



# Reading the Good Samaritan (Lk 10: 25–37) through the lenses of introverted intuition and extraverted intuition: Perceiving text differently



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Working within the sensing, intuition, feeling, thinking (SIFT) approach to biblical hermeneutics, the present study focuses attention on the distinctive voices of introverted intuition and extraverted intuition, by analysing the way in which two small groups, one comprising dominant introverted intuitive types and the other comprising dominant extraverted intuitive types, explored and reflected on the Lucan narrative of the Good Samaritan, a passage rich in material to stimulate the perceiving process. Two distinctive voices emerged from these two groups.

**Contribution:** Situated within the reader perspective approach to biblical hermeneutics, the SIFT method is concerned with identifying the influence of the psychological type of the reader in shaping the interpretation of text. The foundations of the SIFT approach distinguish among the four functions of sensing, intuition, feeling, and thinking. The present study builds on this foundation by developing the nuance of the orientation in which the function is expressed, in this case focusing specifically on the comparison between introverted intuition and extraverted intuition.

**Keywords:** reader perspective; psychological type; SIFT method; psychology and Bible; function orientations.

## Introduction

The sensing, intuition, feeling, thinking (SIFT) method of biblical hermeneutics as proposed by Francis and Village (2008), rooted in the reader perspective approach, was grounded in psychological type theory as originally proposed by Jung (1971) and developed and refined by a series of psychometric instruments, including the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey & Bates 1978), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley 1985), and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis 2005). Psychological type theory distinguished between two core psychological processes, one concerned with perceiving and the other concerned with judging. Psychological type theory suggests that each of these two processes may be expressed in two contrasting functions. Psychological type theory maintains that, while each of the contrasting functions should be accessible in varying degrees to most people, individuals tend to prefer one over the other, and as a consequence develop the preferred function over the other function that remains less consciously differentiated.

## The four functions model

In psychological type theory, the perceiving process is concerned with gathering information and is expressed through the contrasting functions of sensing (S) and intuition (I). Sensing types prefer to begin with the data and with the facts, and progress to the bigger picture. Intuitive types prefer to begin with the bigger picture and with the wider theories, and progress slowly to examining the details and the evidence. In psychological type theory, the judging process is concerned with evaluating situations and is expressed through the contrasting functions of feeling (F) and thinking (T). Feeling types prefer to begin by taking into account the personal and interpersonal values at stake in making judgements and progress to analysing the systems involved. Thinking types prefer to begin by taking into account the objective and logical issues at

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stake in making judgements and progress slowly to valuing the personal and interpersonal values involved.

The SIFT approach to biblical hermeneutics recognises that each of these four functions (sensing, intuition, feeling and thinking) has a part to play in reading and interpreting biblical text and argues that a rich and complete reading of text may need to engage all four functions. At the same time, psychological type theory recognises that each individual reader may have developed a preference for one of the perceiving functions (sensing or intuition), a preference for one of the judging functions (feeling or thinking), and a preference between these two preferred functions. In psychological type theory, the strongest preference is styled the dominant function and the second strongest preference (from the other process) is styled the auxiliary function. This theory suggests that, when reading biblical material, dominant sensing types may prioritise concern with the data and the detail, dominant intuitive types may prioritise concern with the bigger picture and the wider themes, feeling types may prioritise concern with the personal values and interpersonal implications, and thinking types may prioritise concern with the logical implications and the theological issues raised by the passage.

While the SIFT approach to biblical hermeneutics had its origin in theoretical extrapolation from psychological type theory (Francis 1997; Francis & Atkins 2000, 2001, 2002; Francis & Village 2008), subsequently two sets of empirical studies have listened to individuals discussing biblical material within 'type-alike' groups. The theory of working in type-alike groups is that the distinctive voices of different types emerge with greater clarity when they are not distracted by the contributions made from other type perspectives. One set of studies looked at the two psychological processes in turn. First the participants were divided into groups distinguishing between sensing and intuition where they were invited to explore one text concentrating on the perceiving process. Then the participants were divided into groups distinguishing between feeling and thinking where they were invited to explore a second text concentrating on the judging process. The second set of studies looked at the four psychological functions at the same time. In this context, the participants were divided into groups defined by their dominant psychological type preference, distinguishing between dominant sensing types, dominant intuitive types, dominant feeling types and dominant thinking types.

Following these two routes, a range of studies has now been published exploring the following passages from the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles: the feeding of the five thousand reported in Mark 6:34–44 (Francis 2010); the resurrection narratives reported in Mark 16:1–8 and Matthew 28:1–15 (Francis & Jones 2011); the cleansing of the Temple and the incident of the fig tree reported in Mark 11:11–21 (Francis 2012a; Francis & ap Siôn 2016b); the Johannine feeding narrative reported in John 6:4–22 (Francis 2012b);

the narrative of separating sheep from goats reported in Matthew 25:31–46 (Francis & Smith 2012); the birth narratives reported in Matthew 2:13–20 and Luke 2:8–16 (Francis & Smith 2013); two narratives concerning John the Baptist reported in Mark 1:2–8 and Luke 3:2b–20 (Francis 2013; Francis & Smith 2014); the Johannine feeding narrative reported in John 6:5–15 (Francis & Jones 2014); two passages from Mark exploring different aspects of discipleship reported in Mark 6:7–14 and Mark 6:33–41 (Francis & Jones 2015a); the foot washing account reported in John 13:2b–15 (Francis 2015); two healing narratives reported in Mark 2:1–12 and Mark 10:46–52 (Francis & Jones 2015b); the narrative of blind Bartimaeus reported in Mark 10:46–52 (Smith & Francis 2016), the Road to Emmaus narrative reported in Luke 24:13–35 (Francis & ap Siôn 2016a; Francis & Smith 2017), the call of the first disciples as recorded in Luke 5:1–7 (Francis & ap Siôn 2017), the missionary journey of the disciples in Mark 6:6b–17 (Francis, Smith & Francis-Dehqani 2017); the Matthean pericopes on Pilate and Judas in Matthew 27:3–10, 19–25 (Francis & Ross 2018); the message of grace in Matthew 6:25–30 and Matthew 20:1–15 (Francis, Smith & Astley 2022; Francis, Smith & Francis-Dehqani 2018), the account of the Baptism of Jesus in Mark 1:4–9 (Francis, Jones & Martinson 2019); the search for the lost sheep in Matthew 18:10–14 (Jones & Francis 2019); the teaching about binding and loosing on earth in Matthew 18:15–18 (Francis, Jones & Hebden 2019); the account of Jesus' dialogue with Pilate in John 18:33–37 (Francis, Smith & Evans 2021) and Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26–40 (Francis & Jones 2022). Recently this research tradition has also been applied to the Suffering Servant passages from Isaiah 49 and 50 (Francis 2017) and to the Psalms: Psalm 1 (Francis, McKenna & Sahin 2018; Francis & Smith 2018), Psalm 139 (Francis, Smith & Corio 2018), Psalm 73 (Francis, Jones & Ross 2020; Francis, McKenna & Sahin 2020) and Psalm 93 (Francis et al. 2021).

### The eight function-orientations model

While empirical research concerning the SIFT approach to biblical hermeneutics has focused on distinguishing between the four perspectives characterised by sensing, intuition, feeling and thinking, Jungian type theory can also take a further step of differentiating between the orientation in which functions are exercised, distinguishing the extraverted orientation from the introverted orientation. This more complex and more developed approach to psychological type theory generated eight function orientations: extraverted sensing, introverted sensing, extraverted intuition, introverted intuition, extraverted feeling, introverted feeling, extraverted thinking and introverted thinking. The description and development of the eight function orientations have been discussed by Beebe (1992, 2017), Thompson (1996), Berens (1999), Haas, McAlpine and Hartzler (2001), Hartzler and Hartzler (2004, 2005), Berens and Nardi (2004), Hartzler, McAlpine and Haas (2005), Haas and Hunzinker (2006) and Ross and Francis (2020).

A new strand of research developing and extending the SIFT approach to biblical hermeneutics has adopted the eight function-orientation model. In an initial study, Francis, Strathie and Ross (2019) focused on profiling the lenses of introverted sensing and introverted intuition in respect of reading the Beatitudes from Matthew 5:1–10. Then in a second study, Francis, Stevenson and Ross (2021) continued with this focus on profiling the lenses of introverted sensing and introverted intuition, this time in respect of reading the Wedding at Cana in Galilee from John 2:1–11. These two studies confirmed the added richness brought to biblical interpretation by taking the orientation as well as the functions into account. The clear limitation, however, is that both initial studies have focused on the same two function orientations, introverted sensing and introverted intuition.

It is against this background that the present study was designed to offer a different perspective, this time contrasting the readings of introverted intuition and extraverted intuition. First, however, we intend to revisit the literature that differentiates between introverted intuition and extraverted intuition.

Introverted intuition is a form of perceiving, one that is turned inward, orienting to inner images. This function-orientation equips an individual with inner vision. Jung thought these 'inner images were mediated by archetypes that represent the distillation of intense experiences repeated since time immemorial' (Ross & Francis 2020:24). These are for the most part unconscious images 'produced in such inexhaustible abundance by the creative energy of life ... [and] represent possible views of the world which may give life new potential' (Jung 1971:400). Introverted intuition is not concerned with 'external possibilities but with what the external object has released within' (Jung 1971:399). Its inner vision 'transcends the present moment and sets present trials and triumphs in wider context', affording what Spinoza called 'the *specie aeternitatis*, the perspective of eternity' (Ross & Francis 2020:24). Introverted intuition plays a part in all our lives and is usually operating when we hear ourselves:

[A]sking the questions 'What else is going on here?', or 'What does this really mean?', or on occasion when we simply 'know' something even though we do not know *how* we know it. (p. 24)

Extraverted intuition is concerned with the possibilities that may be available through an overall grasp of the current external situation. It is a form of perceiving that orients to the present for the promise of what may be possible in the future, either in the immediate future or in the long term. It sweeps the external environment, perceiving clusters of sensations as patterns that have potential. Dominant extraverted intuitives then are excited by the possibilities in the present situation and even inspired to take action in order to realise these possibilities. Jung (1971:368) wrote 'It is as though his whole life vanished in the new situation', while Myers and Myers (1980:109) spoke of the 'irresistible pull' of possibilities that make for a readiness to take immediate action in response to a

situation. Through the function of extraverted intuition our conscious is able to create a *context* from the *content* of sensory facts and respond to it with its solution, which is often a project of some kind to be realised in the external world.

## Method

### Procedure

In the context of a meeting convened by the Network for Psychological Type and Christian Faith, participants were given the opportunity to take part in a workshop designed to explore the experience of interpreting scripture within hermeneutical communities organised on the basis of their dominant function orientation. Before dividing into groups, Luke 10:25–37 was read aloud from the New Revised Standard Version (Anglicised Edition). Printed copies of the passage were provided for each participant, with the following instruction:

Employ your strongest function (in extraverted or introverted form) to engage conversation with the following narrative from Luke's Gospel. Then agree on a presentation that captures *this* distinctive perspective on the narrative.

### Participants

The workshop was attended by 22 participants (7 men and 15 women). Within this group, preference for intuition was more prevalent than preference for sensing (16 compared with 6), and preference for feeling was more prevalent than preference for thinking (14 compared with 8).

### Analysis

The present analysis is based on the close observation and recording of two of the hermeneutical communities: the community of dominant extraverted intuitive types (two men and four women, five ENFPs and one ENTP) and the community of dominant introverted intuitive types (two women and one man, two INFJs and one INTJ). In the analyses attention was given both to the process and to the content.

## Results

### Dominant introverted intuition

The group of dominant introverted intuitive types comprised one male INTJ (with auxiliary extraverted thinking) and two female INFJs (with auxiliary extraverted feeling). In introverted style, the three participants began the task in silence and seemed somewhat overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. The first person to speak seemed to express the enormity of the task to the relief of the others, 'There are so many huge ideas!' The INTJ participant immediately offered auxiliary extraverted thinking as the helping hand, 'So let's begin by making a list of those ideas'. The INFJs saw this as a hindrance rather than as an aid to identifying the core issues that really mattered. Their strategy was to focus on the ideas that hit them first and in that way to search for the deeper issues that matter most. And so the group got

under way, proceeding by moving from one idea to the next *without* a sense of order, sequence or progression.

Each member of the group held a recurrent theme that continued to emerge within (or erupt from) their discourse. For the INTJ participant it was his concern with the quest for the 'right answer' that Jesus appeared to affirm. For one of the INFJ participants, it was her personal experience as a Street Pastor. For the other INFJ participants, it was her concern with the centrality of relationships.

The INFJ who served as a Street Pastor opened the reflection by saying that what struck her most was the way in which the Samaritan was doing something practical. Often when she sees a practical problem her first inclination is to reflect on the big issues that problem raises.

If I see an old lady hit by a bus, I would want to speculate about what kind of world we are living in; who invented buses in the first place? The Church so often prefers to debate these issues, rather than get its hands dirty. When we started Street Pastors in our church, it gave people something really practical to do. This forced me to be the Good Samaritan. Never mind the big picture, feed the hungry!

The INFJ whose faith focused on relationships took advantage of a gap in the flow of conversation to say that what struck her most was the way in which the narrative is about relationships. A relationship exists between the Good Samaritan and the injured person. The relationship is made when the Good Samaritan went across to the injured person and touched him. He took care of his wounds, and he stayed with him in the inn. We never know where the relationship goes, but we sense that it leads somewhere. How the story ends is a mystery.

The INTJ took the next lull in conversation to say that what struck him most was the struggle between Jesus and the Lawyer. There is something really odd about Jesus' response, 'You have given the right answer'. Surely there is no right answer. Perhaps the Lawyer was not even asking the right question. Was Jesus being ironic rather than affirming? There is a game of theological ping pong going on here. It seems that the Lawyer was trying to trick Jesus with his question, but Jesus tricked the Lawyer into answering the question for himself. The question backfires onto the Lawyer, and he tries to regain the upper hand by asking another question, 'Who is my neighbour?'

The two INFJs were quickly losing interest in this idea and seized on the question 'Who is my neighbour?' Perhaps the Lawyer was really more interested in finding out who Jesus would define as not being the neighbour.

I am willing to help anyone who is my neighbour, but who can I see as falling outside the net: the foreigner, the Muslim? I face this problem as Street Pastor when I see people needing help, but feel that they have brought the problem on themselves. They did not need to get drunk. You need to go deep down into your unconscious and find who is your Samaritan, that is the outsider, the real outsider for you. The challenge is to dig down into yourself.

The INFJ who was involved with the ministry of Street Pastors thought seriously about the way in which the Good Samaritan got involved with the messiness of the victim. He did not petition his MP to make the road between Jerusalem and Jericho safe. He simply interrupted his business (whatever it was), got his hands dirty, stayed with the victim overnight and put his money on the table for the inn keeper to carry on with the work when he had to leave. Because he came upon the injured man, he took it as his responsibility to take care of him.

The INFJ who was interested in relationships, then speculated about the relationship between the Good Samaritan and the inn keeper. They seemed to know each other and to trust each other. The inn keeper trusted the Samaritan to pay the bill on his return; the Samaritan trusted the inn keeper to keep an eye on the costs.

The two INFJ participants focused on how the robbers left their victim half dead. They began to probe the metaphorical significance of that idea. How often that may happen today in the world of corporate restructuring (in business, in universities, in churches), when the victims of restructuring are left half dead (with their lives destroyed) and those responsible just walk away.

These thoughts structured deeper reflection. The real point of the story is not the experience of the victim but the reaction of the Samaritan. The real point is that the Samaritan was moved with pity. There was a deep visceral reaction to the condition of the victim, left there half dead. Here was a deep connection at a really human level, not something that happens at a distance. It is incarnational. The answer to the question, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life' is not in saying the right things, but in being moved by the human situation.

The Samaritan was moved with pity to show mercy. We are all in need of that kind of mercy. Here is the real point of the story: he was moved with pity and he showed mercy. The rest of the story is incidental. It could be about anything. But here is the core: he was moved with pity and he showed mercy.

At this point, the INTJ participant brought his auxiliary extraverted thinking back into play and asked the two INFJ participants where they thought the conversation had led them. They were content that they had identified and nailed the ideas at the heart of the narrative. It is about being moved by pity and showing mercy. They recognised that they had ended up with thoughts that they had not started with – they had discovered something important and they were satisfied with their discovery. The INTJ participant suggested that pity and mercy were abstract and complex ideas.

But by then, after a whole hour of quite intense activity, time had run out.

### Dominant extraverted intuition

The group of dominant extraverted intuitive types comprised three female ENFPs and two male ENFPs (with auxiliary

introverted feeling) and one female ENTP (with auxiliary introverted thinking). In extraverted style, the six participants threw themselves into the task quickly and vocally, speaking one over another as new ideas arose. The group started by working to reinterpret the story for today.

The first major idea to emerge from the story concerned imagining who the key character would be if the story were set in today's society. The story was rooted in the past about a Samaritan. The Samaritans were hated and marginalised. So who are the hated and marginalised groups today? Quick fire brainstorming named migrants, refugees, transgender people and young people. These are groups who are misunderstood and not fully listened to. These are groups whom some fear and whom others hate.

The Samaritan was an interesting character because his description combined both racial and religious overtones. In today's world, the Samaritan suggests both xenophobia and religious hatred. So there is plenty of evidence of xenophobia in today's world. In the United Kingdom, the Referendum on leaving the European Union brought so much xenophobia to the surface. There is hatred of the illegal immigrants from outside Europe and fear of the migrants within Europe from the economically less prosperous countries. And there is plenty of evidence of religious hatred in today's world as well. Key events in world politics have inflamed Islamophobia. Young Muslims are bullied in school. Adult Muslims are discriminated against in the workplace.

The Samaritan was not the only despised person in the Gospels. Despised people and outcasts pop up everywhere. And Jesus always embraces them. Jesus embraces Levi and Zacchaeus. Jesus embraces the leper and the demonic. Today people are marginalised because of physical illness, disabilities and mental health problems. The Gospel is about accepting the unacceptable, loving the unlovable, forgiving the unforgivable. The Gospel is about breaking down the barriers that divide people.

The second major idea to emerge from the story involved putting ourselves in the role of the main characters. Inevitably this began by looking at the hero of the story and putting ourselves in the place of the Samaritan. So who am I helping? How do I do it? And what gets in my way? Quick fire brainstorming came up with many possibilities, especially concerning what gets in the way. Helping others is never simple. Sometimes our help gets in the way and makes matters worse. There are too many possible and unpredictable outcomes. We can become bewildered trying to work out what to do and become paralysed by confusion and indecision.

We often do not know how to help – or just what offering help may lead to. How will others read our helping hand? And doesn't helping others make us vulnerable? Then there is the problem of setting boundaries. It is safer to deal with routine situations where boundaries have been firmly put in place. Then there is the problem of guilt. We feel guilty if we

do not step in to help, and yet we feel guilty if our attempts to help go wrong and we cause more harm than good. Helping others can be both problematic and dangerous.

Moving away from the hero of the story, the group turned attention away from the Samaritan and onto those who walked by on the other side. So how do we deal with the desire to walk by on the other side of the road. There inside each of us is the priest. There inside each of us is the Levi. In other stories these characters would be the heroes, they would be the good people. But in this story they were put into situations in which they did not come out well. There are situations in which all good people struggle.

Then attention turned to the experience of the victim and to experiencing things from his perspective. The victim is just passive in the story. Things just happen to him over which he has no control. One minute he is in the hands of robbers. He is beaten up. He is robbed. He is left wounded by the roadside. The next minute he is in the hands of the Samaritan, a hated foreigner whom he cannot trust. He has his wounds tended by a foreign doctor. He is carried on someone else's animal. He is taken to an inn without having the means to pay his way. The robbers took away his possessions and the Samaritan is now taking away his self-respect. It is not easy being the victim of help.

The third major idea to emerge from the story concerned re-visiting the details. Three specific areas of details caught attention again. First, there was the Lawyer's question that started the whole thing off. Why did the Lawyers ask that question? Why did Jesus push the question back to the Lawyer? And what did Jesus mean when he said that the Lawyer had got it right? Just what is meant by loving your neighbour as yourself? Just how do we love ourselves? Second, there was the unfinished business between the Good Samaritan and the inn keeper. Did the Samaritan come back? How much was the bill and did he pay up? What happened to the man who fell among robbers: did he recover? Third, there was the effect of the whole experience on the Lawyer. How did he feel about the outcome of his encounter with Jesus? The story leaves a lot of loose ends.

The fourth major idea to emerge from the story concerned the really big question. What new perspectives have we gained concerning what is eternal life? Two new perspectives had certainly emerged. Eternal life involves finding and loving our own true self. Eternal life involves identifying and loving those who are 'other' than ourselves. These are big ideas.

The group closed by acknowledging that the story is rich in meaning; that they had enjoyed playing with the many ideas; and that it did not really matter if they had decided nothing. The story was there to generate further new ideas on another new day.

## Discussion

### Dominant introverted intuition

In keeping with the *introverted* orientation of introverted intuition, the process of the small group of introverted intuitive types was consistently observed as featuring reflective silence. For example at the start of the group meeting 'the three participants began the task in silence', and then after contributions from the first speaker – the one INTJ member – and one of the INFJs, a 'gap in the flow of conversation' was reported. This in turn devolved into 'the next lull in conversation'. The process of the introverted intuitive group appeared to be desultory, as if each member was dwelling in his or her own world of possibilities in relation to the Lucan text. However, they seemed to be jogged out of their inner musings by each other's remarks. Despite the sporadic rhythm – or perhaps because of it – it seems that there had been an underlying and unconscious convergence regarding the significance of neighbourliness as 'being moved and showing mercy'. For this *introverted* intuition group, the convergence was largely an internal process: as Jung claimed intuition 'is not a product of a voluntary act; it is rather an involuntary act, which depends on different external or internal circumstances' (Ross 1992:84, quoting Jung 1966:219).

The first speaker, the sole INTJ in the group, drawing on his auxiliary function of extraverted thinking, proposed a logical way of proceeding. That did not receive support from the INFJs. Instead, in keeping with the INTJ's opening exclamation: '... so many huge ideas!' the group went with the process that accorded with a characteristic of introverted intuition which is to resonate to ideas that may be rich in meaning. In short, they converged on what all members had in common. Introverted intuition is a form of perceiving, something Jung dubbed an irrational process rather than a rational process, where the Latin *ratio* means order or ordering. Accordingly, the observer reports the group 'proceeding by moving from one idea to the next *without* a sense of order, sequence or progression'. With introverted intuition, it is the energy of potential significance that sustains the momentum and provides the enervating shifts based on thematic association.

According to Jung, introverted intuition resonates to archetypal themes that well up from our collective unconscious and from repeated occurrences across time and space. In keeping with this feature, each group member was observed to orient to a recurrent theme that continued to emerge within (or erupt from) their discourse. There seemed to be a public pondering of private musings. For example, the member who worked as a Street Pastor was impressed by the sheer practicality of the Samaritan in his helping and contrasted this to her own disposition that was to move automatically from immediate practical response to answering her desire to exploring the wider context in which that need arose. The feeling connoted here was that this was seen as a very personal, even private, response and an

admission to others of the inner world in which she dwelled by virtue of her dominant function-orientation of introverted intuition. There was similar concern with interpretation in the extraverted intuitive group, but this was closely related to the question of action, 'What should be done?'

In contrast, in the introverted intuitive group there was the feeling that the question of what should be done was a question that might come later, and this INFJ seemed really grateful that the Street Pastor programme at her church jogged her back to the outside world to make a practical response to the actual need in the community that she might not otherwise have remembered to get round to, caught as she was in her natural interest for ferreting out the cause. The Street Pastor's words seem to validate Beebe's (2017) claim that our dominant function-orientation operates like the central hero in our psychological functioning, what Jung called our *psyche*, functioning as our automatic 'go-to', whereas our auxiliary function-orientation, which in the case of the INFJ Street Pastor is extraverted feeling, functions like a nurturing parent to feed ourselves and others. This perspective seems to be captured in the group member's grateful attitude: 'This forced me to be the Good Samaritan. Never mind the big picture, feed the hungry!'

The other INFJ then showed her heroic dominant function-orientation of time-and-space-spanning introverted intuition, supplemented by her nurturing parental auxiliary function-orientation of extraverted feeling with its concern for external harmony: she alighted upon the theme of 'relationship' running through the Good Samaritan narrative. For this INFJ, the inception point of relationship was constituted by the Samaritan's move toward the injured person, which for her was exemplified by wound-tending and over-night companionability. By the same token, however, there seemed a relishing of the indeterminability of the relationship's exact course. From the perspective of introverted intuition, life events illustrate an archetype at work, but these never define the archetype nor exhaust it. Rather the core of archetypal power is elusive except under Spinoza's *sub specie aeternitatis*, the perspective of eternity (Jung & Jaffe 1989:3). In keeping with this perspective, the second INFJ concluded: 'We never know where the relationship goes, but we sense that it leads somewhere. How the story ends is a mystery'.

INTJs do not necessarily get on well with each other. As with INFJs, what really matters is the individual introverted intuitive type's inner vision, but this is not usually revealed by either type. However, the INFJs because of their nurturing parental auxiliary extraverted feeling feel some compunction in the interests of harmony to attend to the inter-relational field. INTJs, however, with extraverted thinking as their auxiliary feel no such obligation and so from a distance, as it were, prosecute a logical programmatic implication of their inner vision, and spar with others accordingly but especially with other INTJs. It was perhaps with some awareness of his or her own proclivity in this regard that led the lone INTJ in the group to posit that Jesus and the lawyer may have been

engaging in what the observer reported as intellectual ping-pong. Not surprisingly, the two INFJs were reported as 'quickly losing interest in this idea' and seized on the question 'Who is my neighbour', which in its abstract aspect of attempting to define 'neighbour' as a socio-religious construct might energise their introverted intuition, while their auxiliary extraverted feeling with its attention to harmony would appreciate the potential practical implication for moral conduct.

The two INFJs in the second half of the meeting sustained their interest by reflecting on aspects of human relating that transpired over the course of 2 days, displayed not only in the relationship of the Samaritan to the assaulted traveller but also of the Samaritan to the inn-keeper. In the latter relationship the dynamics of trust were explored through the repeated warm exchanges that were noted between the two individuals. Among the group members there followed an easy and coherent transition to a discussion of the dynamics of the systemic harm perpetrated by corporations contrasted with the immediate care provided by the Samaritan.

Once mercy and pity were discerned as linking moral constructs, their shared introverted intuition drew discussants into deeper reflection, and it seemed the INTJ was able to stay with the very relational content of the reflective discussion, and indeed the INFJs accepted his invitation to more analytical reflection at the conclusion. This illustrates the value of type-similar groupings for exegesis that allows for operation of participants' heroic dominant function orientation. Secondly, the group discussion shows the inflection provided by contrasting but complementary nurturing auxiliary function orientations resulting in different contents but capable of accommodation between the INTJ and the INFJs because of their shared heroic dominant function-orientation with which they steer their lives, including the exegetical endeavour under scrutiny in the study.

### Dominant extraverted intuition

The extraverted intuitive group was vibrantly energetic from the beginning. There was excitement at the outset, and the members seemed enthusiastic about having a shared project of value in which they could engage with others. As with the introverted intuitive group, the extraverted intuitives shared a similar resonance to meaning and comfort with interpretation. There was, however, a significant difference in regard to the timbre and tempo of the process that characterised the two groups. There were also differences regarding how the extraverted intuitives approached the content of the text.

In regard to the group process among the extraverted intuitives, neither pause nor lulls were reported that characterised the introverted intuitive group. In place of reflective silence, the extraverted intuitive group immediately set about 'reinterpreting the story for today'. Four 'action

ideas' were immediately apprehended, in contrast to the reflective inwardly spanning orientation of introverted intuition. The project adopted by this extraverted group for the hour-long gathering was clustered around these 'action ideas': firstly imagining the equivalent social identity of the key character if the story were set in the present day; secondly through trial identification each member stepped into the shoes of each main character; thirdly selected details were revisited – the lawyer's question, unfinished business between Samaritan and innkeeper, and Jesus' impact on the lawyer – and finally new perspectives on eternal life were explored.

The extraverted intuitive group discerned hatred and marginalisation as the operative dynamics in the relationship of Jewish people to Samaritans, and members then engaged in nominating present day groups victimised by these same processes in contemporary society in such quick succession that the observer described this phase as 'brainstorming'. Participants seemed intrigued and energised by the interplay of forces such as race and religion, and the interweaving of both with economic factors. This is in keeping with the nature of extraverted intuition that delights in and is stimulated by perceiving complexity in the external world. For example, the observer reported: 'The Samaritan was an interesting character because his description *combined* both racial and religious overtones'. Furthermore, the function orientation of extraverted intuition roams freely and widely, and according with this predisposition ready reference was made by members to the character of the recent campaign that removed the United Kingdom from the European Union, and in the same breath, as it were, continent-wide dynamics affecting the whole of Europe were touched on, followed by a focus on Islamophobia as it impacted different age groups in different settings, young people at school and adults at work.

There was an easy shift to gather both the past historical narrative and the present day example into the broader theological and ethical perspective of 'inclusivity' that undergirded Jesus' consistent concern for outcasts. It was clear to the observer that group members saw inclusivity to be a direct imperative for governments and citizens in today's societies.

When discussion turned to specific characters in the story, group members energetically projected themselves into each role through identification but then diverted quickly to entering into the complexity of parsing what constituted ostensibly helpful action. Brain-storming was again employed to animate the interaction and to produce a list of relevant considerations. Participants were frank in facing the awkward truth that there are numerous obstacles to being helpful and that intended good sometimes produces harm. Awareness of so much complexity, it was admitted, may lead to paralysis. This provided insight into both the strength and limitation of extraverted intuition and of extraverted intuitive types. They are good starters, open, aware and quick to respond but seldom easily or readily

develop a comprehensive programme to address the multiple factors that they are able to discern. Accordingly, when the first couple of responses prove insufficient as, is often the case, frustration and paralysis occur. Nevertheless, a quintessential call for action featured in this vigorous section of group discussion and thread through the remainder of extraverted intuitives' time together. There was a consistent concern for 'doing the right thing', not in the sense of following tradition or convention, but in regard to doing justice to and responding to the contemporary constellation of relevant factors prevailing at a particular situational moment. Such carefulness was based on the assumption that the right or helpful response may be quite different from one moment to another. It is extraverted intuition that enables any type such ongoing vigilance and discernment of complexity. Characteristically, attunement to the unfolding moment consumed these extraverted intuitives' examination of the Samaritan's actions over the 12 hours or so of his relationship to the victimised traveller.

When extraverted intuition is in play, there is a natural concern with concurrently interacting factors and – with regard to human beings – with relational encounters. In keeping with this tell-tale characteristic, extraverted intuitive group members raised several relational issues: 'How is an action perceived by the recipient'; 'Is the putative helper exposing his vulnerability', presumably by risking rejection. There followed an instant segue to the question of emotional boundaries, and from there to the vulnerability of incalculable guilt that attends the ever-present imperative of conscious action that preoccupies extraverted intuitives, namely the dilemma that, while not acting may seem negligent, yet acting may be harmful. By the same token when attention shifted to the victim, much was made of his lack of agency. The pre-occupation with the relational aspects of action probably reflected the combination of dominant 'heroic' extraverted intuition with auxiliary 'nurturing' introverted feeling for all but one of the group members. Towards the end of the meeting, the natural orientation towards relational interaction and its impact was reflected in the airing of several questions by members regarding the opening and closing exchanges between Jesus and the lawyer. Concern was also expressed about the effect of Jesus upon the lawyer.

## Conclusion

The SIFT approach to biblical hermeneutics and liturgical preaching, as proposed by Francis and Village (2008), drew on Jung's (1971) conceptualisation of the two perceiving functions (sensing and intuition) and the two judging functions (feeling and thinking) to examine the role of psychological type in reading and interpreting scripture. Attention was drawn in the introduction to the present paper to the series of empirical studies that have tested the SIFT approach in relation to a range of specific biblical passages.

The present study belongs to a new stream of research developing and extending the SIFT approach. This stream of

research has recognised that psychological type theory is both richer and more complex than simply distinguishing among the four functions of sensing, intuition, feeling, and thinking. Jung's theory also distinguishes between the two orientations within which each function can be expressed. The eight function-orientation model of psychological type theory, therefore, distinguishes between the introverted expression and the extraverted expression of each of the four functions.

In an initial study, Francis et al. (2019) tested the contribution that could be made to hermeneutical theory by structuring hermeneutical communities on the basis of the participants' preferred function orientations. In that study they reported on reading the Beatitudes (Mt 5:1–10) through the lenses of introverted intuition and introverted sensing. Their initial analysis confirmed the potential within such an approach. In a second study, Francis et al. (2021) reported on reading the Wedding at Cana in Galilee (Jn 2:1–11) through the same two lenses as employed in the initial study, namely introverted sensing and introverted intuition. The data for this second study confirmed the potential within such an approach.

Building on the foundation established by these two earlier studies, the present study has focused on employing and contrasting a different pair of lenses, this time introverted intuition and extraverted intuition, applied to a third passage of scripture, namely the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25–37). The unique contribution to this new emerging stream of research made by the present study is that it brings into profile the distinctive readings of the *same* function (intuition) expressed within each of the two orientations (introversion and extraversion).

The main conclusion drawn from these three studies considered together is that consideration of the reader perspective approach to biblical hermeneutics informed by psychological type theory is enriched when psychological type theory is expanded from the four function account to the eight function-orientation account. This new stream of research developing and extending the SIFT approach is still clearly limited by the examination of just three of the eight function-orientations (introverted sensing, introverted intuition, and extraverted intuition), the application of this approach to just three passages of scripture (the Beatitudes, the Wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the Good Samaritan), and the involvement of just three groups of participants. These are limitations that can be addressed by further research shaped within the same tradition. Such exploration is particularly pertinent among groups of participants who are well versed in psychological type theory and well familiar with Christian scriptures.

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## Authors' contributions

L.J.F. took responsibility for the overall conceptualisation of the article and the organisation of the data. C.F.J.R. organised the discussion. Both authors analysed the data and shaped the article.

## Ethical considerations

Ethical approval to conduct the study was obtained from the School Research Ethics Committee, York St John University (reference no. HRP-RS-AV-12-201-01).

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## Data availability

Data are available from the corresponding author, L.J.F., upon reasonable request.

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