



The Parable of the Good Samaritan

A guided meditation on Luke 10:25-37 written by Rev. Troy Plummer

To paraphrase a man whose faith and commitment to justice landed him in jail, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “when you are behind bars the only bible you have is what you carry in your mind.” We each have a bible we carry with us in our head and heart. Using that bible, share with your partner what is significant or meaningful to you from one of our traditional stories--Luke’s account of Jesus’ further clarification on the great commandment: Love God, Love Neighbor we call the Good Samaritan.

Turn to your partner. You have five minutes. Share what your “bible” brings forward: The story, the action, the sights, sounds, smells. What you are drawn too? What is surprising? If you know, when did it first have meaning for you? What was that meaning? Is that meaning the same today? (This section could be done guided...instead of with a partner, but I find the partner helps with details, feelings.)

Get comfortable in your chair. Feet flat on the floor. Give a big sigh. One more. Notice your breathing. Place a hand over your heart and feel the beating. Breathe in. Breathe out. Pat attention to the breaths, to your heart. Let your hand move away. Breathe in. Hold. Breathe out. (person speaking should count slowly to themselves, Breathe in 2, 3, 4, Hold 2, 3, 4, Breathe out 2, 3, 4).

Imagine the faces of the people in your life. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Imagine the faces of those who bring you warmth. Breathe In. Breathe Out.

Imagine those that are challenging. Breathe In. Breathe Out. Give a big sigh.

Imagine a person or a group of persons that are the most challenging for you. Breathe In. Breathe Out.

The person or person(s) you may try to avoid. Breathe In. Breathe Out.

Look at their face(s). What do you feel? Can you name an emotion?

Name the feeling. Attach it to them. Release. *Breathe In. Breathe Out. Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

For the moment, let them be.

Big sigh. Breathe In. Breathe Out.

Turn your attention to you, your face, your smile, your heart. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

You are the person in our bible memory, that has been set upon by robbers and left in the ditch.

You are alone. You are muddy. You are tired. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

People walk by, but you are too weak to cry out. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

You are vulnerable. Big sigh. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

You hear a voice nearby. You feel yourself gently being pulled from the ditch.

It is hard to focus. You get your sight for a moment to see the face of your helper.

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The face is the same. The same as the very one you avoid. The one that is most challenging to you.

This is your helper. Breathe In. Breathe Out.

Pay attention to your heart as you are pulled from the ditch. What are you feeling? Can you name an emotion? *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

Breathe In. Breathe Out.. Breathe In. Breathe Out.. Sigh.

Now, you are warm again. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

Now, You are clean again. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

Now, You are comfortable again. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

Feel yourself in this space with those around you. *Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

Gently breath. Gently sigh. Gently open your eyes. One more big breath together...*Breathe In. Breathe Out.*

(3-5min) With your partner, share what you experienced. Name the feelings.

This account of the Good Samaritan is lifted and remembered and placed here by the community of Luke as a story of preparation. To prepare the community to "get it". To get what Love God, Love Neighbor requires. To prepare them for the encounters they needed to be ready to receive. The account is here because they knew it was difficult and that we would not "get it" and would need help to receive the Samaritan in our hearts, homes, churches. Can we receive the help without the tapes of undoing the action, the tapes of suspicion about motivation, the tapes that negates the gift of an unexpected neighbor? This continues to be our challenge.

Breathe In. Breathe Out..

Now consider for a moment that you are the Samaritan as well, that you choose to help, that you choose to care, that you do all this knowing that your gift may be rejected by the very person you assist. That you continue to choose to care with no motivation other than it is what being a disciple requires. There are other characters in this story. Other choices can be made. The hearer of Jesus' account is affirmed for choosing the Samaritan as the neighbor and directed to do likewise.

Breathe In. Breathe Out. Listen to the account, now read from Luke. (*Have volunteer read*).

Breathe In. Breathe Out. Make it a part again of the bible you carry everywhere with you. Amen.