

Closing Prayer

In Christ you draw near to us,
God of mercy and compassion,
lifting us out of death,
binding up our wounds,
and nursing our spirits back to health.

Let such a tenderness as yours compel us
to go and do likewise.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Opening prayers · OT 15C²

CPL • LBC Year C Proper 10.odt • 2022-07-05

² *Opening prayers* : scripture-related collects for the years A, B and C from the sacramentary / International Commission on English in the Liturgy. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 1999.

Proper 10

Sunday between 10 and 16 July inclusive · (OT 15)

Principal Service readings

Deuteronomy 30.9-14	The word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart
Psalms 25.1-10	Prayer when in danger
Colossians 1.1-14	Bearing fruit for God
Luke 10.25-37	Inheriting eternal life; the good Samaritan

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
speak to our hearts in the stillness,
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

Gospel Reading

Inheriting eternal life

²⁵A lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ²⁶He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ ²⁷He 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 neighbour as yourself.’ ²⁸And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

The good Samaritan

²⁹But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ ³⁰Jesus 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. ³¹Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³²So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴He 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. ³⁵The 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.” ³⁶Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers? ³⁷He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

Luke 10.25-37 NRSV¹

Comments and Questions

Jesus has just addressed his disciples with a blessing (10.24); now he is confronted straightaway by a lawyer (10.25). Although his disciples maybe eager, he is attracting increasingly hostile adversaries. The lawyer ‘tests’ Jesus by asking about what it takes to inherit eternal life. When Jesus gives an answer, the lawyer seeks to justify himself by asking ‘Who is my neighbour’. This leads Jesus on to tell a parable.

In the other synoptic gospels Jesus is also asked about the ‘greatest commandment’; he responds by citing wholehearted love of God (Deuteronomy 6.5), and in the second place love for your neighbour (Leviticus 19.18). Luke’s version is distinctive in several respects. Jesus combines the two commandments into a single unified command so that ‘love of neighbour’ has equal force to ‘love of God’. Jesus also responds to the questioner: ‘do this and you shall live’. Instead of the debate taking place in Jerusalem, it takes place in hostile Samaria. Finally, to the questioner’s trick question Jesus provides a lovely parable, the moral tale of the Good Samaritan (10.30-35).

The parable is intended to be provocative. It is shocking to recognise that respected people, esteemed for their dedication to living a holy life, a priest and a Levite, don’t even go to look at the injured person out of considerations for personal safety or even concern to preserve ritual purity (a corpse defiled) to justify passing by on the other side. A second shock is to realise this doesn’t show love for one’s neighbour. A third shock is to know that a despised Samaritan, himself at risk, takes the chance to help the victim, and puts himself out for him by taking him to an inn.

How does Jesus use the parable? The point is not who deserves to be cared for, but the demand to become a person who treats everyone encountered with compassion. Rather than clarifying a point of law,

¹ New Revised Standard Version Bible is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Jesus turns it into gospel. You must take the same risk with your life and possessions as the Samaritan did.

Quotations

1

We instinctively tend to limit for whom we exert ourselves. We do it for people like us, and for people whom we like. Jesus will have none of that. By depicting a Samaritan helping a Jew, Jesus could not have found a more forceful way to say that anyone at all in need - regardless of race, politics, class, and religion - is your neighbour. Not everyone is your brother or sister in faith, but everyone is your neighbour, and you must love your neighbour.

Generous justice: how God's grace makes us just / Timothy Keller. 2010

2

[In the story of the Good Samaritan,] everybody knows the robber is bad - but doesn't Jesus also imply an indictment on the priest and Levite? . . . The priest and Levite are over here. They are ‘righteous’ in a superficial way. They don’t rob anybody. They’re not like that lousy criminal who is over here, on the bad end of the line. Do you see it? That’s the line we modern Christians try to live on the right end of it . . . The Samaritan traveller lives on a higher level, altogether. The issue isn’t who is wrong or righteous; that’s obvious. The issue is who is truly good.

A new kind of Christian: a tale of two friends on a spiritual journey / Brian D. McLaren. 2001

Related topics

For further study:

Ecumenism; justice; christology; Trinity