

In John 8, Jesus shows us what he tells us in Matt. 5: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” May the love that we show our neighbour be conditioned by mercy.

PRAY: Ask God if there are any people in life who you wish were brought to justice. Now pray that your desire for justice would be conditioned by mercy.

THURSDAY JANUARY 20

Read: Mark 2: 1-12

I listened to a presentation this past week by Father Gregory Boyle. He’s a Jesuit priest who founded and leads “Homeboy Industries”, a group of businesses that provides opportunities for gang members living in L.A. to be free from their gangs and live meaningful and fulfilling lives in Christ. Father Boyle talked about this story from Mark and I thought it had something to add to the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Four men carry their paralyzed friend to Jesus. Prevented from accessing Jesus because of the crowds, they make room. Literally, they raze the roof to bring their friend to Christ. Jesus heals, and announces forgiveness. Wonderful miracles! But what about the other miracle wonders Boyle. What about the miracle of caring friends who made it possible for someone on the outside to be let in? As Boyle said, “somebody chose to rip the roof off the place so that someone who was on the outside, is now on the inside.”

In Luke’s parable, we read that the Samaritan brought a despised Jew *inside*. And that’s the miracle of hospitality; making room.

PRAY: Pray that your life, your home, our church, will be a place that makes room for those on the outside to come in.

FRIDAY JANUARY 21

Read: Our ministry priority on being a “hospitable community.” (below)

As a tangible display of God’s renewing power, we extend His hospitality by: Involving ourselves in the lives and needs of one another and our neighbours; Inviting our neighbours to follow Christ with us; Warmly embracing one another and our neighbours. As a congregation we can show hospitality in many ways. Welcoming international students, serving our community (ESL, Preschool, neighbourhood clean-up, etc.), hosting a small group, are just a few ways.

PRAY: Pray through our ministry priority. May our neighbourhood increasingly experience us as a hospitable community.

SATURDAY JANUARY 22

Read: Tomorrow’s sermon text, Luke 10: 38-41.

Consider coming to morning prayer today in the sanctuary at 6:00AM.

WEEKLY DEVOTIONS GUIDE

JANUARY 16-22, 2011

BY: PASTOR ANDREW BEUNK

NEW WEST CRC

SERIES: A 'TANGIBLE DISPLAY' PEOPLE: JOURNEYING WITH JESUS IN LUKE

SERMON NOTES: “THE BASICS OF DISCIPLESHIP: HOSPITALITY TO THE STRANGER”

LUKE 10:25-37

PASTOR ANDREW BEUNK

SUNDAY JANUARY 16

“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”

(Enoch 9)

“Who is my neighbour?”

Answer? A parable.

Jerusalem to Jericho

Priest (Sirach 12:1-7)

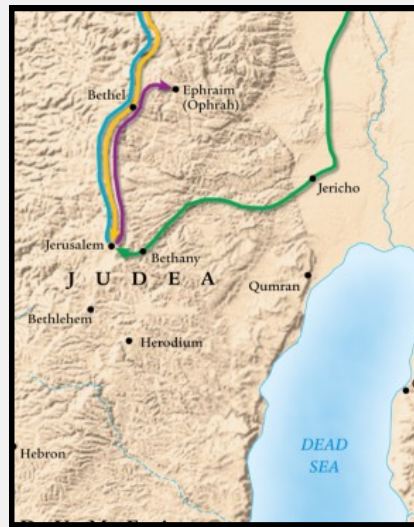
Levite

Samaritan

Compassion, bind up, oil, wine
Samaritan behaves like _____.

Hosea 6, Isaiah 43

KEY THEME OR TAKE-AWAY:



Left: Photo of a portion of the Jericho road. Right: Jerusalem to Jericho; a 29km journey descending 975m.

MONDAY JANUARY 17

Read: Luke 10: 25; Ephesians 2: 1-10; John 15:13-17

What must I *do*...? That's the question we are all tempted to ask. What must I **DO**?! Consider what Pastor Rick Warren writes in an article called "What Difference Does Easter Make?":

"There are two ways the Bible says you can get to heaven. Plan A is to earn it. That's the performance plan. And to earn it you only have to do this: never sin and always do what's right for the entire time that you live. Just be perfect.

"Since none of us qualify for Plan A, God came up with Plan B, which is this: You trust Jesus Christ when he says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He was the only perfect person who ever lived, because he was God. He came so we could know what God is like. And by trusting and establishing a relationship with him, you get in on his goodness.

"My friend Ron Dunn took his young son to a carnival one time for his birthday. His son picked six boys to go with him, so Ron bought a roll of tickets. Every line he'd come up to, he'd pull off seven tickets and give them to all the kids. When they got to the Ferris wheel, all of a sudden there was this eighth little kid with his hand out.

"Ron said, "Who are you?" The kid said, "I'm Johnny." Ron said, "Who are you, Johnny?" Johnny said, "I'm your son's new friend. And he said you would give me a ticket."

"Ron asked me, "Do you think I gave him one? Absolutely.""

Jesus calls all who put their trust in Him, friends. And this friend opened the door to eternal life.

The real question is always, "What did Jesus do?"

PRAY: Thank God for His Gift of eternal life.

TUESDAY JANUARY 18

Read: Luke 10: 26-29

The second greatest commandment that summarizes all the Law and the Prophets is, "Love your neighbour as yourself." Admittedly, the 'neighbours' that Jesus is referring to are more than simply those who live close to us in our neighbourhood. But surely, in the sense of Luke's parable, they too are our neighbours. And the Bible says we are called to love them as we love ourselves.

Think about that for a moment. How many of the names do you know of people that live close to you? Can you name 5 households? Maybe? What are some ways that you can express tangible love towards those living in your neighbourhood. How about doing that very thing this week! Love your neighbour with a tangible expression of kindness. And spend time now praying for them, by name if possible, asking God to express His love for them through you.

PRAY: Pray for those in your neighbourhood.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 19

Read: Luke 10: 36-37, John 8: 1-11

David Neff is the chief editor of *Christianity Today* magazine. In 2008 he attended a dialogue between Muslims and Christians held at Yale University. He observed a significant difference between Christian and Muslim understandings of love, mercy, and compassion. He wrote:

"The Christian participants had been taught by Jesus that love should be indiscriminate—just as the mercy shown by the Good Samaritan was conditioned on nothing other than the wounded man's need. That may not be the way we generally behave, but it is the way we have learned to think of ourselves. It is the standard against which we measure ourselves.

"The Muslim participants startled us Christians by talking about the limits their religion brought to their compassion. Orphans, widows, and others in need through no fault of their own deserve compassion, they said. But in Islamic ethics, there was no obligation to help the person whose drunkenness or gambling or otherwise unwise behaviour put them in difficulty.

"Reflecting on what I heard those Muslim leaders say, the tension was not between a generous God and a stingy God, as [Japanese theologian] Kosuke Koyama puts it, but between mercy that was defined and conditioned by justice (the Muslim view) and justice that was conditioned and defined by mercy (the Christian view)."