

# Caring Enough

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[ 0 : 00 ] St. John's Shaughnessy Church It is my great privilege to have to prepare sermon for Sunday morning occasionally.

And I have had the most delightful time with this passage, which is basically the story of the Good Samaritan. And it feels a little bit like Jesus seeing a whole crowd of people to be fed and saying to his disciples, All we have here is five loaves and three fish.

And what are they among so many? And you might well look at the parable of the Good Samaritan and say, Here's a thousand people in a thousand different situations.

And all we have for them is Luke 10, 25 to 37. What is that among so many? I have come to the conviction that there is more food in this passage than would feed you a hundred times over.

It's an amazing passage of Scripture. And it's the question of the lawyer.

[ 1 : 54 ] I'd like the lawyers in the congregation to stand up. I don't mean that, but it would be interesting. It's like the lawyer who went to Jesus and said, What must I do to have eternal life?

And he was asking the question, Because in the whole of the Jewish nation, the Hebrew nation, That was the formulation of the ultimate question of our human lives.

To find eternal life. Other people have thought other things might be more suitable. In an article in a paper this week, It refers to the meaning of life is a search for truth.

And then there is a search for a massive technological breakthrough That will totally change the circumstances of our individual existence.

There is the possibility of a huge scientific discovery That will make human life far more meaningful. Maybe.

[ 3 : 21 ] There is an article from the Guardian Which suggests that somebody slightly perverse, I would suggest, But nevertheless possible in our wonderful pluralistic world, Who considers that the great objective for humanity Is the methodical destruction of the inner man.

That is, our spirituality is confusing us badly, And if we would get over it, we would be better off. Another suggestion was from the Marquis de Sade.

And he thought, and this seems appropriate to our times, That what man was really looking for Was to be liberated by surrender to erotic fantasies.

Total surrender to erotic fantasies. And we would find the meaning of life. And then there is the dogma of absolute rebellion.

Which many seem to turn to. And that is exemplified by, It's written about by a man named Breton, And he preached that What you need to do Is to go down into the street, Pistol in hand, And shoot at random into the crowd.

[ 4 : 48 ] These are possibilities that are considered. But you see, What Jesus does with the lawyer Is to say, Eternal life.

You want the answer to the big question. He says, Well now, You're a lawyer, Don't you know? And the lawyer replies, Well, It looks like it is.

And you have all said this this morning, I trust. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God With all thy heart, With all thy soul, With all thy mind, And with all thy strength.

And your neighbor as yourself. Well, The lawyer, Jesus said, That seems a satisfactory answer. You don't need another answer. And so, The lawyer, And this is a wonderful little phrase in that story. The lawyer willing to justify himself.

[ 5 : 53 ] Because I guess he didn't feel he measured up to that. Raised the question behind which most of us can hide from time to time. And he said, Well, Just who is my neighbor?

Well, Jesus goes to work then, And tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. In this story, You will know that The The first picture you have in the story Is of a victim.

And the victim Has been assaulted by robbers. He has been robbed of all that he possessed. He has been left naked.

He is seriously wounded. He is totally unable to help himself. And he has the appearance of one who is half dead.

And the other half about to happen. Now that's the picture you have. And you must hold that picture in your mind. The picture of the victim. And then along this same road, From Jerusalem down to Jericho, Comes a priest.

[ 7 : 28 ] And the priest Saw the wounded man. Recognized that he was very busy.

And that if he was to go over and touch that man in any way, He would become defiled. And he would then be forced to take a lot of time Going through a ritual cleansing.

And he was conscious further, That if he delayed there very long, The same thing might happen to him As it happened to the victim.

And so, With great wisdom, And understandable logic, He crossed to the other side, And he went on his way.

Well, then a Levite comes down. And the Levite was the next To come along, And mindful of the sum of the same issues, Of being defiled, Of wasting time, Of not completing his journey, And of subjecting himself to danger, He too, Crossed the road, And passed by on the other side.

[ 8 : 47 ] The third person to come down the road, Is regarded, Is called a Samaritan. Now, The Samaritans were, Of a despised race, Half Jew, And half Gentile, And quite confused about what the truth was.

But this Samaritan, Nevertheless, Came along, And was filled with compassion, Towards the man, And he got himself, Totally involved in the situation.

His donkey, His money, His wine, His oil, Some of his goods, He tore up to make bandages, He took the man, To an inn, Stayed with him overnight, Until the immediate crisis was passed, Then left money, To pay for his continued care, And promised to pay any further charges, Which might be incurred.

And having told that story, Jesus then asked the lawyer, To make a decision. And the lawyer, Was said, Who was neighbor, To this man, Who fell among robbers?

Now, The lawyer, Of course, Said, The man who, Who had compassion on him. Well now, I want you, To go into the realm, Of imagination, About this story.

[ 10 : 30 ] Because, What I'd like you to imagine, Is, That the priest, Having, Completed his journey, And arrived in Jericho, Met, The Levite, At a pub, That evening, And they had, A discussion, And, The priest, Would say, There's a problem, In our society, People are getting, Beaten up, And left to die, On the roads.

We've got to get, A company together, That's going to look after, This kind of situation, And we've got to see, That our world is, And our roads, Highways, Are better policed, So that this doesn't, Happen any longer.

And you might call him, A liberal. The Levite, On the other hand, Said, This man has, Obviously, Consistently, Broken the laws, Of God, He has, Totally deserved, What has happened, To him, And there is nothing, That can be done, For him, You might call him, A conservator.

Well, This, This discussion, Went on, And, At the, What's happening, In our, Congregations, As a result, Of what's happening, In our diocese, Is that, We are being, Divided, One from another, And, It looks, Very much like, The debate, At the pub, In which, The priest, And the Levite, Took part, And both, Argued, One against the other, And, It's, Our congregations, Are getting broken up, Into, That kind of, Dissension between us, And I trust, That we might, Overcome that, One group is saying, You are, You are, Sexually disoriented,

And you need, Healing, The other group is saying, You are, Sexually, Phobic, And, You need, Healing, And, It's my purpose, To see that you are healed, By obeying the law, Or, It is my purpose, To change the conventions, Of our society, So that you may be, Healed of your, Errant ways, So, We have this debate, Going on, The, Homophobic, Saying, The homosexuals, Are wrong, And, Have got their, Sexuality, Confused, And, The homosexuals, Saying, The rest of you are wrong, Because, You are homophobic, Well, At that point, I will go no further, Except to go back, To the passage, And look at it again, It says,

[ 13 : 53 ] To all people, Everywhere, To every, Individual, Among us, You will find, The meaning of your life, When you come to love, The Lord your God, With all your heart, Including, Your soul, Your strength, And your mind, You will then see, That your neighbor, As an object, Of, God's love, And,

Your neighbor, May come to see you, As, An agent, Of, God's love, You will come, To love God, In this way, When you discover, That God, Is love, And that he has, Found you, Beaten, Robbed, Naked, Dying, Unable to help,

Yourself, Beside the road, And he has, Undertaken, To see that you are, Healed, At his expense, Quite strange, That, The present, Conflict, Between, Conservatives, And liberals, And, Is, They, They, Neither, Want to be, Contaminated, By contact, With the other, And both, Are very much, In need, Of a neighbor, Who will be, The agent, Of God's, Healing, Salvation, Well, How can they be, An neighbor, To one another, By going back, To the lawyer's question, What shall I do, To inherit eternal life?

We must go back, To discover, That there is only, One thing in life, That has, Supreme importance, And that is, That the God, And father, Of our Lord, Jesus Christ, Is worthy, Of being loved, With all your heart, And all your soul, And all your strength, And all your mind, And this, You see, Is to be, The primary, Reality, In your life, Is that love, Total love, For the God, Who totally, Loves you, But you see, There is a catch to it, Which is very interesting, To my mind, And that is, That the second half, Of the law, Is, Thou shalt love, Thy neighbor, As thyself, And the big difficulty, With humanity, Is, We think,

We can do that, On the basis, Of our own strength, But we can't, Think how, Diligent you are, How careful you are, How beautiful you are, In loving yourself, Are you going to put that, On a neighbor? Not bloody likely, But that's what, We're told to do, To be able, To do that, You see, Has a prerequisite, And the prerequisite, To it, Is, That you come, To love the Lord, Your God, With all your heart, With all your soul, With all your mind, And with all your strength, Then it is, Intensely logical, And totally understandable, That what the reason, For your life is, To be enabled, To love, Your neighbor, Your neighbor, Is yourself, You see, The church, Desperately needs, To discover, That whatever it is, That motivated, The Samaritan, He was able, To give his time, Take the trouble, Be deeply motivated, By compassion, To give generously, To care deeply,

[ 18 : 15 ] To sacrifice, To sacrifice himself, To be prepared, To become involved, In long time care, Thus becoming, The means, Of God's healing, Salvation, Poured into, His own life, And the life, Of his neighbor, That's, What needs to happen, That's what the church, Needs, You know, It doesn't need, To maintain, The debate, Between the priest, And the Levite, Neither of whom, Did anything, It needs, To get back, To the reality, Of, This business, Of, A long term, Love, For, The next person, Your neighbor, Now, If you look at this, In a slightly, Different way, You will see, That what God's purpose is, In Jesus Christ, Is to come to you, Beaten,

Robbed, Naked, Unable to help yourself, Left to die, And he offers you, Eternal life, Those are, The circumstances, Of your life, And the offer, That is made to you, In the gospel, And so you see, What, What, What we need to, Take very seriously, And recognize, Is that the Samaritan, Was a totally despised, Man, Who did this, And in our society, The Lord Jesus, Is a totally despised man, Who we, In our arrogance, And self-sufficiency, Don't consider, It, A worthy, That we should, Submit, To the healing, That he, In his compassion, And love, Wants to pour, Into our lives, I am not, That badly off, That I need, Him, Indeed, You do, Need him, We all, Desperately, Need him, We need him, Because of the perversity, Of our sexuality, We need him, Because of our, Many phobias, Or fears, We need, Him, Because of, The meaninglessness, Of our lives, We need him, Because of, The near approach, Of death, For all these reasons, And many more, We need him, The danger is, That we are too proud, To allow him, To bring to us, The salvation, That we need, And to learn, From that, How we might become, The agents of God, In bringing this, Healing,

The word salvation, Means healing, In bringing this healing, To our neighbor, Well, That's, That's, It's, It's a, It's a strange question, Could I, As a proud person, Be in the situation, Where I would accept, The help of someone, Who is generally, Despised, By the whole community, In which I live, Well, This, I think, Is a very, Central issue, For our time, The life of the church, Is not to be, The priest, And the Levite, Arguing with each other, The life of the church, Is in the freedom, Of the spirit, Seeing, The good Samaritan, Go to the person, In profound distress, And bring to him, The faith, And the care, And the healing, And the love,

And the compassion, That he basically needs, Because, He has trouble, With his sexuality, And needs to be healed, He has trouble, With his phobias, And they need to be erased, Well, There's so much more, I want to tell you about this, But I'm going to stop, And I want, Just to remind you though, That, If you look at the structure, Of the communion service, In which you are taking part,

This morning, You come face to face, With this issue, When, Felix, Will address you, And say, To you, If you do truly, And earnestly, Repent you, Of your sins, That is a matter, [ 23 : 22 ] Of recognizing your needs, If you do truly, And earnestly, Repent you, Of your sins, And are, In love, And charity, With you, Draw near, With faith, And to do the work, To do, And to pray, That our whole church, May come to a new understanding, Of this amazing grace, Which lies hidden for us, In the parable, Of the good Samaritan, Amen.

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