

Daily Reflection on Scripture
Week of January 22
Parables Part II – The Good Samaritan



Just then a religion scholar stood up with a question to test Jesus. “Teacher, what do I need to do to get eternal life?” He answered, “What’s written in God’s Law? How do you interpret it?” He said, “That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence—and that you love your neighbor as well as you do yourself.” “Good answer!” said Jesus. “Do it and you’ll live.” Looking for a loophole, he asked, “And just how would you define ‘neighbor’?” Jesus answered by telling a story. “There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he was attacked by robbers. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man. “A Samaritan traveling the road came on him. When he saw the man’s condition, his heart went out to him. He gave him first aid, disinfecting and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable. In the morning he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I’ll pay you on my way back.’ “What do you think? Which of the three became a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?” “The one who treated him kindly,” the religion scholar responded. Jesus said, “Go and do the same.”

Luke 10:25-37 (The Message)

If you would like to receive the Sacred Pause on your phone, text ‘crossroads’ to 41411.

Sunday, January 22, 2017

Luke 10:25-28 ...a religion scholar stood up with a question to test Jesus. “Teacher, what do I need to do to get eternal life?” He answered, “What’s written in God’s Law? How do you interpret it?” He said, “That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence—and that you love your neighbor as well as you do yourself.” “Good answer!” said Jesus. “Do it and you’ll live.”

Reflection: Eternal life. For ages people have been asking the question “What do I need to do to get eternal life?” More often than not what many people mean by asking that question is, how can I make it to heaven after I die. Although the phrase “Eternal life” has a quantitative side to it, for Jesus it was more about a quality of life in the moment. In other words, how can I find life’s greatest value right now. Jesus said love God, love others and love yourself and you will find just how rich and blessed your life really is; not just in the hereafter, but right in this moment.

Sacred Pause: Every moment is part of eternity. The richest moments are experienced when you live your life in love with God, others and yourself.

Monday, January 23, 2017

Luke 10:29 Looking for a loophole, he asked, “And just how would you define ‘neighbor’?”

Reflection: One of the core breath prayers that we practice at Crossroads goes like this: breathe in saying, *whomever I am with...* Breathe out saying, *I am their neighbor.* That is as clear a response to the question, “And just how would you define ‘neighbor’” that anyone can give. Jesus made it clear we are neighbors one to the other. And when we know one another’s story then we don’t have to build fences between us.

Sacred pause: Whomever I am with today, I am their neighbor. I am to treat all people, particularly those in need, with kindness and compassion.

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Luke 10:30-32 Jesus answered by telling a story. *“There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he was attacked by robbers. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man.*

Reflection: Close your eyes and sit quietly for a few moments. Imagine this scene. You are walking down a deserted road and suddenly you notice just ahead of you a man lying in the road, stripped naked. It’s obvious that he has been beaten badly. What thoughts are going through your head? What feelings are running through your body? Has there been a time when you drove by or walked away from someone in need of help? What kept you from offering a helping hand? Reflecting back on that situation, would you respond differently today?

Sacred Pause: Very easily the day becomes so busy that I don’t even take time to ask anyone how they are. I need to slow down and be more present to others

Wednesday, January 25, 2017

Luke 10:33 *A Samaritan traveling the road came on him. When he saw the man’s condition, his heart went out to him.*

Reflection: The Samaritan was the least likely person to help the Jewish man who was beaten and left in the ditch to die. Jewish people hated Samaritans and Samaritans hated Jewish people. No one ever expected the Samaritan to help. When Jesus said it was a Samaritan who helped the man who was badly beaten, everyone’s jaws dropped. Sometimes we are the least likely to help in a situation. And yet when we move beyond thinking we are the least likely to help and step into a need, we often find we are all that was needed to lift the other person up and out.

Sacred Pause: When you move beyond feelings of inadequacy and step in to help, you might find you were all that was needed to lift the other person up.

Thursday, January 26, 2017

Luke 10:34 *The Samaritan gave him first aid, disinfecting and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable.*

Reflection: “Be kind to everyone you meet because everyone is carrying a burden.” Those words can change how you see others. Those words can tear down fences that so easily get built between races, religions, sexes and social status. Everyone is human, regardless. That understanding is what led the least likely Samaritan to stop and show kindness to a supposed enemy. We don’t know what happened after the fact, but one can certainly imagine that neither the Jewish man nor the Samaritan saw the other or the great religious divide the same.

Sacred pause: “Be kind to everyone you meet because everyone is carrying a burden.” Those words can tear down fences that so easily get built.

Friday, January 27, 2017

Luke 10:35 *In the morning the Samaritan took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I’ll pay you on my way back.’*

Reflection: Put yourself in the role of the Innkeeper. In all likelihood he was Jewish. And now he was witnessing a Samaritan pick up the tab for the Jewish man whose life he just saved. Can you imagine the impact that must have had on the Innkeeper? Whenever and wherever compassion is offered, people notice. Compassion changes the world. Who doesn’t want compassion? Compassion goes way beyond the doctrines

of any religion, for compassion is the universal language of God's love with skin on it. Everyone who witnessed this transaction that day also witnessed the Kingdom of God's love reigning in that moment, with impact for eternity.

Sacred Pause: Compassion goes way beyond the doctrines of any religion. Compassion is the universal language of God's love with skin on it.

Saturday, January 28, 2017

Luke 10:36-37 *"What do you think? Which of the three became a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?" "The one who treated him kindly," the religion scholar responded. Jesus said, "Go and do the same."*

Reflection: Remember that Jesus was telling this story in response to the question, what do I need to do to get eternal life? Jesus simple answer is, be neighborly. Treat everyone with kindness and you will find the quality of your earthly life being heavenly. Treating others with kindness is sometimes the hardest thing we have to do. In those difficult times we need to recall the golden rule – Do unto others as you would have others do to you.

Sacred Pause: When it is hard to show kindness to someone else, pause and remember the golden rule – Do unto others as you want others to do to you.