

March 2017  
Luke 10:25-42  
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We have listened to this text many times, I have wondered if lawyers now are the same as they were in Jesus' time. Luke presents lawyers as an expert interpreter of the law, or a scholar of Hebrew law and how it applies to daily life, a scribe, an antagonist to Jesus, someone who tests Jesus. So the question is "Teacher what must I do to inherit eternal life?" What does Jesus do? He answers the question with a question....I don't like it when people do that! He turns the table on the lawyer! Jesus said to him "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" Quite a feat don't you think. The lawyer answers "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus says "do this and you will live." Easy right? But wait who is my neighbor? Who do you consider to be my neighbor? Be more specific here please! Answers please!

We come back to the parable, it says "A man" there is no hint at his heritage here. Is he white, black, brown? We could add a lot here now...gay, straight, Muslim, Buddhist, Christian? No cloths to identify him - beaten half to death, left for dead. Who comes by but a priest, now you would think he would stop to help right? But being a priest might he have thought that he could not defile himself as he was a pure person. Then the Levite also passes by...could the robbers still be there? Then we have the Samaritan who stops and saves the life of a man he does not know, he doesn't care! This is a man in need and I must help, he takes care of the need. No questions asked!

What kind of person are you? What kind of a family are we? Do you or should I say do we step up and help those in need? Knowing this faith family my answer is a resounding YES! Come to this church on Food Shelf days, come on Monday and Thursday evenings as community meals are shared. Come on Wednesday nights for worship and a meal with the confirmation kids, parents and mentors. Come on Monday mornings and watch Tiny Tots leaders teaching children of all faiths. Are we meeting the needs?

Look at our special giving each month for seminary scholarships, college scholarships, camp scholarships to help send kids to camp and so many more. We can look out further, to the quilts being made and sent to world relief, to our benevolence sent to the synod to help all over the world. Are we meeting the

needs?

Lets look at Martha and Mary . If you think about back in those days a man was the head of the house and a woman was worth nothing , there is no man mentioned in this passage. Interesting huh? We have Martha making the choice to serve and care for her guests, which was huge in those days, we have Mary that chooses to sit at Jesus' feet and learn. Who is right here? We know that Jesus says Mary is the one doing the right thing. We have a lot of Martha's and Mary's here in this congregation that are doing a wonderful work.

Who are you Martha or Mary?

Our lives are full of rules, what we can and can not do.

Our lives are full of wants and needs.

If we follow the rules we should have success right?

Does Jesus want us to step out or step up to do what is right according to the law?

Or does he want us to step out or step up to do what is right according to his love and mercy to all?

Was Martha right in her belief that Mary should be helping her? Martha believes so.

We worship and work together in this place, we don't always agree on what, when or how we should do things....BUT with love and mercy we can come to the point where we can agree to disagree and move forward to a common goal. I feel that is where God wants us.

At the retreat last weekend that some of our council members and nominating committee attended we talked about

Our Mission Statement: With God's love embrace one another, our neighbors and all creation.

Our Vision statement: Doing God's work with our hands and providing spiritual growth for all. Opportunities for living out our Christian faith. Support our mission and ministries.

And our Values: Practice hospitality with welcoming and kindness. Respect and care for all of community. Serve our community. Live as generous stewards.

Let me repeat these they are so important:

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mission and ministries.

Our Values: Practice hospitality with welcoming and kindness. Respect and care for all of community. Serve the community. Live as generous stewards.

This is great work! I believe that we are doing these things as I stated before, but can we do more? When you talk to someone who is not a member of this congregation, how enthusiastic are you about what is happening here? What is your passion, what do you feel strongly about? Share it!

Do you know that the senior high youth are asking for a Bible Study?

We have an enormous wealth of knowledge in our older generation, we have 125 years of history in this place. Isn't it exciting to know that we have a group of people digging into that history to celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Do you have something to offer here? Have you ever thought that by mentoring someone or a young family you are growing future leaders?

At our age are we thinking we have done enough? Personally, for me I don't think we should ever stop giving of ourselves to nourish our young people. The wisdom we have learned through the years needs to be shared. You might think you are too old or not in tune with those young people - but I would not be here right now if it were not for older people taking me under their wing and showing me what the love of God is all about! I hope I have thanked them and you for all you have given me, that you know how much this faith family means to me. I pray that I can nurture someone to grow as you have helped me.

I don't think our job is ever done. We need to be open and ready to serve where ever God leads us.

So who are you? The priest, the Levite, the man half beaten to death remember that Pastor Darrell has said one of three are going through some trial every day, the Samaritan, Martha, Mary? Are you willing to step up and step out to share your wisdom and the love and mercy God has shown you? Do you know there is a group called Befrienders that are ready and willing to help you through your transition times?

Be that person, share the love and mercy of God! Step up and step out share your wisdom. Help us to do God's work with our hands. You have so much to offer, use it! Thanks be to God! Amen

