

Sun., May 1 Holy Communion

Memory Verse: Luke 10:27 “He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

Message: Luke 4 Rejected 2: “Occupied by Serving” -Lijuan You, George Mix, Duane Dittberner
Scripture: Luke 10:25-42

Blurb: Serving others in love is commanded by God, but sometimes we can do it just too well! We continue in our Rejected Series with Luke 10:25-42. Our guest panel members from the congregation are Duane Dittberner, George Mix and Lijuan You. They will be helping us wrestle with how to serve...and how NOT to serve!

[Recorded Worship Beginning]

WELCOME -Pastor David

Gather bread and juice to use later in the service.

MEMORY VERSE -Pastor David

“He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” -Luke 10:27

WORSHIP MUSIC SET -Prerecording

Let Your Kingdom Come

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

[Live Worship Beginning]

GATHERING SONG: *Let Your Kingdom Come* -Sanctify

WELCOME -Pastor David

MEMORY VERSE -Pastor David

“He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” -Luke 10:27

WORSHIP MUSIC SET -Sanctify

In Tenderness

More Like Jesus

Sitting at the Feet of Jesus

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

[Both Recorded & Live Worship]

SERVE MOMENT: National Day of Prayer -Pastor Andrew

GENERATIONAL BRIDGE -Pastor Andrew

MESSAGE: Luke 4 Rejected (Luke 10-12) 2: “Occupied by Serving”

PP#1: Rejected 2: “Occupied by Serving”

“One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part. It won’t be taken away from her.”
-Luke 11:42

“Rejected: Occupied by Serving.” Luke 11:42 “One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part. It won’t be taken away from her.”

Turn to Luke chapter 10. Jesus is now traveling around Judea, the part of Israel in the south, around Jerusalem. From here forward Jesus finds Himself more and more confronted by the Jewish leaders, and He faces more and more opposition.

The second half of Luke 10 has three main sections. The first is Jesus teaching the Greatest Commandments. Then is His famous Parable of the good Samaritan. Then is the story of Mary and Martha serving in the home. Luke is the only Gospel that tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan and the story of Mary and Martha. A central theme through these three passages is the calling of love to go and serve.

PP#2: *Image of a panel of famous people (different from last week)*

So, to help us think about what it means to go and serve from our primary love, we again call up a panel of folks from this church to share with us. I’m going to have them come on up, please. Let’s give them a welcome!

This week our panel members are Duane Dittberner, George Mix and Lijuan You. Welcome! And thank you for your willingness to share, and bravery for doing it up here in front! Know that you are among friends, and you are a blessing to us.

So, first of all, please tell us a brief introduction and then a your favorite May activity. We’ll go alphabetically. Duane, you go first.

Duane: Introduces self and shares a favorite activity do to in May.

George Mix: Introduces self and shares a favorite activity do to in May.

Lijuan You: Introduces self and shares a favorite activity do to in May.

PP#3: Luke 10:25-29 (CEB)

25 A legal expert stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to gain eternal life?”

26 Jesus replied, “What is written in the Law? How do you interpret it?”

27 He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

28 Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.”

So, turn to Luke 10:25. The 72 have just returned, and now Jesus and His disciples are traveling around. At one location, a Jewish leader, an expert in the Jewish Bible, publically tests Jesus, trying to find fault with Him. He asks a very common question that Jewish experts often debated: of all the laws, which are most important? Rabbis, when asked questions like this, would often put the question back on the one asking, making them answer first. The scribe would have been ready for this. The two verses the scribe identifies—Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18—were commonly named as the summary passages of the Old Testament. Saying these verses was not surprising. And Jesus affirms that this answer is true. It is the way to life eternal.

So, let's read the passage. Verse 25, "A legal expert stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to gain eternal life?' 26 Jesus replied, 'What is written in the Law? How do you interpret it?' 27 He responded, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.' 28 Jesus said to him, 'You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.'"

So, panel members, what do you think here is important for us today?

George: I hear the 'written law', as Jesus and the scribe refer it, as being somewhat vague even while being specific: vague in the sense that we love to best of our abilities, not perhaps as how others love, but how we feel love, which can only be judged by God. So we must always continue to reflect on what God is telling us, can we love more? Are we truly loving enough? We must each compare ourselves to God's calling in our lives to love, not compare ourselves to others.

Lijuan: When I read "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind," I was thinking, what does that mean? Until I experienced this. When I was pregnant with Rafael, after an ultrasound, I was informed that my baby might have a 10% possibility of having a disability, like Downs Syndrome, because the ventricles in his brain were larger than normal size. My husband, Yizong, and I were worried a lot because in China there is no program or service for those with disabilities. If a family has a kid with a disability, one of the parents has to stay home with the kid. As a mom, I was so sad. Tears came out when I was cooking, in the classroom, on the bus, anywhere. That was the time that I realized that Jesus is my only hope. So all day long, I was praying and praying with all my heart, all my strength, and all my mind. I remember that I set an alarm at 5:00 am to pray because I was going to school during the day. However, I actually didn't need the alarm because as long as I was awake it was the only thing I focused on. The whole church prayed for us. One friend shared our prayer request with her son-in-law. And then she told us that her son-in-law said if the baby is normal, we should keep him; if not, he was willing to adopt him. We were so touched by that because he didn't know us but he was willing to love our kid as his own. A miracle happened! In two weeks, my baby's ventricles turned to normal size. He was given a name, Rafael, by our pastor. She said Rafale means "God heals." Praise the Lord! He taught us a great lesson through this difficult time in our life. I know that I sought God with all my heart. I will definitely need to work on loving God with all my heart. Just like the brother who is willing to adopt Rafael, to love neighbors as himself.

Wow, what a powerful story! Thank you Jesus for Rafael's healing, and what a joy for us to have him here with us! I love how you also identified that the brother-in-law of a friend, who was willing to adopt Rafael, showed you how to love your neighbor. We need to love like this!

PP#4: Luke 10:29-35

“29 But the legal expert wanted to prove that he was right, so he said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’

“30 Jesus replied, ‘A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. 31 Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. 32 Likewise, a Levite came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way.

Well, as we keep going, we see that although Jesus and the legal expert agreed about the most important laws, the legal expert pushed back about application. *Whom* should we love as our neighbor? What about the Romans, the Samaritans, the non-Jews?

To answer the man's question, Jesus tells a story. We now call this the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Jesus often used parables to teach lessons about God's Kingdom. You understand the point of the parable when the listener identifies himself/herself as some character in the story. In this case, Jesus wants the Jewish leader—and all His listeners!—to identify himself as one of the people who did not help the victim.

Let's read the story. Verse 29, “But the legal expert wanted to prove that he was right, so he said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’

“30 Jesus replied, ‘A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. 31 Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. 32 Likewise, a Levite came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way.

PP#5: Luke 10:29-35

33 A Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. 34 The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 The next day, he took two full days' worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, ‘Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.’”

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Great parable, one of Jesus' best known. Jesus cast the enemy in the role of hero. What do you do with this, Duane?

Duane: I think the legal expert made a mistake in asking Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” If instead he would have asked “Who is *not* my neighbor?” The answer today might be certainly Vladimir Putin is not my neighbor, Derrick Chauvin is not my neighbor, Atheists and Muslims can’t be my neighbors. While we may totally disapprove of the beliefs and policies these and others like them, Jesus would say they are all our neighbors, and we should treat them and look at them civilly and courteously. I am reminded of the verse, “Judge not and be not judged.”

Wow, way to bring it home! We need to apply it in our own context! George, how about you?

George: The Levite was a temple worker, his profession was serving God at the temple, as was the priest. They knew the laws of God that called them to always help others. Yet they chose what was easier, turning a blind eye, so they could just keep on doing what they were planning to do. The Samaritan, however, helps the man not because he wanted to, but because in his heart he knew it was the right thing to do. Everyone is your neighbor - apply it even to those you don’t like!

Yes! The parable is supposed to convict us. How often do we come up with excuses in order to not have to stop and help, right? We tend to choose what is easier. But that’s not love!

PP#6: Luke 10:36-37

36 What do you think? Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?”

37 Then the legal expert said, “The one who demonstrated mercy toward him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Okay, in verse 36, we see that Jesus turns the question around. The scribe had asked, “Who is my neighbor,” but Jesus now asks, “Who acted like a neighbor?” Jesus turns the direction from us looking out at others and judging them, to looking at ourselves and judging how well we act. Let’s read, starting with verse 36, ““What do you think? [Jesus asked.] Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?” 37 Then the legal expert said, ‘The one who demonstrated mercy toward him.’ Jesus told him, ‘Go and do likewise.’”

So, panel, what does loving like a neighbor look like? Let’s start with you, Lijuan.

Lijuan: I realize Jesus applies this in two different ways in this chapter. One is “Love your neighbor as yourself,” the other one is: “Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?” So neighbors could be someone who needs help or who offers help. I am thinking that is why God gives us different gifts and wants us to work together as a whole body.

Yes! Loving your neighbor can mean giving help, and it can also mean receiving help! God gives us different gifts for a purpose! How about you, Duane?

Duane: The expert got this right when he said, “the one who demonstrated mercy”. We are to do likewise. But, in practice this is easier said than done. I am reminded of the recent bombing of the Al Feroque (spelling?) Islamic Center in Minneapolis. The two men who planned and carried out this act were eventually caught and sent to trial just

this month. The defense lawyer for the men argued for leniency in sentencing because the men had cooperated with authorities. But, the judge was not moved until the leaders of the mosque proclaimed they had forgiven these men as is their belief to do so. The men were facing 28 years in prison, but the judge reduced the sentence to 10 years. Could I forgive in a situation like this, or could you?

Wow, that's real! Here we see a non-Christian, just like in Jesus' story, loving in a very difficult way. Can we love like this? We need to, Jesus says! This is real, isn't it?

PP#7: Luke 10:38-42

38 While Jesus and his disciples were traveling, Jesus entered a village where a woman named Martha welcomed Him as a guest. 39 She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His message. 40 By contrast, Martha was preoccupied with getting everything ready for their meal. So Martha came to him and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to prepare the table all by myself? Tell her to help me."

41 The Lord answered, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things. 42 One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part. It won't be taken away from her."

Okay, the third story is now in the home of Mary and Martha. They lived with their brother, Lazarus, who Jesus later would raise from the dead. They seem to be really good friends with Jesus, and He stays with them as His home base while in Judea. Bethany, their village, is just 2 miles from Jerusalem. Luke 10:38-42, "While Jesus and his disciples were traveling, Jesus entered a village where a woman named Martha welcomed Him as a guest. 39 She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to His message. 40 By contrast, Martha was preoccupied with getting everything ready for their meal. So Martha came to him and said, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to prepare the table all by myself? Tell her to help me.'

"41 The Lord answered, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things. 42 One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part. It won't be taken away from her.'"

So, Jesus doesn't say serving and working is bad. I think the problem here was that Martha was "preoccupied" by it and was missing out on enjoying the moment at hand. George, what do you think?

George: Maybe Martha was jealous? Maybe Martha was comparing herself too much to Mary. Whatever it was, Martha was too worried about all the serving and in so doing was missing Jesus. Jesus knew that Mary was focusing on, giving all of her attention to Jesus, He knew her priorities were ordered to what was most important.

Yes, priorities is the key here, I think. Good insight for us all! Lijuan, give us a woman's perspective!

Lijuan: Every time I read this part, I always feel it's not fair! Martha was doing all the work! Yet, we can't use being busy as an excuse to not spend time with Jesus, even if it is good work. Both work and spending time with Jesus can be different ways to show love.

Excellent! We need to be doing both. How about you, Duane?

Duane: I think Martha was maybe working hard on the household chores to make a good impression on Jesus and perhaps getting a reward in the form of a compliment for her efforts. She may have thought she could earn Gods love and salvation. But in Ephesians, Chapter 2 verses 8-10, we are told the opposite. “For it is by grace we are saved through faith, and that of ourselves. It is a gift of God, not of works.” That is not to say, good works are not important. Verse 10 in fact tells us we are created to do the good works God lays out for us. It is all about life balance. Mary’s faith will most certainly also will lead her to good works.

The best thing is focusing on Jesus and spending quality time with Him. Jesus is using this actual event to teach a lesson on spiritual priorities. Life comes from being with Jesus. But being with Jesus, then, in turn, compels us to go and serve. Serving and working doesn’t earn our relationship with Jesus, or our salvation but it is a result from our relationship with Jesus. We must serve, but be careful not to be so busy serving that we miss Jesus!

Thank you, panel, for your insights and for sharing with us. I’m going to ask you to continue to show us how to love Jesus and to serve, by also helping serve Holy Communion today. So, if you don’t mind, just stay here as we now get ready to grow in our love of God, and we spend some time sitting with Jesus here, before we are sent to go serve because of Him.

[Transition to Holy Communion. Panel stays on the stools until they go serve.]

HOLY COMMUNION -Pastor David

Prayers of Confession
 Words of Assurance
 Introduction
 Great Thanksgiving
 Words of Institution
 Prayer to the Holy Spirit
 Receiving of the Elements - two receiving lines

[Live Worship Only] CLOSING SONG: *It Is Finished* -Sanctify

OFFERING & ANNOUNCEMENTS -Pastor David

Wednesday Meal: Men
 Next Sunday: Panel of Marilee, Reese & Sherry R.
 Read ahead: Luke 11:1-28

MEMORY VERSE -Pastor David

“He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” -Luke 10:27

BENEDICTION -Pastor David

POSTLUDE -Sanctify (live)