

THE GOOD SAMARITAN THROUGH A SERVANT LEADERSHIP LENS

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This study explores the servant leader in Luke 10:25-37 using socio-rhetorical inner texture. Although other studies have examined the Good Samaritan passage, this is the first to explore the parable through inner textural analysis using a servant leadership lens. Through the use of repetitive, progressive, narrative, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic textures and patterns, existing findings were corroborated, and new findings were identified for future exploration. This study demonstrated that servant leaders empower and heal followers, communicate a vision, illuminate the path for followers, exhibit emotional intelligence, demonstrate foresight and stewardship, and display awareness. This study also examined the internal processes of servant leaders and found that they are intrinsically motivated, reorient out-groups to in-groups, and emphasize people, emotion, and action. This study contributed to the body of knowledge by presenting conceptual frameworks for follower empowerment, communicating a vision, and compassion within acts-based emotional intelligence.

Keywords: servant leadership, follower, Good Samaritan, inner texture, socio-rhetorical analysis

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Servant leadership presents a framework for leaders to demonstrate empathy, empowerment, stewardship, and other key qualities. It has been reviewed and studied in recent research, demonstrating the significance of servant leadership to modern leadership discourse. There has also been an increasing interest in ethics-based or

values-based leadership. The Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 presents an ethical narrative that can help connect servant leadership to ethics. This connection also serves an interdisciplinary purpose in social science, highlighting the connection between leadership theories and a religious text. This study examines Luke 10:25-37 through the lens of servant leadership, contributing to both theoretical development and practical implementation.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this section, I review the literature on servant leadership and the biblical passage.

Servant Leadership

The theory of servant leadership was first articulated by Greenleaf (1977), with the principle that a leader is servant first. Since Greenleaf's work, servant leadership has expanded to encompass a range of definitions, traits, behaviors, scales, potential outcomes, models, and more (van Dierendonck, 2011). Reilly and Spears (2018) articulated 10 key characteristics of servant leaders: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth, and building community. These 10 characteristics remain widely used (see Kane, 2024; Noling-Auth, 2024). Russel and Stone (2002) identified several of these traits among servant leaders, concluding that research has documented nine functional attributes and 11 accompanying attributes. Qui and Dooley (2019) recognized six dimensions of servant leadership: integrity, self-sacrifice, building community, empowering people, emotional healing, and visioning.

Different motivational factors for servant leaders have been proffered, including potential motivation like agape love (Patterson, 2003), altruism (Mulinge, 2018), personality dimensions (Washington et al., 2006), individual characteristics (van Dierendonck, 2011), emotional intelligence (Barbuto et al., 2014), and culture (Sokoll, 2011). Generally, research has found that servant leadership yields beneficial outcomes for the follower, teams, and the organization (Langhof & Guldenberg, 2020; van Dierendonck, 2011). Servant leaders appear to have positive impacts on human flourishing within organizations.

Luke 10:25-37: The Good Samaritan

The story of the "Good Samaritan," found in Luke 10:25-37, begins with a lawyer standing up to question Jesus about the law and the definition of neighbor. Jesus then tells the parable of the wounded man, the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan, and their responses and interactions. The story concludes with Jesus reengaging with the lawyer to clarify the true vision of a neighbor. Jesus presented this story to the audience in Capernaum (Sales, 2023).

The Lukan passage has been explored in scholarly, practical, and theological contexts through various theoretical lenses. Pillay (2008) conducted an inner textual analysis, specifically related to open-middle-closing texture and pattern, bridging the Lukan church with the present church in its response to HIV and AIDS. Han et al. (2023) conducted a historical and grammatical analysis of the text to explore the concept of solidarity. Similarly, Marshall (2013) examined the passage and found a call to a common good through neighborly love. Funk (1964) provided a discourse on the concept of love within the passage, as it is defined and applied through the views of the lawyer, the reader, and the church. Lu (2022) examined the motivations of the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan, informed by the regulatory focus theory. Sales (2023) used culture and learning theories to explore Jesus' pedagogy in challenging his audience in Luke 10:25-37. Likewise, Efruan and Dami (2019) used diacognitive analysis to discover Jesus' multicultural pedagogy principles, finding that a teacher's compassion is essential as it fosters a desire to help others. Eidsvåg and Falcetta (2024) examined modern Norwegian nursing ethics through the lens of the Samaritan passage's compassionate care ethics. Cornelius (2013) applied modern psychology to Luke 10:25-37 to explore the motivation for compassion. Researchers have explored, examined, and applied Luke 10:25-37 through modern theory and methodologies. However, no scholarship has explored Luke 10:25-37 through servant leadership using inner textual analysis.

A parable is particularly apt for the use of modern leadership theory. Osborne (2006) argued that a key hermeneutical principle of a parable is the application of the central truth to modern life. Bonilla and Mora (2022) presented the parable's audience as a "universal audience," extending beyond the lawyer mentioned in the passage to all Christians across time (p. 103). In this way, the ancient text maintains a modern relevance in both theoretical development and practical application. The principles found within Luke 10:25-37 demonstrate supraordinate themes for modern use.

Jesus as Servant Leader. Previous scholars have treated Jesus as a servant leader. Etukumana (2024) used rhetorical analysis to examine Luke 22:23–27, finding that Jesus articulated the servant leadership model via His care for humanity. Song (2023) found that Jesus acted as a servant leader by growing people, articulating a compelling vision, and serving others. Du Plessis and Nkambule (2020) argued that "Jesus is the embodiment of servant leadership" through His empowerment of followers, service, healing, and watchfulness (p. 5). Molano (2019) concluded that it was well established in Christian and secular literature that Jesus is an exemplar of a servant leader. This research will therefore treat Jesus as a servant leader.

Samaritan as Servant Leader. Previous scholars have concluded that the Samaritan presented in Luke 10:25-37 is a servant leader. Foster (2024) conducted a genre analysis and found that the Samaritan exhibited all the characteristics of a servant leader, including listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to personal growth, and building community. Although Baker (2023) did not directly state that the Samaritan was a servant leader, Baker presented the Samaritan through the lens of servanthood,

implying the Samaritan was a servant leader. Therefore, this research will treat the Samaritan as a servant leader.

METHOD

This study will employ socio-rhetorical criticism through the layer of inner texture (Robbins, 1996). Inner texture addresses the language used in the passage and how it communicates. There are several textures and patterns of inner texture, including repetitive, progressive, narrational, argumentative, opening-middle-closing, and sensory-aesthetic, which are revealed in the boundary of a rhetorical textual unit of Luke 10:25-37.

The repetitive pattern examines “the occurrence of words and phrases more than once in a unit” (Robbins, 1996, p. 8). This recurrence of words offers insights into the discourse of the text. Progressive texture (and pattern) “resides in the sequences (progressions) of words and phrases throughout the unit” (Robbins, 1996, p. 9). Repetition of the progression illuminates the phenomenon being explored.

Narrational texture and pattern address the actors within the text, being the characters, narrator, and reader. The narrational texture examines the speakers and listeners in stories, questions, and commands. The opening-middle-closing texture addresses the pericope through the structure of a story with a start, middle, and end. This analysis was not conducted, as Pillay (2008) conducted an opening-middle-closing texture related to Luke 10:25-37.

The argumentative texture and pattern address the development of arguments or reasoning within the text (Robbins, 1996). This texture presents thesis, rationale, counterarguments, premises, and conclusions. Finally, sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern examine zones of emotion, self-expression, and purposeful action. These zones focus on the human senses and extend those senses to ideas. The zone of emotion-focused thought examines the senses of the eyes and heart, expanding these physical aspects to seeing, knowing, understanding, and thinking. The zone of self-expressive speech focuses on the mouth and ears, flowing into hearing, speaking, telling, and listening. The zone of purposeful action focuses on organs that can touch, such as the hands, feet, and legs, and extends this sense to the movement of coming, going, activity, and behavior. This study will analyze Luke 10:25-37 through the inner-texture layers of repetition, progression, narration, argumentation, and sensory-aesthetic elements to identify supraordinate themes relevant to modern servant leaders.

ANALYSIS

The repetitive texture examines the repetition of words within the pericope (Robbins, 1996). This is observed in Table 1.

Table 1

<i>Repetitive Texture and Pattern</i>				
Role				
v.25	Law			
v.26	Law	You		
v.27		You	Neighbor	
v.28		You, You		
v.29			Neighbor	
v.30				Robbers
v.35		You, You		
v.36		You	Neighbor	Robbers
Actions				
v.25			Do	
v.28			Do	
v.31	Saw (priest)			Passed by (priest)
v.32	Saw (Levite)			Passed by (Levite) Came (Levite)
v.33	Saw (Samaritan)			Came (Samaritan)
v.34		Care (Samaritan)		Came (Samaritan)
v.35		Care (Samaritan)		
v.37			Do	
Motivations				
v.33	Compassion			
v.37	Mercy			

The progressive texture and pattern explore the sequences within the passage (Robbins, 1996). This analysis divides the passage's structure into subunits by genre (Foster, 2024). Foster demonstrated that the parable is situated within a historical setting. Therefore, Luke 10:25-37 contains two thematic units. This passage contains both a historical narrative and a parable. The historical narrative begins and ends this passage (vv. 25-29; 36-37), creating an outer frame for the parable, and the parable serves as the inner frame (vv. 30-35). The progressive texture is divided and conducted within these two thematic subunits.

Pillay (2008) found a similar separation of the passage into smaller yet distinct units when conducting the opening-middle-closing texture and pattern. Pillay separated

the passage into scenes. Pillay concluded that the opening comprised verses 25-28, the middle was verses 29-35, and the closing was verses 36-37. Pillay's work also showed the distinction between the units separating the parable from the surrounding verses.

The progressive texture of the parable (inner frame) is observed in Table 2, and Table 3 depicts the progressive texture of the historical narrative (outer frame).

Table 2

Inner Frame Progressive Texture

Character	Verse	Emotion	Action ¹	Action ²	Outcome
Priest	v. 31			Saw him	Passed by
Levite	v. 32		Came	Saw him	Passed by
Samaritan	v. 33		Came	Saw him	
Samaritan	v. 34	Felt Compassion	Came	Bandaged his wounds	Care

Table 3

Outer Frame Progressive Texture

Character	Verse	Emotion	Action	Outcome
Lawyer	vv. 25-29	Justifying	Law	Reorient to mercy
Neighbor	vv. 36-37		Mercy	"Go and do the same"

The narrational texture examines the voices within the passage (Robbins, 1996). The narrational texture's characters within the passage addressed by the narrator are the lawyer, Jesus, the wounded man, the priest, the Levite, the Samaritan, the innkeeper, and the reader. Table 4 depicts the pattern that emerged when narrational speech alternated between voices within the passage. Table 4 typifies the question-answer structure of a narrational passage. Again, this passage was analyzed within the subunit of the outer frame, as narrational texture often reveals the units within the passage.

Table 4

Narrational Question and Response Structure

Verse	Question Response Structure	Type
v. 25	"What shall I do?"	Interrogative Discourse
v. 26	"What is written?"	Interrogative Discourse
v. 27	"You shall love..."	Propositional Discourse
v. 28	"Do this and you will live."	Imperative Discourse

v. 29	"And who is my neighbor?"	Interrogative Discourse
vv. 30-35	Answered indirectly with a parable	Propositional Discourse
v. 36	"Which of these three?"	Interrogative Discourse
v. 37	"The one who showed mercy toward him"	Propositional Discourse
v. 37	"Go and do the same"	Imperative Discourse

The argumentative texture explores the reasoning within the passage (Robbins, 1996). This pattern examines the arguments for and against. The argumentative texture follows a logical structure. The argumentative texture is revealed in Table 5.

Table 5

Theme	Verse	Statement
Thesis	v. 27, 25	"You shall love [...] your neighbor as yourself..." "to inherit eternal life"
Rationale	v. 28	"You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."
Contrary	v. 29	"And who is my neighbor?"
Parable	vv. 30-35	The Good Samaritan parable
Restatement of Thesis	vv. 36-37a	"Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him."
Conclusion	v. 37b	"Go and do the same."

The sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern evoke the different senses (Robbins, 1996). This layer shows how the text conjures emotions, self-expressive speech, and action. The deeper layers of emotion, self-expressive speech, and action are often associated with specific human body parts, as noted previously. In this way, the physical informs the non-physical deeper layers. These zones of emotion, self-expressive speech, and purposeful action are revealed in Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8, respectively.

Table 6

Verse	Text	Zone Activity
v. 27	"You shall love the Lord your God... with all your heart... soul... strength... mind"	Heart: love

v. 31	“saw him” (priest)	Eyes: awareness
v. 32	“saw him” (Levite)	Eyes: awareness
v. 33	“when he saw him, he felt compassion” (Samaritan)	Eyes: compassion
v. 36	“Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor...”	Mind: empathy
v. 37	“The one who showed mercy...”	Heart: mercy

Table 7*Zone of Self-Expressive Speech*

Verse	Text	Zone Activity
v. 25	“A lawyer... saying...?”	Mouth: questioning
v. 26	“And He said...?”	Mouth: questioning
v. 27	“And he answered...”	Mouth: answering
v. 28	“And He said...”	Mouth: command
v. 29	“But wishing to justify himself, he said...?”	Mouth: questioning
v. 30	“Jesus replied and said...”	Mouth: speaking
v. 35	“...he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said...”	Mouth: speaking
v. 37	“And he said...”	Mouth: speaking
v. 37	“Then Jesus said...”	Mouth: command

Table 8*Zone of Purposeful Action*

Verse	Text	Zone Activity
v. 30a	“A man was going down... fell among robbers”	Feet: going
v. 30b	“they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead”	Hands: violence
v. 31-32	“passed by on the other side”	Feet: walking avoidance
v. 33	“came upon him”	Feet: walking toward
v. 34a	“Bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine”	Hands: care
v. 34b	“put him on his own beast”	Hands and legs: shared burden
v. 34b	“brought him to an inn and took care of him”	Hands and legs: movement to safety
v. 35	“Took out two denarii... I will repay you”	Hands: giving
v. 36	“the man who fell into the robbers’ hands?”	Hands: control
v. 37	“Go and do the same.”	Full Body Movement

FINDINGS

The analysis of the inner layer of the text reveals several repetitions, progressions, and movements within the passage. This analysis informs the findings by exploring the relationship between the ancient text and the modern world. The analysis identifies the supraordinate themes as revelations. The supraordinate themes (ST) developed from the analysis connect servant leadership to human flourishing. These themes are synthesized into related domains applicable to modern practice. The STs relate to the individual, follower-leader dyad, and organizational constructs.

Individual Domain

ST1: Servant leaders' intrinsic motivations spur action. The progressive and sensory-aesthetic texture and patterns in Table 2, Table 3, Table 6, and Table 8 outline the progressive emotion, action, and outcome of each actor within the parable subunit of the text. The priest saw and passed by (v. 31). The Levite saw and passed by (v. 32). The Samaritan saw, felt, and bandaged wounds, poured oil and wine, put on a beast, and took care of the robbery victim (vv. 33-34). The Samaritan first saw and then felt compassion. From this compassion, the Samaritan cared for the robbery victim. This indicates that compassion is an internal motivator. Through this sequence, the emotion prompted the action. This demonstrates that servant leadership begins not with acts but with internal motivation. In this pericope, the internal motivator was compassion. This is apt as compassion compels action. Servant leaders are motivated by their internal compassion, mercy, and care for their followers. A leader cannot merely act as a servant leader, as servant leaders are more than a series of acts. Servant leaders are defined not only by their behaviors or expected outcomes, but also by the internal motivations that compel them to act.

This suggests that servant leadership is multifaceted and is driven by intrinsic motivations. This aligns with Mulinge's (2018) argument that servant leaders are motivated by compassionate love: "In servant-leadership, compassionate love is the underlying motivation, given that servant-leadership emphasizes concern for the welfare of others" (Mulinge, 2018, p. 352). Although compassion is a factor in this passage, the emphasis is on the action, as the same action is repeated (came, saw; Table 3). However, the emotion or intrinsic motivator is what leads to a different outcome in each case of the priest (passed by), Levite (passed by), and Samaritan (care; Table 3).

In the historical unit presented in Luke 10:25-37, the progressive texture and pattern are presented in Tables 2 and 3. In Table 3, the passage begins with the law articulated by a lawyer under which "you," neighbors, and robbers exist (Table 1). However, the passage does not end with the law but with compassion and mercy. This progressive pattern appears as a theme in the Bible as the salvation message, with antiquity connecting modernity through "you," an active participant in the story. This aligns with Patterson's (2003) argument that servant leadership is motivated by agape love. Modern servant leaders should accept and practice compassionate love as a motivating factor to benefit followers.

ST2: Servant leaders emphasize people, emotion, and action. Table 1 depicts the repetitive texture and pattern of the passage's roles, actions, and motivations. In this inner texture, Jesus is introduced by the lawyer as "teacher," immediately placing Jesus in the role of a religious leader within the text (v. 25). That places the lawyer and the implicit reader as the student or religious follower as depicted within the narrational texture analysis. The conversation begins with the lawyer challenging Jesus with a "test" (v. 25).

The repetitive patterns presented in this text focus on roles or people, actions, and internal motivations. The roles occupied by characters or people within the text presented are lawyer, "you," neighbor, and robbers (Table 1), in that chronological order. Between the roles presented at the beginning and the internal motivators at the end are a series of actions. The repetition of "care" shows continuing action (vv. 34-35). Modern servant leaders can use the repetitive texture and pattern as a guide for leadership. The emphasis on and ongoing practice of "care" indicate that modern servant leaders should demonstrate care for their followers. This repetitive texture and pattern indicate that the focus should be on people, emotion, and continuing action. Similarly, servant leaders should also focus on people, emotions, and actions.

ST3: Servant leaders demonstrate awareness, which is the beginning of moral responsibility. Table 6 demonstrates the act of seeing and knowing. The sensory-aesthetic texture's emotion-focused zone, which brings action into the less tangible environment of knowledge, demonstrates the connection between the various characters' "seeing" and awareness. For each character, this "seeing" created awareness, marking the beginning of a series of decisions. The priest and Levite saw and were aware; however, they failed in their moral responsibility. The Samaritan saw and acted. The Samaritan was aware and acted on that awareness, beginning a journey of moral responsibility. In this way, modern servant leaders should cultivate the practice of "seeing." By this, servant leaders need to observe their followers and see their needs. This is awareness and the beginning of moral responsibility. Once a servant leader "sees," they become aware, and this awareness creates a moral responsibility to act. Modern servant leaders should demonstrate this awareness through "seeing" their followers and meeting their needs.

ST4: Servant leaders exhibit acts-based emotional intelligence. The progressive and sensory-aesthetic texture and patterns informed Tables 6 and 2. Table 6 creates a sense of emotion within the reader. Through this texture and pattern, the reader can sense the emotions in the passage, and the passage creates emotions within the reader. The reader observes that the priest and Levite see the wounded man but do not act, as shown in Table 2. This lack of emotional response and action for the wounded man presents a jarring sensory void. This elicits empathy in the reader toward the wounded man. Empathy is a core goal of the zone of emotion-focused thought within this passage (Table 6).

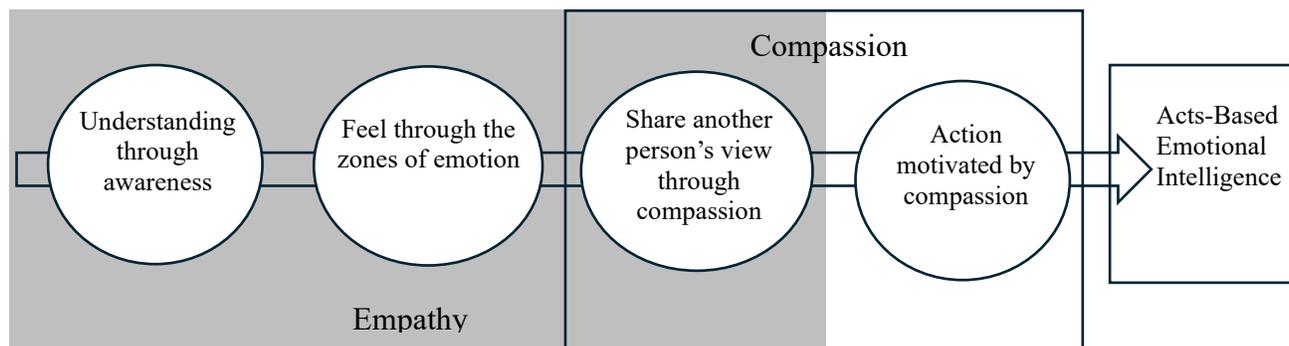
Empathy is also observed within the Samaritan. The priest and Levite pass by the wounded man at a distance. Only the Samaritan is described with a sensation of *feeling* compassion. The Samaritan felt in a dual manner: his own feelings, and the feelings of the wounded man. This act of empathy involves a process of “understanding, feeling, and sharing another person’s world with self-other differentiation” (Eklund & Meranius, 2021, p. 300). This is a dichotomous process between observer and observed. The Samaritan in this passage displayed empathy when he saw (understood) and felt (feeling) compassion (sharing another person’s world with self-other differentiation). This creates a potential conceptual framework for emotional intelligence.

Individual Domain Application. Combining ST1, ST2, ST3, and ST4 presents a potential model for acts-based emotional intelligence in the context of the servant leader. The Samaritan saw, felt, and acted. The first part of emotional intelligence is established in ST3, where servant leaders demonstrate awareness, which is the beginning of moral responsibility. This is the “saw” action described by each character as awareness (Table 1, Table 2, & Table 6). The second stage in emotional intelligence is the “feel” dimension, as shown in ST1 and ST4. The Samaritan is the only character within the parable described as feeling (Table 2 & Table 6). ST1 reveals that feeling was the motivation for action. ST4 shows that the Samaritan displayed empathy through the process of understanding, feeling, and sharing a worldview. However, the text states explicitly that the Samaritan felt compassion. Compassion is beyond empathy and includes action (Addiss et al., 2022). This suggests that servant leaders are called to more than just emotional intelligence, which culminates in awareness and emotional regulation (Esaam & Radhwan, 2025), but an action-based emotional intelligence that incorporates action in response to human suffering and need.

The Samaritan responded to awareness (ST3) and feeling (ST1 & ST4) through action (ST2), based on care (ST2). This is the robustness of the composition of compassion. “Compassion is a response to suffering that involves cognitive awareness, empathy, and action to alleviate suffering” (Addiss et al., 2022, p. 2). The Samaritan demonstrated this process within the text. In this way, the Samaritan went beyond mere emotional intelligence and instead demonstrated an acts-based emotional intelligence.

Modern servant leaders could utilize acts-based emotional intelligence as a leadership tool. Furthermore, they can utilize this process, as demonstrated by the Samaritan, to exhibit awareness, empathy, and action. Modern servant leaders display empathy by understanding through awareness, feeling through the zones of emotion, and sharing another person’s view through compassion for the follower (Eklund & Meranius, 2021). However, this model advances the understand, feel, and other worldview definition of empathy to include an acts-based component that fully informs acts-based emotional intelligence. Figure 1 illustrates the Compassion Process Model, which demonstrates how servant leaders can utilize the passage to cultivate emotional intelligence through awareness, emotion, compassion, and action.

Figure 1
Compassion Process Model



Leader-Follower Domain

ST5: Servant leaders use persuasion to illuminate the path to followers. The narrational, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic texture and patterns inform Table 4, Table 5, and Table 7, which show the progression of the question and response typified within the question and response structure found within the gospels. The passage begins with the lawyer asking the question, "What shall I do..." (v. 25), and it ends with a command as Jesus responds, "Go and do the same" (v. 37).

Reilly and Spears (2018) found that listening and commitment to people's growth were essential traits of servant leaders. Luke 10:25-37 demonstrates this as the servant leader listened to the follower and focused on the follower's growth. Jesus listened to the lawyer's initial reasoning and question. Jesus then connected the lawyer's question to the exploration of understanding. This is demonstrated through progressive texture and pattern: "It is the repetition of the word 'do' that...reveals progression" (Pillay, 2008, p. 129). The focus of the question and response is based on acts (do). The follower asked an acts-based question, and the leader replied with an acts-based response. Through this parable, Jesus, as the leader, listened to the follower's question and responded. The leader described the path to success in a way that met the needs of the follower. Through this process of question and response, the follower underwent a transformation in his thinking. The follower initially began the pericope with a limited understanding of what constitutes a neighbor; however, by the end of the passage, the follower was able to answer. Jesus, as a servant leader, met the follower where the follower needed, and the servant leader illuminated the issue.

This aligns with Russel and Stone's (2002) review of the literature on servant leadership, which found that servant leaders use persuasive communication to share wisdom and develop understanding. Luke 10:25-37 is unique in that it shows one method of a persuasive communication strategy that servant leaders can use. Rather than responding to a question with a traditional answer or command, the response needed may be more complex to ensure wisdom and understanding. Servant leaders modulate their communicative responses based on follower needs. Therefore, servant

leaders do not merely answer; servant leaders illuminate understanding. Jesus listened, responded based on the follower's need, and helped the follower grow in understanding. This provides a unique perspective in that servant leaders may modulate their communication processes based on the individual follower.

ST6: Servant leaders heal others. Table 8 shows the actions taken in the passage. Although the passage began with acts of violence and then avoidance, the actions taken by the Samaritan were healing actions that restored the injured man. The Samaritan bandaged and poured wine, showing the care of sacrificial leadership. He also put the wounded man on his animal and brought him to the inn. This purposeful action showed the sharing of the wounded man's burden. This passage does not merely relate to the physical restoration, but also the non-physical state, as Table 8 shows control of the robbers' hands to safety. Modern servant leaders should also act in a healing manner with their followers through self-sacrifice, the sharing of burdens, and restoring psychological safety. This confirms previous research by Qiu and Dooley (2019) in regard to self-sacrifice and emotional healing. ST6 demonstrates that self-sacrifice and healing are indeed actions of servant leaders within the Good Samaritan passage.

ST7: Servant leaders empower followers. Table 4 demonstrates a conversation between the characters of Jesus (leader) and a lawyer, and the reader participating as the followers, as depicted within the narrational texture analysis. Through a series of questions, answers, and responses revealed in the narrational texture, Jesus shapes perception, controls the moral arc, and ends the conversation by empowering the lawyer and the reader. The empowerment Jesus developed was through meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995). Jesus addressed meaning by connecting personal values with Christian role responsibility, as seen in verse 25, through the question of role, "what shall I do?" and the response in verse 27, "You shall love..." Jesus connected competence in that He provided the knowledge and command to accomplish the Christian role responsibility as seen with knowledge development in verse 36, "Which of these three," and the lawyer's response, "The one who showed mercy toward him" (v. 37). Jesus developed competence through knowledge sharing for the lawyer and the reader using the parable. Jesus connected self-determination through the autonomy of moving forward, as demonstrated in verse 37, "Go and do the same." Once Jesus connected the meaning and competence, He presented instructions for future action. This allowed the lawyer to engage in autonomous decision-making informed by meaning and competence. Finally, Jesus addressed the impact through the action and consequence. The action presented is "You shall love..." (v. 27) and the consequence "Do this and live." (v. 28). By the end, the lawyer is empowered to speak with accuracy (v. 37, "The one who showed mercy to him"). Jesus empowered the lawyer through building meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

The reader or third-party observer is also empowered as the lawyer in the passage. The meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact provided to the lawyer by Jesus in the passage are also provided to the reader. The ultimate

empowerment to the reader is the command, “Go and do the same” (v. 37). In this way, Jesus empowered the reader as He did with the lawyer.

Leader-Follower Domain Application. ST5, ST6, and ST7 present a potential Follower Empowerment Framework for modern servant leaders to empower their followers through meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Spreitzer (1995) described meaning in terms of values and fit. In ST7, Jesus connected personal values to the Christian responsibility. This increased the fit between personal views and responsibility. ST7 demonstrated that servant leaders can develop meaning by connecting values.

Competence is described as the ability to do the work (Spreitzer, 1995). This begins with knowledge building. ST5 demonstrates that Jesus employed persuasive communication to illuminate understanding. ST7 also showed that Jesus used knowledge development through questions and responses. In both ST5 and ST7, the servant leader built competence through knowledge sharing and understanding.

Spreitzer described self-determination as self-directed or self-governed in actions. ST6 depicts the Samaritans' self-initiated, autonomous actions in healing. ST7 addresses future actions. ST6 and ST7 reveal action-based initiation and future-oriented action as forms of self-determination through autonomous decision-making.

Finally, Spreitzer described impact as the expected outcome of the action. ST5 demonstrates the outcomes through persuasive communication; ST6 shows the outcomes of self-sacrifice and shared burdens in healing; and ST7 reveals the action and consequences of loving a neighbor. ST5, ST6, and ST7 outline impact through action and consequence. The Follower Empowerment Framework outlines actions that servant leaders can take to empower followers by fostering meaning through connecting values, competence through knowledge sharing, self-determination through act-based, autonomous decision-making, and impact through action and consequence.

Organizational Domain

ST8: Servant leaders demonstrate stewardship and foresight. The zone of purposeful action in the sensory-aesthetic texture also demonstrates the act of stewardship and foresight, as seen in Table 8. The Samaritan is described as using his own time and money to care for the wounded man, as a steward for the wounded man's care. Noling-Auth (2024) presented a difference between ‘caring about’ and ‘caring for’ as an act of servant leader stewardship. This pericope confirms that the servant leader not only cares about followers but also cares *for* followers, just as the Samaritan cared for the wounded man. The passage even goes further to show a continual care of the wounded man until he is healed through the continued payment, “On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you’” (v. 35). This demonstrates the Samaritan's foresight in planning for the future. It also demonstrates sustained commitment, rather than a one-time action. The promise to return shows ongoing

accountability for following through with the articulated plan. Stewardship, in this context, is an action-based concept, not merely a leadership trait. Foresight shows the continuous action of future planning and commitment to that plan. Stewardship and foresight are continuous, action-based presentations for a servant leader. Modern servant leaders should replicate these actions of stewardship and foresight.

ST9: Servant leaders reorient in-groups and out-groups. The argumentative texture and pattern presented in Table 5 exhibit a logical progression from thesis to rationale, to counterargument, to analogy (parable), to restatement of the thesis, and ultimately to conclusion in Luke 10:25-37. Each element of this argument supports a specific conclusion. Jesus reframes the question of “who is my neighbor” into a guide for being a good neighbor (v. 29). The law up to this point used ‘neighbor’ as the definition; however, Jesus redefined ‘neighbor’ not by proximity or national identity, but by action (Cranfield, 1954; Proctor, 2019). This passage demonstrates that servant leaders move out-group members into the in-group.

In the leader-member exchange theory, followers are generally divided into two groups based on the quality of the relationship with the leader, whereas the in-group has higher quality, and the out-group has lower quality (O'Connor & Srinivasan, 2010). Servant leaders redefine the members of the out-group as members of the in-group. Luke 10:25-37 challenges the boundaries of in-group identity, instead defining members by their actions rather than their titles or labels. This is similar to Reilly and Spear’s (2018) idea of rebuilding community. However, Luke 10:25-37 shows that all people are members of this community, thus expanding the in-group. Modern servant leaders can employ this strategy to decrease differentiation between group members and increase high-quality relationships with all followers.

ST10: Servant leaders develop and communicate a transformational vision. The narrative, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic inform Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7. The argumentative texture and pattern in Table 5 reveal a deeper communication pattern. From the thesis to the conclusion, Jesus transformed the lawyer’s perception through storytelling and questions. Table 5 shows this progression from the thesis, stated by the lawyer, being “You shall love [...] your neighbor as yourself” (v. 27) to the restatement of the thesis, also stated by the lawyer, “The one who showed mercy toward him” (v. 37). Jesus transforms the lawyer’s perception and thinking. Between the thesis and the conclusion is a parable followed by a question and a command from Jesus. Jesus used this parable, question, and command to engage the lawyer. In this pericope, Jesus reframed the *law* for the *lawyer*. Modern servant leaders could also use this strategy to develop and communicate a transformational vision. Storytelling as a leadership practice to communicate a vision is not a new concept (Parry & Hansen, 2007). However, this pericope not only focuses on the argumentative texture and pattern of storytelling and questioning, but it also shows the transformation that occurred within the follower or lawyer.

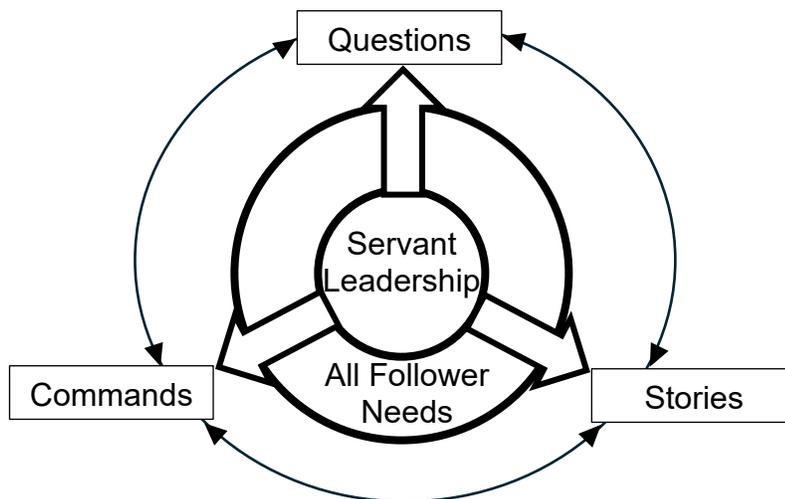
O’Gorman and Gillespie (2010) argued that research often explored storytelling from the leader’s perspective, but future research should examine the effect of

storytelling on staff or followers. Here, the pericope shows the transformational outcome of the follower. This outcome could specifically relate to servant leaders. O’Gorman and Gillespie (2010) also warned about the potential dark side of storytelling; however, servant leaders can use storytelling and questions in a way that creates positive transformational change and a future vision for their followers.

This passage provides a structure or format in which modern servant leaders can respond to or engage with followers. Three constructs comprise this theoretical framework for communicating a transformational vision. First, Jesus posed questions, offered a parable, and concluded with a command. The questions Jesus asked were to clarify information and encourage reflection (Table 4). Second, the parable established an emotional connection for the lawyer (Table 6). Through the story, Jesus created awareness, compassion, and empathy that engaged, informed, and persuaded the lawyer by providing a human context for the complex principle (Table 6). Finally, Jesus commanded, which demonstrated his authority while directing and initiating action (Table 7). Servant leaders can employ these strategies to enhance effective communication with their followers. Modern servant leaders could ask questions, tell stories, command, or engage in this sequential structure as a process. Jesus used this structure as a sequential process to meet the followers’ communication needs to increase understanding among the followers. So too can modern servant leaders apply this sequential structure as a process for effective communication.

Organizational Domain Application

The combination of ST5, ST9, and ST10 creates a unique conceptual framework for communication. ST5 highlighted the importance of communicating through the followers’ needs. ST9 demonstrated that effective communication was for all followers, rather than just the in-group. ST10 provided the task behavior or application for communicating a vision, including asking questions, telling stories, and issuing commands. These three constructs can be applied sequentially or individually, depending on the needs of all followers. Joining these three supraordinate themes presents a potential conceptual framework for leaders to communicate a vision to their followers. Figure 2 depicts a conceptual framework for this communication model. Notably, this conceptual framework is designed to communicate at both the individual and organizational levels. Luke 10:25-37 depicts communication at the individual level between Jesus and the lawyer; however, Bonilla and Mora (2022) demonstrated that the audience within the passage is a “universal audience” for all Christians, showing an organizational level communication structure (p. 103).

Figure 2*Communicate Vision Model*

IMPLICATIONS

This study builds upon previous calls for research by Qiu and Dooley (2019), who stated that more qualitative research was needed within the servant leadership domain. Likewise, Idris and Zairah (2022) found that emotional intelligence within the field of servant leadership was underdeveloped, and future research was necessary. This study advanced the field by providing a conceptual framework of compassion that informs an acts-based emotional intelligence.

Theoretical

This study is the first to explore Luke 10:25-37 through the lens of servant leadership theory, employing inner textural analysis. This paper confirmed previous findings in that servant leaders heal and empower followers (ST6 & ST7), develop intrinsic motivation that spurs action (ST1), communicate a vision (ST10), illuminate the path for followers (ST5), exhibit act-based emotional intelligence (ST4), demonstrate foresight and stewardship (ST8), and display awareness (ST3). This study also contributed to the advancement of the field of servant leadership. This study examined the internal processes of servant leaders and found that they reorient out-groups to in-groups as community-building for followers (ST9) and emphasize people, emotion, and action (ST2).

Practical

This study also offered practical implications by building on theories and prior scholarship to develop a conceptual framework for empowering followers, a conceptual

framework for communicating a vision, and a conceptual framework for fostering compassion as a gateway to acts-based emotional intelligence. The conceptual frameworks presented could inform modern servant leader behavior. The Follower Empowerment Framework, the Communicate Vision Model (Figure 2), and the Compassion Process Model (Figure 1) depict potential tasked behavior for servant leaders. This shows the synthesis and practical application of this research.

Limitations

This study began with the theory of servant leadership and employed a deductive approach; therefore, areas of exploration could have been excluded. This a priori strategy could exclude principles and tenets naturally garnered from empirical observation. Additionally, this study addressed several supraordinate themes at a cursory level with respect to meaning. Further development in several areas could deepen the meaning and findings of servant leadership. Finally, this study was not intended to alter or modify established exegetical research on the passage, but rather to expand it into modernity within the realm of servant leadership.

Future Research

Future research should explore several supraordinate themes found within this study. First, the study found that servant leaders reorient out-groups to in-groups as a community-building for followers. This process warrants further exploration to examine how it occurs and the outcomes of that process. Another supraordinate theme found within this study is that servant followers emphasize people, emotion, and action. Although appearing fundamental in terms of servant leadership scholarship, this likely has a more profound implication and consequences. Therefore, future scholarship should examine how the emphasis on people, emotion, and action influences modern servant leaders and assess the impact of these influences. Future research could explore Luke 10:25-37 through other methodological means. For example, using other tools in the socio-rhetorical sphere may yield similar or different results, depending on the analysis. Finally, exploring different biblical passages using the suite of analytical tools available could inform the theory of servant leadership, relatable to a modern context.

CONCLUSION

This study reviewed Luke 10:25-37 through a servant leadership lens, utilizing inner texture analysis. The story of the Good Samaritan reveals relevance for modern servant leaders. This study bridges the connection between the parable of the Good Samaritan and modern leadership theory, demonstrating the congruence between the biblical text and modern scholarship. This study confirmed previous findings on servant leadership and contributed to the theoretical and practical development of servant leaders' empowerment tasks, communicating vision dimensions, and compassion process for acts-based emotional intelligence.

About the Author

Dr. Sarah Rolle is an Adjunct Instructor at Liberty University. She earned both her B.S. and M.A. from Liberty University and completed her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership at Regent University. Her research interests focus on followership studies and leadership dynamics. Sarah is married and considers her spouse a constant source of strength and support. She can be reached at sfurman@liberty.edu.

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