

July 10, 2022

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 10:25-37

We have all heard this story many times in our lives. You have probably heard it more times in your life than I have preached on it. We often think that it is about doing the right thing even when the rules say otherwise. We have read it to deal with injustice and racism. This passage does deal with all these issues and more. It is one of those passages that is truly timeless. This passage addresses the societal problems of Our Lord's day, our recent past and now our current issues. However, this passage also addresses a deeper, personal issue of what it means to be a Christian and a disciple of Christ.

The topic of discipleship was a hot issue in Our Lord's day and still is today. Jesus uses the character of the Good Samaritan as an example of the ideal Jew. This person did the right thing even when Jewish law stated otherwise. Jews would not consider Samaritans Jews, but they were. This is a lot more about being a Jew. This is about being a decent human being and not seeing colour or where a person is from. The

Good Samaritan is a great example of living your life to its fullest as a child of God. Truly fulfilling your potential as God would want you too. As you could imagine, this parable would have gotten Jesus into trouble with His Jewish audience.

So let's push the envelope a bit further. The Good Samaritan is the ideal Jew. The Good Samaritan is also the ideal example of what a follower of Jesus should be. Jesus is setting the bar for His: disciples, apostles and followers. He is telling them what He expects from them. Some will get it, but most will not. This example is still the pattern for the believing Christian today. We are all children of God and followers of Christ. If we just took these parables to heart and made them part of our daily lives the world would be a much greater place. They are the blueprint to building the Kingdom here on Earth.

The parable of the Good Samaritan sets the bar high for the listener in Jesus's day. The bar may even be higher in our age. Regardless, Christ still expects us to try and reach it. He knows that we will have our good days and bad ones. Yet we are constantly trying and that is what matters the most. Giving up is not an option. Discipleship is not cheap, but requires much effort and work.

Pastor Deitrich Bonnhoffer had some very powerful quotes on the topic of discipleship. At first they may sound harsh, but when you stop and think about them they start to make some sense. He wrote the book, *The Cost of Discipleship*. I'll share some quotes with you.

“Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are.” We claim to be so inclusive. Yet cancel culture is a common practice in so many places.

“God says, discipleship is not limited to what you can comprehend, it must transcend all comprehension. Plunge deep into the waters of your own comprehension, and I will help you comprehend even as I do. Bewilderment is the true comprehension. Not to know where you are going is true knowledge. My comprehension transcends yours.”

“Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a person must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it cost a man His life and it is grace because it gives a person the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of His Son: Ye were bought at a price, and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon His Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered Him up for us. Costly grace is the incarnation of God.”

The next quote truly sums up the Good Samaritan story. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. These people without possessions of power, these strangers on earth, these sinners, these followers of Jesus Christ, have in their life with Him renounced their

own dignity, for they are merciful. As if their own needs and their own distresses were not enough, they take upon themselves the distress and humiliation of others. They have an irresistible love for the downtrodden, the sick, the wretched, the wronged, the outcast and all who are tortured with anxiety. They go out and seek all who are emeshed in the toil of sin and guilt. No distress is too great, no sin too appalling for their pity. If any person falls into disgrace, the merciful will sacrifice their own honour to shield them and take their shame upon themselves.”

A lot of stuff there to make you think and reflect upon your own journey as a disciple of Jesus. Can you see yourself in the role of the Good Samaritan? May God continue to bless you and may the Holy Spirit continue to work through you, Pastor D