



Moral Stories & Teachings
Philosophy & Religious Studies

The Parable of the Good Samaritan is found in the New Testament of the Bible in the gospel of Luke.

At the time of Jesus, the land of Palestine was ruled by the Romans and split up into different areas. For hundreds of years the Jews and the people of Samaria had been enemies, as they did not agree about where God's people should worship.

Jews and Samaritans hated each other. Most Jews would not travel through Samaria. They went by a longer route to avoid Samaria and any contact with Samaritans.

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 travelled, 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.'

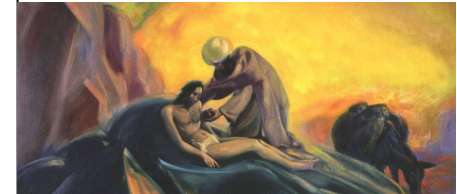
Jesus taught that we should 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' and 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

Parable: a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson

Prejudice: an unfair feeling of dislike for a person or group because of race, sex, religion, etc

Levite: a member of the Hebrew tribe of Levi who were assistants to the priests in the Jewish temple.

Reimburse: to repay with money, goods or time



Prodigal: spending money or using resources freely and recklessly; wastefully extravagant.

Inheritance: is the practice of receiving money, property, or material things upon the death of an individual.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son is found in the New Testament of the Bible in the gospel of Luke.

The story of the Prodigal Son, also known as the Parable of the Lost Son.

Jesus tells the story of a man who has two sons. The younger son asks his father to give him his portion of the family estate as an early inheritance. Once received, the son promptly sets off on a long journey to a distant land and begins to waste his fortune on wild living. When the money runs out, a severe famine hits the country and the son finds himself in dire circumstances. He takes a job feeding pigs. He is so destitute (poor) that he even longs to eat the food assigned to the pigs. The young man finally comes to his senses, remembering his father. In humility, he recognizes his foolishness, decides to return to his father and ask for forgiveness and mercy. The father who had been watching and waiting, receives his son back with open arms of compassion. He is overjoyed by the return of his lost son! Immediately the father turns to his servants and asks them to prepare a giant feast in celebration. Meanwhile, the older son is not one bit happy when he comes in from working the fields and discovers a party going on to celebrate his younger brother's return. The father tries to dissuade the older brother from his jealous rage explaining, "You are always with me, and everything I have is yours."

Six Blind Men and the Elephant

One of the earliest versions of the story originated in the Indian subcontinent and appears in Buddhist text which dates to around 500 BCE.

The story has been widely used and appears in many religious traditions, including Jain and Hindu texts.

The story became well known in Europe after 19th-century American poet John Godfrey Saxe created his own version as a poem.

Six blind men were told about an elephant that had wandered into the village, so they went to the elephant, and they began to touch different parts of its body to observe what does it looks like.

The first man approached the elephant and touched against the broad and sturdy side, and he concluded that it is a wall.

The second man touched the tusk of the elephant and mistaken it into a spear.

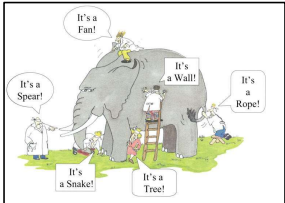
The third man touched the elephant’s tail and mistaken it to be a rope.

The fourth one reached out an eager hand and felt the leg of the elephant, he concluded that the elephant is a tree.

The fifth one touched the ear of the elephant and mistaken it as a fan.

The last man approached the elephant and he happened to hold its trunk, then he concluded that the elephant is a snake.

The story's moral is that humans tend to claim absolute truth based on their limited experiences, while ignoring the limited experiences of others.



Father Maxmillian Kolbe

A real-life example of sacrifice could be:

- It could be a teacher who is delayed after class with a student who needs help.
- A bystander who witnesses an auto accident and rushes to help.
- A soldier who pulls a buddy out of harm's way at the cost of being shot himself.



Kolbe was inspired by the Virgin Mary and was put into a concentration camp because he opposed the German invasion of Poland. Kolbe never lost his Christian faith and is now a saint of the Catholic Church

- Maximilian Kolbe was a Polish priest who lived during the second world war. During the time, the Nazi Germans were rounding up Jewish people and taking them off to concentration camps. Here they made them work, starved them, tortured them and eventually killed them. Kolbe used his church to shelter 2000 Jews from the Nazis and in 1941 he was arrested by the Germans and sent to a prison camp called Auschwitz. A man from Kolbe's barracks went missing. The Nazi camp commander picked ten men from the same barracks to be starved to death in order to deter further escape attempts.
- (The man who had disappeared was later found drowned)
- One of the selected men cried out, "My poor wife! My poor children! What will they do?" Kolbe offered himself instead, and said to the prison officer, "I am a Catholic priest from Poland; I would like to take his place, because he has a wife and children."
- During his time in the cell, Kolbe led the men in songs and prayer. After three weeks of no water or food, only Kolbe and three others were still alive. He encouraged others that they would soon be with Mary in heaven.
- Each time the guards checked on him he was standing or kneeling in the middle of the cell and looking calmly at those who entered, while the others lay moaning and complaining on the ground around him.
- He was killed with a poisoned injection. Some who were present at his death say that he raised his left arm and calmly waited for the injection

Sacrifice: to offer or kill as a religious sacrifice or give up something valued for the sake of others.