

Worship Service: Sunday March 5, 2017

1ST Sunday in Lent

Theme: "Jesus encourages mercy, sharing the story of the Good Samaritan"

WE GATHER IN WORSHIP

Gathering Song: "**Come and Fill Our Hearts**" (*music available*)

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
Alleluia!

*Call to Worship:

Lent calls us to journey, this and every day,
following Jesus wherever he leads us.

**Lent calls us to journey:
to the place where God covenants with us,
to receive the new names we are given.**

Lent calls us to worship together,
to tell future generations the good news.

**Lent calls us to practice justice,
to bring God's hope to all people.**

Lent calls us to faithful living,
to trust the One who gives us life.

**Lent calls each of us to take up our cross,
to trust the One who bears it with us.**

Lent calls us to journey with God.

**Let us worship God, who walks with us,
this and every day.**

*Song: "**Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song**" BoP#665

*God's Greeting (*from 2 Corinthians 13:14*)

(Our Lord has called us to worship and now greets us.)

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

*(As God has greeted us with his peace,
so let us pass the peace of Christ to each other.)*

*The Sharing of the Peace *(We greet each other saying, “**The Peace of Christ be with you**”)*

WE ARE RENEWED IN GOD'S GRACE

Prayers of Adoration and Confession:

Leader: Creator God,
by whose word we are fed,
in whose name we find safety,
in whose intent for our world we find hope,
we offer you our songs and prayers of praise.
We rejoice in your way.
You travel ahead of us on our journeys
and meet us in unexpected places.
In moments of temptation,
In moments of isolation,
In moments of confusion,
you are there,
offering us hope for a new day,
shaping us by your holy Word,
and drawing us together into the mystery of the body of
Christ.

Sung Chorus:

**Lord I need You oh I need You
Ev'ry hour I need You
My one defense my righteousness
Oh God how I need You**

Voice 1: Forgiving God there are people who may not be beaten
down or lying by the road, but we pass them by.
Some are family and friends

we take so much for granted
we cannot see how we have stripped
them of our love and compassion.

Voice 2: Others are neighbors:
who have been left half-dead by crushing work;
who have fallen into the hands of despair;
who have been abandoned by all those
who walked on by them.
Many are strangers, people we don't know,
but quickly judge:
they are weak, or poor, or the enemy
or because they remind us of who
we once were, or could become.

Sung Chorus:

**Lord I need You oh I need You
Ev'ry hour I need You
My one defense my righteousness
Oh God how I need You**

Voice 1: Lord, Rescue us from the power of our sins,
Righteous One of all generations.
Pour out your justice on us,
rather than your judgement,
that we would be moved with pity,
and spurred to action;
that we would hear of the hope that is ours,
and share it with our sisters and brothers;
that we would shower mercy on all we meet,
even as we have received forgiveness for our sins
through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Song: **"Lord, I Need You"**

Verse 1

Lord I come I confess
Bowing here I find my rest
And without You I fall apart
You're the one that guides my heart

Chorus

Lord I need You oh I need You
Ev'ry hour I need You
My one defense my righteousness
Oh God how I need You

Verse 2

Where sin runs deep Your grace is more
Where grace is found is where You are
And where You are Lord I am free
Holiness is Christ in me
Where You are Lord I am free
Holiness is Christ in me *Chorus*

Bridge

So teach my song to rise to You
When temptation comes my way
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus You're my hope and stay
And when I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus You're my hope and stay *Chorus*

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*Christy Nockels | Daniel Carson | Jesse Reeves | Kristian Stanfill | Matt Maher
worshiptogether.com songs (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)*

Assurance of God's Pardon:

Hear the words of the Psalmist: Happy are those who are forgiven. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice.

Thanks be to God we are made new.

Guide for Grateful Living from Matthew 22:37-40

*(We respond to God's forgiveness
by living our thanks according to God's Word.
Hear now God's will for our lives from Matthew 22:37-40.*

Our Lord Jesus said:

*"You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,*

*and with all your soul,
and with all your mind.'*
This is the greatest and first commandment.
And a second is like it:
'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'
On these two commandments
hang all the law and the prophets.")

Song of Dedication: **"This is My Commandment"** BoP#694

Additional verses:

This is my commandment, that you trust one another...

This is my commandment, that you serve one another...

Youth message: "A Heart of Mercy" (The Story of the Good Samaritan)

GOD SPEAKS TO US FROM HIS WORD

Prayer for Understanding

The Reading of Scripture:

Debbie Lamb

Psalm 15

Luke 10: 25-37

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon: "Embracing each Encounter"

Text: Luke 10: 25-37

Theme: "Embracing each Encounter"

The Parable of the Good Samaritan is precipitated by and in answer to a question posed to Jesus by a lawyer. In this case the lawyer would have been an expert in the Mosaic Law and not a court lawyer of today. The lawyer's question was, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ([Luke 10:25](#)). This question provided Jesus with

an opportunity to define what His disciples' relationship should be to their neighbors. The text says that the scribe (lawyer) had put the question to Jesus as a test, but the text does not indicate that there was hostility in the question. He could have simply been seeking information. The wording of the question does, however, give us some insight into where the scribe's heart was spiritually. He was making the assumption that man must do something to obtain eternal life. Although this could have been an opportunity for Jesus to discuss salvation issues, He chose a different course and focuses on our relationships and what it means to love.

Jesus answers the question using what is called the Socratic method; i.e., answering a question with a question: "He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?'" ([Luke 10:26](#)). By referring to the Law, Jesus is directing the man to an authority they both would accept as truth, the Old Testament. In essence, He is asking the scribe, what does Scripture say about this and how does he interpret it? Jesus thus avoids an argument and puts Himself in the position of evaluating the scribe's answer instead of the scribe evaluating His answer. This directs the discussion towards Jesus' intended lesson. The scribe answers Jesus' question by quoting [Deuteronomy 6:5](#) and [Leviticus 19:18](#). This is virtually the same answer that Jesus had given to the same question in [Matthew 22](#) and [Mark 12](#).

In verse 28, Jesus affirms that the lawyer's answer is correct. Jesus' reply tells the scribe that he has given an orthodox (scripturally proper) answer, but then goes on in verse 28 to tell him that this kind of love requires more than an emotional feeling; it would also include orthodox practice; he would need to "practice what he preached." The scribe was an educated man and realized that he could not possibly keep that law, nor would he have necessarily wanted to. There would always be people in his life that he could not love. Thus, he tries to limit the law's command by limiting its parameters and asked the question "who is my neighbor?" The word

“neighbor” in the Greek means “someone who is near,” and in the Hebrew it means “someone that you have an association with.” This interprets the word in a limited sense, referring to a fellow Jew and would have excluded Samaritans, Romans, and other foreigners. Jesus then gives the parable of the Good Samaritan to correct the false understanding that the scribe had of who his neighbor is, and what his duty is to his neighbor.

The Parable of the Good Samaritan tells the story of a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, and while on the way he is robbed of everything he had, including his clothing, and is beaten and left half dead. That road was treacherously winding and was a favorite hideout of robbers and thieves.

Today many people find themselves on the Jericho road and how many of us find ourselves their right now.

How many of us find ourselves in the hands of robbers, scammers and thieves whose intent is to beat us, strip us and leave us for dead.

How many of us get the phone call that you have won the lottery or the sweepstakes and you should just pay 1000 dollars from your credit card.

How many of us get the call from Microsoft that a malware is attacking your computer and they want to help you figure it out.

Its tax time now so maybe some of us have gotten the call that we have been selected by the govt of Canada for some big payout or that we owe the govt some amount of money.

Ho many of us get the phone call that we have won an all expense paid cruise or trip and are just require to give our credit card number.

There are pensioners on the Jericho road right here in Kenora who have lost their entire life savings to scammers and criminals on the phone.

The Jericho road is a dangerous place and a frightening place. On the Jericho road there are no rules, no boundaries and our stereotypes have no foundation. On the Jericho road, everything is turned upside down. And this is because, on the Jericho road, we meet God, and we must operate by God's values and according to God's expectations

The next character Jesus introduces into His story is a **priest**. He spends no time describing the priest and only tells of how he showed no love or compassion for the man by failing to help him and passing on the other side of the road so as not to get involved. If there was anyone who would have known God's law of love, it would have been the priest. By nature of his position, he was to be a person of compassion, desiring to help others. Unfortunately, "love" was not a word for him that required action on the behalf of someone else. The next person to pass by in the Parable of the Good Samaritan is a **Levite**, and he does exactly what the priest did: he passes by without showing any compassion. Again, he would have known the law, but he also failed to show the injured man compassion.

The next person to come by is the Samaritan, the one least likely to have shown compassion for the man. Samaritans were considered a low class of people by the Jews since they had intermarried with non-Jews and did not keep all the law. Therefore, Jews would have nothing to do with them. We do not know if the injured man was a Jew or Gentile, but it made no difference to the Samaritan; he did not consider the man's race or religion. The "Good Samaritan" saw only a person in dire need of assistance, and assist him he did, above and beyond the minimum required.

The parable overturned the expectation that the first duty of a religious functionary was to keep himself pure and undamaged for the performance of religious rites. The parable reversed the stereotype of the Samaritan as one who would react to an injured Jew with hostility. For in the parable, the Samaritan plays the role of God, and as God, he reacts to the situation with compassion.

'Compassion' in English is a fairly bland word. But as used of God, it has an enormous depth of meaning. God in the Old Testament is a God of **'hesed'** **a Hebrew word for which there is no adequate English translation. As well as compassion it includes love, kindness, faithfulness, tenderness, consistency, pity, dependability and humanity.**

For the Jericho road runs through our daily lives, through our homes and our schools and our workplaces. We are on the Jericho road whenever we have to choose to act, or stand by and do nothing, to say something or keep silent; whenever we vote, whenever we have to respond to a planning application that might affect our comfort or the value of our property, and whenever we shop and have to make decisions about whether to go for the fairly traded or environmentally friendly option or for the cheapest and most easily available one. In all these situations we are asked by Jesus' parable to recognise that people we have never met, people who are totally unlike ourselves, people in need are our neighbours in the Kingdom of God.

The Jericho road runs straight through the Church, and we are on it whenever we are tempted to become a tribal church, accepting only 'people like us' into membership, instead of being the holy and catholic church that we proclaim ourselves to be in the creed. It is a major tragedy that so often we in the church fail to recognise that we are on the Jericho road when we make our decisions about how our church life is to be organised – and that so often we become the priest or the Levite, and walk by on the other side.

He dresses the man's wounds with wine (to disinfect) and oil (to sooth the pain). He puts the man on his animal and takes him to an inn for a time of healing and pays the innkeeper with his own money. He then goes beyond common decency and tells the innkeeper to take good care of the man, and he would pay for any extra expenses on his return trip. The Samaritan saw his neighbor as anyone who was in need.

Because the good man was a Samaritan, Jesus is drawing a strong contrast between those who knew the law and those who actually followed the law in their lifestyle and conduct. Jesus now asks the lawyer if he can apply the lesson to his own life with the question "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" ([Luke 10:36](#)). Once again, the lawyer's answer is telling of his personal hardness of heart. He cannot bring himself to say the word "Samaritan"; he refers to the "good man" as "he who showed mercy." His hate for the Samaritans (his neighbors) was so strong that he couldn't even refer to them in a proper way. Jesus then tells the lawyer to "go and do likewise," meaning that he should start living what the law tells him to do.

By ending the encounter in this manner, Jesus is telling us to follow the Samaritan's example in our own conduct; i.e., we are to show compassion and love for those we encounter in our everyday activities. We are to love others (vs. 27) regardless of their race or religion; the criterion is need. If they need and we have the supply, then we are to give generously and freely, without expectation of return. This is an impossible obligation for the lawyer, and for us. We cannot always keep the law because of our human condition; our heart and desires are mostly of self and selfishness. When left to our own, we do the wrong thing, failing to meet the law. We can hope that the lawyer saw this and came to the realization that there was

nothing he could do to justify himself, that he needed a personal savior to atone for his lack of ability to save himself from his sins. Thus, the lessons of the Parable of the Good Samaritan are three-fold: (1) we are to set aside our prejudice and show love and compassion for others. (2) Our neighbor is anyone we encounter; we are all creatures of the creator and we are to love all of mankind as Jesus has taught. (3) Keeping the law in its entirety with the intent to save ourselves is an impossible task; we need a savior, and this is Jesus.

*Song of Response: **“Jesus Calls Us O’er the Tumult”** BoP # 672

Prayers of God's People, concluding with the Lord's Prayer

WE BRING OUR GIFTS

Work and Witness of our Church

A Time of Giving

*Sung Response: **“Praise God, from Whom all Blessings Flow”** BoP#79

WE GO OUT TO SERVE AS THE HANDS AND FEET OF CHRIST

*Closing Song: **“Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love”** BoP#229

*The Benediction