



Ambassadors of a

WORLDWIDE BROTHERHOOD

MEDITATION 2: THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

- **LECTIO / READING: (Luke 10: 25-37)**

Someone reads aloud the Bible text below. You also can read it by turns with two persons.

The Greatest Commandment

25 There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" 27 He said in reply, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself."

28 He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

29 But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" 30 Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. 32 Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.

33 But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight.

34 He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them.

Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him.

35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.'

36 Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbour to the robbers' victim?"

37 He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."



- **MEDITATIO/EXPLANATION**

Jesus told a parable to show how wide God’s love and mercy is towards every fellow human being. Jesus’ story of a brutal highway robbery was all too familiar to his audience. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho went through a narrow winding valley surrounded by steep rocky cliffs. Many wealthy Jews from Jerusalem had winter homes in Jericho. This narrow highway was dangerous and notorious for its robbers who could easily ambush their victim and escape into the hills. No one in his right mind would think of traveling through this dangerous highway alone. It was far safer to travel with others for protection and defense. Jesus makes the supposed villain, the despised Samaritan, the merciful one as an example for the status conscious Jews. The priest probably didn’t want to risk the possibility of ritual impurity. His piety got in the way of charity. The Levite approached close to the victim, but stopped short of actually helping him. Perhaps he feared that bandits were using a decoy to ambush him. The Levite put personal safety ahead of saving his neighbour.

This story tells us first of all that we must be willing to help even if others brought trouble on themselves through their own fault or negligence. Second, our love and concern to help others in need must be practical. Good intentions and showing pity, or empathizing with others, are not enough. And lastly, our love for others must be as wide and as inclusive as God’s love. God excludes no one from his care and concern. God’s love is unconditional. So we must be ready to do good to others for their sake, just as God is good to us.

Jesus not only taught God’s way of love, but he showed how far God was willing to go to share in our suffering and to restore us to wholeness of life and happiness. Jesus overcame sin, suffering, and death through his victory on the cross. His death brought us freedom from slavery to sin and the promise of everlasting life with God. He willingly shared in our suffering to bring us to the source of true healing and freedom from sin and oppression. True compassion not only identifies and empathizes with the one who is in pain, but takes that pain on oneself in order to bring freedom and restoration.

Notes:



- **CONTEMPLATIO/CONTEMPLATION**

Jesus truly identified with our plight, and he took the burden of our sinful condition upon himself. He showed us the depths of God’s love and compassion, by sharing in our suffering and by offering his life as an atoning sacrifice for our sins upon the cross. His suffering is redemptive because it brings us healing and restoration and the fullness of eternal life. God offers us true freedom from every form of oppression, sin, and suffering. And that way is through the cross of Jesus Christ.

Jesus’ parable about a highway robbery gives us a helpful hint. Jesus told this dramatic story in response to a devout Jew who wanted to understand how to apply God’s great commandment of love to his everyday life circumstances. In so many words this religious-minded Jew said: “I want to love God as best as I can and I want to love my neighbour as well. But how do I know that I am fulfilling my duty to love my neighbour as myself?”

Jesus must have smiled when he heard this man challenge him to explain one’s duty towards their neighbour. For the Jewish believer the law of love was plain and simple: ‘Treat your neighbour as you would treat yourself.’ The real issue for this believer was the correct definition of who is ‘my neighbour’. He understood ‘neighbour’ to mean one’s fellow Jew who belonged to the same covenant which God made with the people of Israel. Up to a certain point, Jesus agreed with this sincere expert but, at the same time, he challenged him to see that God’s view of neighbour went far beyond his narrow definition.

Notes:

- **COLLATIO / SHARING**

We sit and share in small groups and come together as a whole group to compare our findings. We enter into a conversation about the Bible passage and the meditation and share the insights we have gained.

- What strikes you?
- What bothers you?
- What does it stir up in you?
- How does the passage challenge you?

You can discuss this by using the following questions:

- What does Jesus' story tell us about true love for one's neighbour?

- The cross shows us God's perfect love and forgiveness. Are you ready to embrace the cross of Christ, to suffer for his sake, and to lay down your life out of love for your neighbour?

- If God is all-loving and compassionate, then why is there so much suffering and evil in this world? Many agnostics refuse to believe in God because of this seemingly imponderable problem. If God is love then evil and suffering must be eliminated in all its forms. What is God's answer to this human dilemma?



- **ORATIO / PRAYING**

Pray together:

Lord Jesus,
May your love always be the foundation of my life.
Free me from every *fear* and selfish concern,
that I may freely give myself in loving service to others,
even to the point of laying down my life for their sake.
Amen.

Individually, rewrite the above prayer according to your personal fear(s), by extending the second line. Share it with your neighbour.

- **CREATIO/CREATIVE PROCESS**

Search on the Youtube Channel for contemporary (pop)songs that express the theme you discussed today. Choose the best example and share the link on our page facebook.com/AmbassadorsWWB. Also explain shortly why you chose this song!

- **OPERATIO/GETTING INTO ACTION**

‘Treat your neighbour as you would treat yourself.’ How would you treat yourself? What do you need most? Or what would make you happy?

Reflect on these questions (what do you need most, or what would make *you* happy), and then give this, or act like this towards *someone else* in your neighbourhood, today, or in the coming week. How do they react?

