

Neighbour | September 16, 2018

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Luke 10. 25-37

The story of the Good Samaritan is arguably Jesus' most famous. What made it so? Why did it stick, continuing to evoke and provoke response today?

A Very Good Story

- It begins with Jesus' being quizzed by a religious expert about how to receive eternal life, a customary back and forth ensues. "Love God and love your neighbour" is the correct response, this is the full life of God.
- The expert presses the question, "and who is my neighbour?" - a wiggly question.
- Jesus responds with a story that the crowds would have expected, but a punchline they would not. The punchline is not that the everyday Israelite walks down the road and rightly "loves God and neighbour" , but a despised Samaritan.

Uncomfortable Punchlines, Un-wiggly Answers & Implications

- Jesus casts the villain as the hero. This good news, the life and love of God is breaking in on and through all people.
- If you want the eternal, full life of God you'll have to get used to the walls coming down and the lines getting scrubbed out.
- Of course, this is a world full of walls and lines. Even the Jesus-follower must recognize the lines they draw learn (Luke 9.51-56).

- If we want the full life of God we need to learn to answer the “who is my neighbour” question differently.

Answering Differently

- The good news is that we can answer differently because of Jesus. In Jesus we see a God who doesn't wriggle, a God who comes alongside indiscriminately. Even to the point of death (Luke 23.34, “Father forgive them...”).
- God, through the life and death of Jesus, “feels compassion” and “shows mercy/kindness”.
- Our culture tells us to be open minded, tolerant of one another. Jesus pushes us further - it's not enough to be open minded, the way of Jesus is to be open hearted. This is a much harder, but more life giving road.
- This begins and is only possible with being open-hearted to God. Letting him come alongside in neighbourly love, we are filled and learn how to do the same for others.

Discussion Questions:

- What's the main point of the story that Jesus tells?
- What kind of walls and lines exist in our world? In our hearts?
- How do we begin to learn how be open-hearted to a culture/people that we might disagree with?
- What does being open-hearted to God look like for you, right now?