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Who is my Neighbour?" A Study of Luke 10:25-37. In it's Lucan and Igbo"

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Abstract

Often in society, we meet individuals lying at the roadside, strangers are not readily welcome. There is exclusion of an osu from full case participation in the life of the community. Too often we are at a loss as to what should be done in each. Situations like these have called for the study of the parable of the Good Samaritan, one of the parables where Jesus taught us how to love and how to be a neighbour to everyone without discrimination.

From the study of the relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans and between the Jews and the Gentiles, and from the study of the Lucan Community, a similarity was discovered in relation to the Igbo community. The discriminatory treatment meted out by the Jews to others was likened to that meted out to an osu in the Igbo community. For instance, it was not possible for a Jew to marry a Samaritan and vice versa. Accepting food and drink from a Samaritan was against the law. Surprisingly, the osu suffer the same treatment from the hands of the freeborn.

From the exegesis of Luke 10:25-37, we discovered that there was a far-reaching difference between the lawyer and Jesus on the definition of neighbour. The lawyer regarded "neighbour" as a term not referring to everyone, and perhaps thought of what classes of people were excluded by it from the scope of the commandment. But Jesus declined to set any limits. A neighbour is anyone that needs one's love.

Since the parable is timeless, it claims that love is not words, but deeds. And these deeds involve risks, sacrifices, and sharing of one's possessions. From our fieldwork we

found out that the major causes preventing people from rendering this expression of love in the society range from fear of dubious characters (popularly known as "419"), unnecessary interrogation by the police, fear of being beaten up while helping someone knocked down or abandoned along the roadside. The osu is not yet fully accepted, although the gods they were sacrificed to have been wiped out.

Therefore, in our recommendations, we have encouraged the Igbo Christian to see the osu as a neighbour, as an object of love; welcome the stranger despite the fear of "419"; spend money and time to help an accident victim with all the risks involved. Our other recommendations include providing all citizens with national identity cards, formation of "Good Samaritan Corps". The police are to be well equipped with First Aid boxes. Christian Doctors should see it as a religious duty to stop at accident scenes and help out. In terms of societal awareness of the need for good morals, we have suggested the use of media houses and Churches to disseminate information. The most effective, however, is living a good Christian life.

It has been argued that insensitivity to the needs of others is due mainly to the way people have reacted to social crimes. But in the light of Jesus' teaching in the parable of the Good Samaritan, we have called for a rethinking of the whole situation bearing in mind Jesus' command to the lawyer, "Go and do likewise".

Keywords: Neighbour, Igbo Community, Parable, Teaching, Samaritans, Jews and Gentiles

1. Introduction

Too often we are faced with a feature which is growing in the society: when we passby, we see an individual lying at the roadside neglected; strangers are not readily welcome. In Igbo society, even though there is increasing interaction with those classified as osu, their exclusion from full participation in the life of the community is noticed. Often, we are at a loss as to what should be done in each case. What is responsible for this attitude one may ask?

Situations like this make one think of the Gospel of Luke which shows so clearly the love and sympathy of Jesus for the outcast, the unfortunate and the stranger. A good example relating to our situation is the story of the Good Samaritan. Can the lesson of this parable become a reality today? The issue is that of love of neighbour: a love that is indispensable in all human relationships.¹

According to John Crossan, the parable of the Good Samaritan stands as a timeless example of love in action.ⁱⁱ Traditionally, we have come to regard the narrative as a parable, but in the Gospel, it is told as a story. In this work we shall use the two terms interchangeably.

A good Samaritan, for a Jew of the first century was a contradiction in terms. A Samaritan was a stranger, an enemy and a heretic. For Herman Hendrickx, in Jewish eyes the Samaritans were bastards, because those who had escaped deportation to Assyria in 722 B.C had mingled and intermarried with pagans.ⁱⁱⁱ Racial, political and religious antagonisms gradually developed into absolute contempt.

The Jews avoided every contact with Samaritans. Marriage between a Jew and a Samaritan was not possible as many conflicts had widened the gap. Accepting food and drink from a Samaritan was against the law. In fact, Jews had no dealings with Samaritans (cf. John 4:9). The Samaritans were equally hostile to the Jews.

Against this background, Jesus' choice of a Samaritan to play the hero's role in his parable on neighbourly love is significant. For Pol Vonck, if the story is to be made to function as it did long ago, when it surprised Jesus! audience, then it cannot but question our established conclusions today.^{iv} Indeed, the questioner, who at the end is told to do as the Samaritan did is the one to whom the parable comes home directly.

The question now arises: Can the Christians formed in Igbo culture live up to this demand of love for those of their ethnic group and outside? Can the concept of neighbour (agbatobi) in Igbo context be equated with the concept of neighbour in the Lucan context? These questions become pertinent especially now when many people think that the society has gone bad and that it is difficult for someone to go out of one's way to act as the Samaritan did.

2. Research Methodology

This work intends to examine the extent to which the Igbo Christian has understood and answered the question "who is my neighbour?" and in what practical way these Christians are carrying out the Lord's injunction "go and do likewise (Luke 10:37).

The area of study is Igboland in the context of Luke 10:25-37. Information was obtained from Igbo towns, Churches, hospitals, police stations and from charitable homes. Some information was also obtained nationally. It must however be noted that though centred in Igboland, the findings of the work would also apply to Christians in other ethnic groups in Nigeria and other African Countries.

This work will be done through library research and field work. The library research will cover books and articles on the Gospel of Luke and Igbo culture, and other general works that will be of help to the thesis. In the field work, interviews and use of questionnaires will be employed, to supplement the paucity of literature on agbatobi in Igbo culture, and the understanding of neighbour in society today.

2.1 Research Content

The work consists of five chapters and a conclusion. In the first chapter we shall sketch out the issues at stake and our method of approaching it.

In the first chapter which also has Literature Review, we shall examine the salient views of various authors to Luke 10:25-37, and on the concept of neighbour (agbatobi) in Igbo culture.

In chapter two, we examine the relationship that existed between the Jews, the Samaritans and the Gentiles in Luke's day.

Chapter three constitutes the exegetical chapter of Luke 10:25-37.

Chapter four, we discuss the concept of neighbour in Igbo culture in the light of Luke 10:25-37. In this chapter also we analyse the questionnaires and interviews.

In chapter five, we put forward some proposals in view of re-emphasizing the concept of neighbour based on the findings of the previous chapters. The conclusion shall be a summary of the evaluation of the whole work.

3. General Review

According to Brad Young, the parable of the Good Samaritan is a story which could actually have occurred.^v This does not mean that the parable would be an accurate telling of something that happened but rather that the parable would take the basic outline of the event and adapt the details for its own purpose.

In this section we shall discuss the parable in its contemporary NT scholarship. In this we shall see also whether the parable is one single pericope or whether it was developed in two stages (10:25-28, 29-37), as some authors would hold. For a better appreciation of the parable, we shall also examine the authors that discuss the characters that are involved.

With regard to the concept of neighbour in Igboland and Africa as a whole, there is paucity of literature. However we shall study it in the light of the interest developing now among writers with regard to agbatobi (neighbour) and related concept hospitality (obi-nnabata).

Taking all these on board, we shall present this review under two major headings, namely, works on

- a) Luke 10:25-37 in contemporary NT scholarship; and
- b) On neighbour (agbatobi) in Igbo culture set within the African context.
- c) Luke 10:25-37 in contemporary NT scholarship
- d) One of the questions usually raised on this text of Luke 10:25-37 by scholars is whether it is one single pericope or whether it was developed in stages. Two major divisions are usually proposed, Luke 10:25-28 and Luke 10:30-37. For John Crossan, the parable is found only in the latter.^{vi} He holds that Luke 10:25-28 is not the original framework for the parable.^{vii} Pol Vonck holds that in order to link the parable to the lawyer's question, Luke composed verses 28:29, 37 (at least 37b).^{viii} For J. Jeremias, the double command to love is the only connection between verses 25:28 and the rest of the parable.^{ix}
- e) Some scholars however approach Luke 10:25-37 as one single pericope. H. Hendrickx sees it as a single unit but with verse 30 starting the parable proper.^x Madeleine Boucher shares the same view but adds that the parable was introduced by the lawyer's question in verse 29.^{xi} E. Laverdiere holds that the parable is a single unit but was developed in two stages (10:25-28; 29-37).^{xii} We accept Laverdiere's views for the analysis of the text in this work.
- f) Many more writers are however interested in the message of the parable. According to G. V. Jones, "the parable is not a pleasant tale about the traveller who did his good deed, it is an indictment of social, racial and religious superiority"^{xiii}.

- g) Similarly, Low Hendricks, it is not a story of someone who did a good deed, it is an indictment against anyone who has raised protective barriers in order to live a sheltered life.^{xiv} For Robert Karris, "the parable of the Good Samaritan" functions as part of Luke's answer to a gigantic mission problem in his church.^{xv} Pol. Vonok like Jones sees the parable as an indictment of religious superiority.^{xvi} For R. Tannehill, in a parable like the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus continues to appeal to his opponents with strong words designed to change their view of themselves and of Jesus' mission.^{xvii}
- h) But of great interest to the thesis as to Eta Linnemann is that Jesus uses the story of the Good Samaritan to answer the question of a Scribe: "who is my neighbour?"^{xviii} For him, Jesus uses the story to bring the question of the neighbour to the right place,^{xix} For N. Perrin, the parable is as an exemplary story and as such is concerned to teach by example, in this instance, the example of true neighbourliness.^{xx} For J. Aizala also the immortal parable illustrates genuine love of one's neighbour.^{xxi} For Boucher, it then becomes clear that it is not official religiosity, but the doing of the concrete deed of love for the neighbour, that fulfils the law of God.^{xxii}
- i) Leopold Sabourin seems to differ a little. For him the real purpose of the lawyer's question, and consequently of the parable, was to have Jesus take sides on the debated issue: who for a Jew is the neighbour?^{xxiii} However, recent commentators point out a contrast the initial and final meaning of neighbour in the parable.^{xxiv} As Sabourin holds, in the beginning the Mounded traveller seems to be the neighbour; in the end it is the Good Samaritan.^{xxv} It can be asked: how important is this shift of meaning?
- j) No great reflection is necessary to find out that the story itself requires the shift: first the attention has to be drawn on the man in need, to illustrate what it means to be compassionate towards others. The real purpose of the story is given at the end. "Go and do likewise".^{xxvi} In fact, Sabourin would hold that at the end both the man in need and the Good Samaritan are "neighbour", from a different viewpoint.^{xxvii} For Pol. Vonck, in verse 29 the neighbour is the object.^{xxviii} He is the one to whom one shows mercy. He further asks a question: Is this everybody? Would there be really any 25 limits and can there be a non-neighbour?^{xxix} In verse 36 however the neighbour is the subject, he is the one who shows mercy and thereby proves himself a neighbour.^{xxx} But we have Jesus' view, on the other hand, that what matters is to prove oneself a neighbour to anybody one finds in need,^{xxxi}
- k) According to Brad Youngs: Jesus is saying that there is reciprocity in human relationships, and in order to grasp how to answer the question of who is one's neighbour, one must take action and behave like a neighbour to all 38 need regardless of the consequences.^{xxxii}
- l) So Crossan hold that, the example of the despised half-breed Samaritan was intended to teach the lawyer that no human being was beyond the range of his charity.^{xxxiii} The law of love called him to be ready at any time to give his life for another's need. For Laverdiere, this means that the real question is not who is my neighbour but how does one prove oneself a true neighbour to other?^{xxxiv} So the crucial aspect of human relationships is a response to the neighbour's need.
- m) Because of this, some authors seek to define who & neighbour is. For John Kilgallen, the neighbour then is the one who needs my love.^{xxxv} That a neighbour is anyone in need with whom one comes in contact and to whom one can show pity and kindness, even beyond the bounds of one's own ethnic or religious group is the point at issue.
- n) In effect, the question that Jesus asks at the end of the story and the response that the lawyer begrudgingly gives to it cast the question in a larger perspective and unmask the lawyer's effort to justify himself. It is no longer whether the victim of the highway robbery should be considered legally a "neighbour" to either the priest, the Tavit, or the Samaritan, but rather which one of them acted as a "neighbour" to the unfortunate victim. In the Lucan context the "kindness" shown by the Samaritan to the half-dead victim becomes a concrete example of the love of one's neighbour advocated in verse 28; it is an essential part of the way to "eternal life".
- o) Some authors while examining the parable focus mainly on the characters that are involved. For them, a knowledge of who the characters are enriches also our understanding of the parable. Fitzmyer recalls that there was a privileged status for the priest and the Levite in Palestinian Jewish society namely, their levitical and/or Aaronic heritage.^{xxxvi} As Boucher observes, the priests were the highest religious leaders in Israel.^{xxxvii} The Levites were the associates of the priests and 34 belonged to the Temple personnel.^{xxxviii} The Samaritans were a people who were mixed both ethnically and religiously.^{xxxix} Their history made them schismatic and cowardly in the eyes of the Jews. Some like Jeremias wonder whether it is not more probable that Jesus had in mind the Sadducean prescription which strictly forbade a priest to defile himself with a dead man by the way.^{xl} It must then be supposed that the priest and the Levite regarded the unconscious man as dead and avoided contact with him on levitical grounds.^{xli} The same regulations on defilement from contact with a dead body were also to be found in the Samaritan Pentateuch, but they did not hinder the Samaritan of the story from being motivated by his own pity and kindness which enabled him to transcend such restrictions.^{xlii}
- p) It was however, surprising and offensive for Jesus hearers that it should be a Samaritan that was given the role of the merciful person. They would have preferred that it was a lay Jew who helped the victim. The lawyer was badly hit when he was forced to make conclusions. The word Samaritan was too heavy for him to mention so he ended up saying "the one who showed mercy on him". A conclusion can be reached that the Samaritan proved a neighbour while others were found wanting.

4. Neighbour (Agbatobi) in Tabo Culture Set within the African Context

The issue of "neighbour" in Igbo culture and in other African cultures, is a topic that has not yet been much written on; we may see it as a new ground for contemporary research. In early anthropological books on Africa, it received no more than casual references.

One may be tempted, to think that the reason why there is paucity of literature on this topic is that it was clearly understood who a neighbour is in Igbo culture. A neighbour may not be a person who is not living within one's environment; only the person living next door to one's house is considered a "neighbour". There is emphasis on locality. There is emphasis also on hospitality both to persons, to one's acquaintance or to strangers. Perhaps bringing in hospitality would be an extended sense of one's *agbatobi*. Hospitality has an important social relevance for the Igbo people. They are expected to be hospitable to relatives, friends and strangers.

Sayings like "onye ijo neje odike onwerebe" (a traveller in a strange land is like one who had never owned a home), indicate the appropriate response expected of an Igbo to such a person. The Igbo should make him or her share in the comfort of one's home. Even in times of war, strangers from any part of the world are protected; to kill them is a sacrilege. For this reason, people travelled freely and found shelter and food offered to them willingly whenever they terminated their journey. As Chanama observes, it is an act of wickedness to deny hospitality to people.^{xliii}

For Chidili, the virtue of hospitality reveals traditional African community life to be Christ-like.^{xliv} He further holds that in this African heritage we see the theme of love preached by Christ in action, the love to welcome the strangers and visitors with smiles and open mindedness.^{xlv}

They love to shelter the visitors and strangers, accommodate and feed them without counting the cost.^{xlvi} They love to succour the needy, the marginalized, the down trodden and indeed all people of this cadre with Joy and smiles.^{xlvii} For Ilogu, hospitality is one of the community's social values which include, respect for age and its seniority order, acceptance that the community is more important than the individual, justice, social harmony together with order and unity, lack of duplicity, honesty, and co-operation.^{xlviii}

Through socialization practices and contexts in which a child is brought up, namely, the home, the various levels of extended family and the lineage, the various age grades and initiation rites, he or she is taught these social values. This boils down to the fact that many traditional Africans who practised hospitality could be taken as doing what the good Samaritan did.

From the above survey, it is clear that in Luke the word "neighbour" means the one who needs one's love. But in Igbo culture the emphasis is more on hospitality to that same person who also needs love. This study will attempt to bring the two senses together in order to bring out the purpose of the parable in our context.

5. Relationship between the Jews, the Samaritans, and the Gentiles

For a better appreciation of the parable of the Good Samaritan, the study of the circumstances under which Jesus told the parable is also necessary. These circumstances involve Jewish history and social setting. This becomes important since the act of showing mercy can be conditioned by the circumstance one finds oneself. Our aim in this chapter then is to establish the socio-cultural background to Luke 10:25-37.

6. Analysis of Luke 10:25-37: The Parable

Verse 29 opens with θέλον δικαιοῦσαι εαυτὸν ("desiring to justify himself"), that is, to vindicate himself, or to justify

his question, to show that Jesus' apparently obvious answer was inadequate. Probably the lawyer wanted to show that he was right in posing the question that he had originally proposed to Jesus, even though it found such a simple answer. Since the teacher of the law knew the answer to his own question, his question then was pointless so he wants to justify his question, to show that his question was a valid one.

"And who is my neighbour?", *kai tis oteu moi* Kas introduces a further question in a discussion. πλησίον The question the lawyer now asks implies that the meaning of "neighbour" is not certain: the commandment is not clear. As an adverb. *moios* can be translated as "near", "close by". Taking this definition, a neighbour is somebody living close by or near one. Δε ὁ πλησίον "the neighbour", usually used in a spatial sense for Hebrew equivalents like *shum* 33:38, is translated as "the person next to one".

πλησίον In the MT is used in the sense of "neighbour. The close material link with the or may be seen in the fact that in twelve instances of *O Anoiar* there is allusion to Leviticus 19:15, and that once there is quotation from Zechariah 8:16 (Eph 4:125) and allusion to Exodus 2:13 (Acts 7:27), while only twice is the word used independently (Rom 15:21 Jas 4:12). In Romans 15:2, & *meio y* is used for the brother or sister Christian.

The singular "neighbour" is a generic term it is not a reference to the person only. The further implication in the question is, "where does one draw the line"? Jesus' "example" will extend the answer beyond that given in Leviticus 19:16.

It is to be noticed that in the first stage Luke provided the context for the second, which brings us to the heart of the matter. What had begun as a lawyer's test of Jesus now becomes Jesus' test of the lawyer. Placed on the defensive, the latter returns to the charge with a further question.

Earlier before, verse 30, Jesus had responded to the lawyer's questions with questions of his own. He now answers with a story in which three men came upon someone who had been robbed, beaten and abandoned half dead along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. *Owolapur o Inoous elnev*- this can be translated literally as "taking up, Jesus said". The answer to the question comes in the form of a story.

"*AVORITOS TIS*, a certain person; there was once a man. Luke uses the indefinite; this is a conventional way in English of beginning a story. Κατέβαινε Ἰερουσαλὴμ εἰς ἰεριχὲν going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jerusalem was some 24 kilometres north-east of Jericho, and some 1,300 metres lower in altitude. It is to be noted that this Jericho is not the Jericho of the OT times (Well Sultan) but the town founded by Herod the Great about a mile and a half to the south on the western edge of the Jordan plain where the Wadi *gelt* opens on to it, as William Barclay would hold.

It is to be noted also that the road was not an easy one to move along freely. For William Barclay, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho was a notoriously dangerous road. It was a road of narrow, rocky defiles, and of sudden turnings which made it the happy hunting-ground of brigands. The rocky, tortuous road from Jerusalem to Jericho has through all the centuries been notorious as a place where robbers all too often attack travellers. This explains why the man was attacked. This is expressed *ἰη καὶ λησταῖς περιέπεσε*, "he fell among robbers", with the aorist tense indicating a punctiliar event. There is a possibility to think that this man

brought trouble on himself because he may have known that the road was bad. But if we take the verb περιέπσει with dative which translates "to fall into the hands of", we conclude that it was a mishap. Be that as it may, Jesus answer shows that we must help one even when he or she has brought his or her trouble, perhaps as the traveller had done.

The meeting of the traveller with the robbers was not a pleasant experience. He was stripped and beaten, "They stripped him", the idea could be "cook away everything he had", and left unconscious, this explains why he looked like a corpse. Kai after the relative pronoun serves to focus the attention on what follows. "Beat him" literally means having laid blows (on him) probably with clubs or stick.

Kata cukup by chance, by coincide. This begins verse 31. The help that was supposed to have come to this man left half dead was by a stroke of chance. This phrase is emphatically placed at the head of the sentence. "Going down", this in most likely going down from Jerusalem to Jericho as the traveller was doing before he fell into the hands of robbers. We have to note the durative imperfect Κατεβην. Who was going down this time? Tepeus Tis (a priest). "A priest", one who probably had been serving in the Jerusalem Temple and was making his way home after the end of his course came to the scene. For Fitzmyer, later rabbinic tradition knows of Jericho as a place where some priest lived.

What was the action of the priest? "but passed by on the other side". It is clear here that it was the sight of the wounded man that diverted the priest. We can imply that he must have seen him from a reasonably close distance, but he passed by on the other side". No doubt he was remembering that one who touched a dead person was unclean for seven days (um 19:11). So he could not be sure but he feared that the man was dead: to touch him would mean losing his turn of duty in the Temple; and he refused to risk that.

Another person came into the scene; he is a Levite. A Levite is a member of the priestly tribe of Levi, who 39 had the duty of helping in the services in the Temple (see Num 3:1-3; 1 Chro 23:27-32).

In the OT, "Levite" was commonly used for those descendants who were not Aaronids, but who were entrusted with minor services related to the Temple cult and rites. Their status varied in the course of OT times, especially as priestly clans became more numerous. Relatively few of them returned from the Babylonian Captivity (Ezra 2: 36-43) but these soon acquired a status entitling them to receive tithes for priestly service (Neh 10:37-38).

It is not clearly stated why he passed by also in the text. But because he is of the priestly tribe and a Jew he may have also feared being contaminated by contact with or proximity to a dead body. But he seems to have gone nearer to the man before he passed of. For Barclay. the Levite was a man whose motto was "safety first" because the bandits were in the habit of using decoys and one of their number could easily have acted a wounded man; and when some unsuspecting travellers stopped over him, the others would rush upon him and overpower him. So for Barclay it was not a question of being contaminated or not. But whatever the reason, the Levite also passed by on the other side.

In verse 33 we have Σαμαρίτης δε τις οδεύων but a Samaritan, as he journeyed". Εμπροσθεν! is emphatic. He is the foil to the two respected members of the Palestinian Jewish community mentioned in verses 31-32, who would

have regarded him almost as a pagan. οδεύω to travel, to make one's way, without indication of direction or goal of the journey. But that the Samaritan was not on his way home may be gathered from verse 35; though the text does not say in which direction the Samaritan was going. It is probable that he was going the same route, from Jerusalem to Jericho.

"He came to where he saw", but not yet at the man's side (nee. 34). He probably allowed minutes to pass in pity for the abandoned man. or probably he came to him unintentionally "and when he saw him", he had compassion; he felt sorry. It is good to note again that Samaria was the province between Galilee and Judea. There was much hostility between the Jews and Samaritans because of differences in race, customs, politics and religion. Of these three, a priest and a Levite both saw the wounded man but they crossed over to the other side of the road and continued on their way. The Samaritan not only stopped but helped out.

καὶ προσελθὼν καὶ ἐδήσεν τὰ τραύματα αὐτοῦ "and after going to him he bandaged his wounds", ἰ πορεύ denotes a deliberate act as compared with ἦλθεν Κατ'αὐτὸν of verse 33. "Pouring oil and wine"; probably the oil is olive oil. Present participle ἰν used denoting an act which is simultaneous with Κατεβην, though in the normal order of things the bandaging follows the applying of oil and wine. The olive oil and wine were the provender that the Samaritan had with him on his journey. A mixture of them for medicinal purpose probably is known by the Samaritan.

We have references in the bible where the olive oil is mentioned. For instance, in the of olive oil is said to be a softener of wounds (Isa 1:6); elsewhere in the HT, it is used to anoint the sick (Mark 6:13; Jas 5:14). The acidic nature of wine would serve as a medical application. It can be used as a disinfectant. The Samaritan did not stop at this, he went further. "Then he set him on his own beast", or it can also be translated, "and after putting him on his own beast". This marks the transition to a new series of acts, for Fitzmyer. προσελθὼν is to cause to mount, to put, to load. The beast was not specific but probably it could be either a donkey or a mule. But the import of the whole scene is that it was the beast on which the Samaritan was riding on himself, "Brought him to an inn" Inn may be described as "a lodging house", house to pass the night, house where they receive travellers or guests.

Verse 35 introduces a new day, Εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν - the next day. There is probability that the Samaritan took care of the wounded man (v 34) the whole night. If we go by this we see the Samaritan really involving himself in taking care of this person he picked along the road half dead. Not stopping at this he went on to spend his money ἐκβαλὼν δύο δηνάρια - after taking out two denarii (he took out two denarii, RSV). The Samaritan is depicted making use of his material possessions (oil, wine, his beast, silver money) to aid an unfortunate human victim. A denarius was the daily wage of a common labourer (see Matt 20:2).

Εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν is used here without the usual note of violence because it translates to throw or cast out of" The Samaritan gave them (denarii) to the innkeeper, that is, the man who owned (or managed) the inn. Εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν probably is coming from the verb, Μειλεο care". But used as a noun, it is translated as "caring for", usually unexpressed if the reference is to self. So we can translate εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν as "look after him; take care of him". There is use of effective imperative. This is not meant as an order for only once but

for a period of time. We can hold on this, because the Samaritan was ready to pay for extra expenditure - "whatever more you spend (in addition)... I will repay you". "Ey used is emphatic.

Luke uses &πTOS, Swvat in two senses; first in a natural sense of "give over or back, hand over and second with the connotation of debt: pay back what is owned, re-imburse". In our context we prefer the second. The re-inbursement comes when the Samaritan comes back. The Samaritan's makes clear that he plans to return that way. This is reinforced by the dative of the articular infinite liavepxes Bau that was used.

Verse 36 sees Jesus putting a counter question, TIS TOUTE TUN TO: "which of these three"? This records an abrupt change from the narrative to a question addressed to the lawyer, the expert in the law. The counter question put by Jesus to the lawyer changes the original question. It is a clear indication that the question states that the story is ended. Proved neighbour" Jesus' question was, "who acted like a neighbour to the man? or did what a neighbour should do?

Having told the parable, Jesus again calls on the lawyer to answer his own question. In so doing he also transformed the question. For Jesus the real question is not who is my neighbour? but how does one prove oneself a true neighbour to others? The lawyer answers, -"the one who showed mercy on him". The lawyer had not the courage to call the name "Samaritan so he ended up with the phrase "the one who showed mercy on him? (v 37).

The lawyer is then told to are likewise. TropeÛOU going with Kal ou̐ can be best translated as "you too go", or with most "you too do". "De likewise" refers to the kindness that the Samaritan did: "act in the same way as he did", "be helpful to others as he was". The lawyer is then told to act like the Samaritan in showing mercy even to anyone in need.

7. The Concept of Neighbour in Igbo Culture

In chapter one, we discussed the concept of neighbour in the parable of the Good Samaritan as different authors would see it. Worthy of note is that there was emphasis on whom one can be a neighbour co. In this chapter, we shall study the concept of neighbour in Igbo culture. Taking on board on whom one can be a neighbour to in Igbo culture we shall also discuss the social structure of Igbo families, clans and villages.

Also, to be considered is the extent to which one can be a neighbour to another person considering contemporary Igbo attitude towards strangers and those that are afflicted and the osu caste system. In the case of the afflicted we shall take the examples of accident victims, taking them also as those abandoned to fate. The procedure we shall use is to find out through library research what obtained traditionally in these cases, and from our questionnaires and interviews what obtains now. Our findings will enable us in the final chapter to assess the meaning of neighbour in Igbo context in the light of Luke 10:25-37.

We note here that we gave out three types of questionnaire, questionnaire form A, meant for all questionnaire form B, for the Police, and questionnaire form e for medical workers. These group of questionnaires will henceforth be referred to as "A", "B", "C". Also "" vill stand for male respondents, while "F" for female respondents

8. Neighbour (Agbatobi) among the Igbos

For the Igbos, a neighbour (agbatobi) would be a person who lives near another person. This is enforced by the compound word agbata-obi translating "agbata" literally it means "there is an agreement, something between us" (this is agreed upon by both parties). On the other hand, "obi" has got to do with where one is living. So getting the words together the suggested meaning would be that we agree to live near each other's obi. This explains why 127 of our respondents (98%, H 66, 61) hold that a neighbour is the person living next to one, or living close by.

One thing seems to be certain, the concept of neighbour (agbatobi) was an issue presumed to be understood by all who grew up within Igbo culture. So instead of describing who a neighbour is, the issue becomes what a neighbour is to the other. For instance, it is said that agbatobi onye bu nwaneya (one's neighbour is one's relations). This denotes that a neighbour can be resourceful especially in the time of need. This explains why if anything happens to one, his or her neighbour would be the first to be alerted before the real relations are notified.

The communal living that the Igbos are involved in would also help to assess the concept of neighbour. No doubt, in the community life of the Igbos, everybody seems to be a neighbour to the other. We shall discuss briefly the make-up of families, clans and villages in Igbo social structure to know the extent one can be neighbour to the other. Ninety-one respondents "A" (70%, M 44, P. 47) said they could be neighbour to any person in the social structure. while 34 (268, M 21, F 13) said they cannot be neighbour to just any person.

In Igboland, the basic unit of Igbo life was the village group. For Inichel, the village was a small face to-face society. The term ogbe translates the village. For Aligwekwe It was formed when several patrilineages (umunna) declared themselves the descendants of a common remote ancestor believed to have founded the Ogbe. From this set up there exists a community life.

The community life makes a group of scattered village a unit. Their descent from a common ancestor leach component village being descended from a son), explains why a certain village can claim to be superior because for instance, it is descended from the eldest son. So, the village system plays a primordial role in the Igbo traditional social organisation, but it needs to be noted that the last and the largest subdivision of the Igbo traditional society is the clan.

According to Aligwekwe, "Clan, in the Igbo set up was composed of a number of villages which acclaimed to be descended from one common mythical or very remote ancestor, who was to have been the father of the historical or remote ancestors of each of the village making up the clan".

So, it is believed that the mythical ancestor was the founding ancestor of the clan. A clan was composed of many villages that enjoy this ancestral origin, though the number of villages varies in different areas. But it is a basic fact that the clan is the largest ancestral unit in an Igbo traditional society. The set-up is such that one can be a neighbour to all the members of one's clan. In this case the tie in obligatory of belief in a very remote ancestral descent.

The family on the other hand is referred to as ezi comprising the father, nna; the mother, nne; the child, nwa; the husband, di; the wife, nwanyi. According to Aligwekwe, the Igbo traditional family can be given two levels of description: the

nuclear family and the extended family. The nuclear family can be as monogamous when it comprises the father, the mother and children, or polygamous when the man in the family marries several wives, who were recognised, each one, as his legitimate wife.

The Igbo traditional extended family includes the sum total of the nuclear families descendants of the same grandfather or in some cases, of the same grandfather. It is important to note also that the greatest factor that brings one family together with the other is marriage. This explains why every precaution is taken to make sure going to continue the life of the extended family. Among the precautions taken for Ross, is that one was forbidden to marry in one's own village." Perhaps another serious precaution is whether one is an onu (an outcast) or not. It is a fact that in Igboland marriage is all embracing and very involving. It is community oriented.

9. Ostracism in Igbo Culture

A case in point here and of interest to our work is the osu caste system, we decided to treat this to see the extent the concept of neighbour in Igbo culture can travel. As we admitted that the Igbo pattern of life is communalistic, perhaps we must admit also that there are social distinctions. Again, ostracism destroys the concept of love that is stressed in the parable under study.

According to Aligwekve, in some parts of Imo state and Abia state, the most important social distinction appears to be the diala and non-diala dichotomy." The former was known as freeborn while for the latter it was the contrary. While in parts of Anambra and Enugu states, the non-diala are synonymous with osu (outcasts). For Aligwekve an osu was a person consecrated or who was consecrated to a god to play the role of the guardian of its altar.

However, all the authors reviewed agree that it is difficult to trace the exact origin of osu caste system. They would think that the origin was within the context of human sacrifice in Igbo traditional religion. No wonder then Arinze narrates the Initiation of an osu in which the priest of the deity plays an important role. For him, the ceremony of dedication which takes place at the shrine is performed by the priest of the deity in the presence of other priests and titled men of the community'.

We don't however intend to go into details but it is important to note that a person could also voluntarily offer himself to be consecrated as an osu to a spirit in fulfilment of an oath, or to escape the unscrupulous molestation of evil neighbours. The latter seems to suggest that an osu cannot be a neighbour to anyone except perhaps those in the "osu family", since he or she runs away from those he or she terms "evil neighbours". But he or she may have caused the problem since an osu could be a murderer or any other type of criminal, a dissident, who had escaped death or punishment of his or her community by offering oneself voluntarily to a god, or by taking refuge in its temple as a means of protection.

For Ikenga-Metuh, the osu could also include persons who, forced by hunger, ate the sacrificial meat set before a god. From that very fact, Metuh maintains, they became automatically osu, separated from the rest of the community as men and women, more or less, cursed for life. Probably, it would be impossible to think of being a neighbour to such a class of people.

Another issue to note is the discriminatory part of osu practice. They are condemned to live in a particular area of

the town particularly living at the proximity of the altar of the you to which they are consecrated. The osu could not be initiated into or associated with another social institution other than that of osu. They are the debarred from taking any title no matter how rich the person may become. It is important to note that the Igbos attach too much importance to title-taking. The person regarded as nobody in Igbo culture without title. An osu cannot break kola hut in the presence of the freeborn. In choice of marriage partner, osu superstition plays great role. An osu cannot become a priest to any deity.

Perhaps, one may think that the discriminatory treatment meted out to the osu is a thing of the past. Surprisingly, from the interview conducted and the questionnaires received, some aspects of Igbo life still reflect the evils of osu caste system. As to whether Igbo culture still encourages osu, 72 of the respondents in "A" (55% M. 45, F 27) that the culture still encourages it while 55 (42% M 24, F31) said it does not. However, three remained silent on the question.

Further statistics of the 72 reveal that 19 came from Imo state, 29 from Anambra State, six, Abia state, seven from Enugu state. origin. Eleven did not indicate their state of but the situation is different when it comes to being sympathetic to an osu when he or she is in trouble. Almost all our respondents in "A" accepted the fact that an osu can be helped when he or she is in trouble. Perhaps, may arrive at the conclusion that one can be a neighbour to an osu. The emphasis is on one who is freeborn, being a neighbour to an osu and vice versa.

But the rejection and discrimination are noticed more in one aspect of Igbo life and unfortunately the most regarded in Igbo culture, and that is in marriage. Sixty-nine of our respondents (53% M 31, F 38) said they would not marry an osu, while 58 (45% M 35, F25) said they would. Again, the margin is not much. A reverse question was also asked whether an osu would like to marry a freeborn, 84 (65%, M 40 F38) said they would while 19 (15% M 10, F 9) said they would never marry a freeborn.

About whether there can be exchange of gifts, greetings, between an osu and a freeborn, 99 said there is no problem in that (77%, M. 54, F 45), while 21 (17%, M 10, F 11) said they would not offer anything. Ten of our respondents were not decided on this. We know that there are a lot of symbols involved in gifts and greetings. They generally show acceptance of the other person and are expressions of love.

10. Attitude to Strangers

This is an area where hospitality is put into practice and where love can be expressed. For Onyeocha, one of the Most moral principles preserved by omenani (Igbo custom) is virtue of hospitality. We refer to our questionnaires to show what obtains now.

In "A", 130 replies were received. The first question Appeared was whether one could freely walk up to a stranger and begin a conversation. Among our respondents 101 (78%, M 59, F 42) said they would while 26 (20%, M 10, F 16) said they cannot. Three respondents did not answer the question. In B and C such a question did not appear; rather, emphasis was on helping a stranger as we shall see later.

Our respondents were asked whether Igbo culture encourages welcoming of strangers anytime they come. All our respondents said that Igbo culture encourages that. Perhaps, this goes to affirm that hospitality is imbibed in

Igbo culture. And in the next question in "A" concerning whether one still practises this hospitality today, we have also a good number saying that they do, 101 (78%, M 58, F 43). One respondent answered positively but with a clause, depending on the situation". But 13 (10% M 7 F 6) said that they have stopped the practice and sixteen cannot decide on that.

About offering a stranger an accommodation for a night or two or more, and also feeding the stranger, 92 representing 71% (M 53, F 39), said they would offer accommodation and also feed the person while 34 (27%, M 15 F 19) said they would neither offer accommodation or feed the person. Four respondents did not attempt the question.

In "B" the Police Force was asked whether the police stations have accommodation for strangers. of the 18 replies received, 14 (78%) said the police station had no accommodation for stringers tile four (22%) said that they did have.

In "C" for the medical workers, the same question was asked namely whether they would offer shelter to one who was a stranger and stranded in their hospital or clinic? Of the 60 respondents 44 (73%) ad that they would while 13 (22%) said that they were not offer any accommodation. This could not decide on that. There was also the need to ask in "A" whom non regards as a stranger. All the respondents have the dos that a stranger is one totally new be the other.

A question was alu put so our interlocutors in whether they have been stranded before and whether they rived way help. Thirty-four (26%) said that they have been stranded before, 24 mid that they received help while 10 said that she did not receive any help.

11. Towards True Neighbourliness in Igbo Context in the Light of Luke 10:25-37

We have come to the last chapter of our work, perhaps the most important in terms of our recommendations for an improved future. In this chapter we intend to evaluate the text of Luke 10:25-37 as it applies to the Igbo situation and we hope to arrive ac a new view of neighbour in Igbo context as a result.

In the light of this evaluation, we intend to make recommendations on how to meet the challenge to the Igbo Christian posed by the situation namely, the challenge of human responsibility for the afflicted and the misfortunate; and how to raise societal awareness on the need for good morals if we are to bring about a new situation. The concept of neighbour has a wider meaning in the parable than in its Igbo context. The parable of the good Samaritan shows that anyone, of any race, nationality, or religious belief can be a neighbour. Also, in the story is was not only a question of who is one's neighbour but of how one can be neighbour to others. In the parable the neighbour is both the object, the one co whom one shows mercy (10:29) and the subject, the one shows mercy (10:36).

Consequently, the parable of the good Samaritan presents the most important theological meaning of "neighbour". Superficially, the parable suggests that Jesus would have his followers recognise their neighbour as those in need of help, as individuals to whom assistance would be helpful and to whom it therefore should be offered. According to Buttrich and others, Jesus extends the term "neighbour" till it becomes essentially coextensive with humankind.

In the Igbo context, the term "neighbour can be said to be coextensive with people who share life in a given

community. In this community life one of the essential qualities is hospitality. According to Chidili, "Hospitality which is at the centre of the community spirit of the Igbo people embodies love, neighbourliness, and natural concern for all the members".

A neighbour becomes a brother or a sister who relates thus with all the members of the community particularly with the members living nearby. This explains why especially in moments of sadness, it is the neighbour who is first informed even before close relatives. We may not be wrong to agree with Chidili that the Igbos see community life as God's gift that must be sustained.

In brief, the following emerge as points of similarity and dissimilarity between the Lucan, and Igbo concepts of neighbour:

1. Areas of similarity:
 - a. Both are anchored in human relationship.
 - b. Both are inspired by love, love of the other person.
2. Areas of Dissimilarity:
 - a. Both differ in their area of meaning; the Lucan concept of neighbour has a wider meaning than the Igbo concept.
 - b. The Lucan concept of neighbour has emphasis on helping one who is in need but the Igbo concept of agbatobi would be taken to stress more on co-existing with the other person though helping one in need is also implied.

The parable of the good Samaritan has no doubt inspired countless acts of charity in the past. This explains why our respondents are familiar with the term "Good Samaritan" using it to describe somebody who does a good act to another. In the light of the parable, the concept of neighbour in Igbo culture should be able not only to encourage acts of charity towards the osu, but to work to destroy this caste system. It is a duty most befitting our times that Igbo Christians should work strenuously and make certain decisions to arrive at the recognition of the osu.

12. Conclusion

In every ethnic group or nation there should be an ever-increasing number of Christians who are conscious that they themselves are part and parcel of the artisans and authors of the culture of their community. We have examined the concept of neighbour in the Lucan context. By doing the exegesis of luke 10:25-37, we discovered that the concept of neighbour is wide and coextensive with humankind. The conversation between Jesus and the lawyer Perfectly illustrates the difference between the ethics of law and the ethics of love. To the lawyer eternal life in a prize to be won by the meticulous observance of religious rules: to Jesus, love of God and neighbour is in itself that life of the heavenly kingdom, already begun on earth. The lawyer wants moral duties, limited and defined with a rabbinic thoroughness: Jesus declines to set any limits to the obligations of love. Religion to one is a set of restrictive regulations, to the other a boundless series of opportunities. The lawyer asks his question, not because he wishes to know the answer, but because he wishes to test Jesus' competence as an expositor of Scripture. Jesus turns the table on him, first by showing that he already know the answer to his own question, then by compelling him to measure his own life against the standard which he had prepared to use as a weapon in an intellectual match.

On the definition of neighbour, there is a far-reaching

difference between the lawyer and Jesus. When we speak of the lawyer we refer to the rabbis as well. They thought the whole law was the prescribed way of showing love to God, They regarded neighbour as a term of limited liability, and endlessly debated what classes of people were excluded by it from the scope of the commandment. Jesus refuses to enter this debate. He tells the story of the Good Samaritan, not to answer the question "who is my neighbour"? but so show that it is the wrong question. The proper question is, "To whom can I be a neighbour"? and the answer is, "To anyone whose need constitutes a claim on my love". It is neighbourliness where the best social relationships flourish. It is essential to the point of the story that the traveller was left-half-dead. The priest and the Levite could not tell without touching him whether he was dead or alive, what weighed more with them was the thought that he might be dead and defiling to the couch of holy things than that he might be alive and in need of care. Jesus deliberately shocks the lawyer by forcing him to consider the possibility that one who he considers a semi-pagan and foreigner might know more about the love of God than a devout Jew blinded by preoccupation with rules. What Jesus said to the scribe, he says to us "Go and do likewise".

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- xlvi Walbert Bühlmann, *God's Chosen Peoples* (New York: Orbis Books, 1982), p. 200.
- xlvi Nigerian Constitution, Chapter II, sub-section 21.
- xlvi Guardian Newspaper, Tuesday Nov., 14, 1995, p. 7.
- xlvi Ibid.
- xlvi Cf. *Ibid.*
- xlvi Ibid.
- xlvi Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, "Police Act" in Nigerian Constitution.
- xlvi Exercise of the Duty of Care (Prevention of Professional Negligence) in Rules of Professional Conduct for Medical and Dental Practitioners. (Nigeria: Macmillan Ltd., 1994), p.
- xlvi Ibid.
- xlvi Ibid.
- xlvi Cf. *ibid.*