then imagine what the priest might say to us as he tries to explain his actions that day.

As the Scripture is read, the characters will act out the reading. At the end of the reading, the character who is the priest will stand and share her part. The narrator may be the one giving the devotional or may choose someone else. The narrator should read the Scripture slowly enough for the actors to play their roles.

## SKIT TIME: **Loving Priests**

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

He answered, “‘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, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

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

The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

*The one who is the priest will look at the audience and say:*

“Don’t look at me that way! I know I’m a priest and supposed to be always doing what is right, but sometimes that just isn’t possible! Yes, I saw that man that had been beaten, but I was in a hurry. You see, there was this function at the synagogue that was very, very important. As the priest, I had to be there and could not be late! If I stopped to help this man I didn’t know, I would have missed this meeting. Besides, I am a priest! I can’t go around touching people’s dirty bodies! What if he had some illness? What if I got sick from him? Then I couldn’t help all the other people I’m supposed to help!

“Frankly, when I saw him, I thought he might be just a drunk. You know good people don’t usually get beaten up and left on the side of the road. I wonder what he did wrong that made that happen to him?”

“Oh, don’t look at me that way! You know your Bible says you are all priests if you claim to know Jesus! You’re just as responsible as I am!”

(Thank the actors and give everyone time to return to their seats.)

After the reading of the skit, ask the ladies to discuss by answering the following question:  
**ASK:** What were the excuses he gave for his actions? (I was in a hurry, I had an important function to perform, I can’t go around touching people’s dirty bodies. If I did, then I would be “unclean” and couldn’t help others. And I might get sick myself!)

**ASK:** What were his judgments of the man who had been beaten? (This man might just be a drunk and he might have deserved this “beating.”)

**ASK:** What was his defense? (I am a Priest, but so are you. You are just as responsible as I am.)

**ASK:** What are your own personal reactions to his possible excuses, judgments and/or defense?

## Book

The biblical priesthood was established by God in the Old Testament. A priest was required to act as a mediator/ambassador of God. He was a chosen vessel to represent God to the people.

In the Old Testament, the priest represented “the Law,” but we read in the New Testament that Jesus came to “fulfill the law,” and he added the new commandment of love.

**READ** the words of Jesus from Matthew 5:17... “Do not think that I have come to abolish Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

**READ** the words of Jesus from Matthew 22:37-40... “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Love is not about an emotional feeling, but about acting in a specific way toward others that is consistent with the fulfillment of the commands given in the law. Jesus is love, and loving others is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Law.

And, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, we are all referred to as “priest.”

**READ** Exodus 19:4-6 and 1 Peter 2:9. These two passages explain our responsibility of being priests in our society today and representing the love of God to the world around us.

## Look

As we examine the application of this lesson to our lives, let's return to Luke 10:31. The verse tells us that this priest “saw the man,” but he passed by on the other side. He made a choice to continue on his way and fulfill his temple duties rather than do the right thing by helping this man.

**ASK:** How is this same temptation present in our lives today?

**ASK:** How do we struggle with allowing our “church” commitments to get in the way of “loving our neighbor?”

**ASK:** As members of the “royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God,” how can we represent our God to our own communities?

## Took

We can all imagine that this priest from Luke 10:31 was later convicted of his actions that day and repented. We can all imagine that this priest learned from his wrong choice and changed his ways. And, we all have the opportunity to learn from his example and make “loving the Lord our God by loving our neighbor” a priority and a goal in our own lives.

**ASK:** Can you think of any “present-day” examples of this parable happening in our world today?

**ASK:** What are some practical steps we can take in “loving our neighbor as ourselves.”  
CLOSE WITH A SONG OF YOUR CHOICE AND PRAYER TOGETHER.

**Shared by:** Pam Buchanan lives in a cottage on the Blowing Rock AC Campground with her husband, Rev. Rob Buchanan. She attends the Blue Ridge AC Chapel and serves as

the Appalachian Regional WHFMS president. Pam is thankful for the extra time in these retirement years to travel — to visit her mom, her children and especially her only grandchild, Clara Noel (born in December 2021).