

A Parable for the Upper Atrium

Direct Aim: To ponder the law to love our neighbors

Materials: This meditation and a candle to light when reading the scripture.



We know that Jesus wants us to remain in relationship with him on the True Vine. He has given us many teachings to help us do that. Sometimes Jesus used little stories or parables to help us understand his teachings.

This parable tells of some people traveling along a road in Israel during the time Jesus lived. People walked or if they were fortunate, they rode a horse or donkey. The land was rocky and hilly and the traveling might be lonely and dangerous.

There are five main people in this story: an injured traveler, a Levite, a Priest, a Samaritan, and an innkeeper. The Levite and the Priest worked in the Temple in

Jerusalem and were Jews like Jesus and the people in the crowd who are listening to the story. The Samaritan was not a Jew and most Jews would have seen him as an enemy or at least as someone unknown and not to be trusted.

Let's listen to Jesus's words about these travelers.

Light the candle. You may want to find the reading in a Bible. Luke 10: 25-37

" Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,'" he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?'

The lawyer answered, ' 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 said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied, A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho,



and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead



Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.



So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.



But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them.



Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.



The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend





Jesus said, 'Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?'

The lawyer said, 'The one who showed him mercy.'

Jesus said, 'Go and do likewise.'

You may want to ponder one or more of these questions:

What do you think the Levite and the Priest were thinking or feeling when they saw the injured man?

What do you think the Samaritan was thinking or feeling when he saw the injured man?

The parable said that the Samaritan was moved by pity. What do you think that means?

Were you surprised by this parable? Do you think the people in the crowd listening to Jesus were surprised by what happened?

Who do you consider your neighbors?

Are there people that you don't consider your neighbors? Why?

Are there any maxims that might go with this parable?

Is there anything you want to ask or say to Jesus before we extinguish the candle?

Extinguish the candle.

Things you might do:

- Write your own story about a good neighbor.
- List maxims that might go with this parable.
- Draw or paint a picture of a good neighbor story.
- Write about or draw a picture of a time you were a good neighbor.