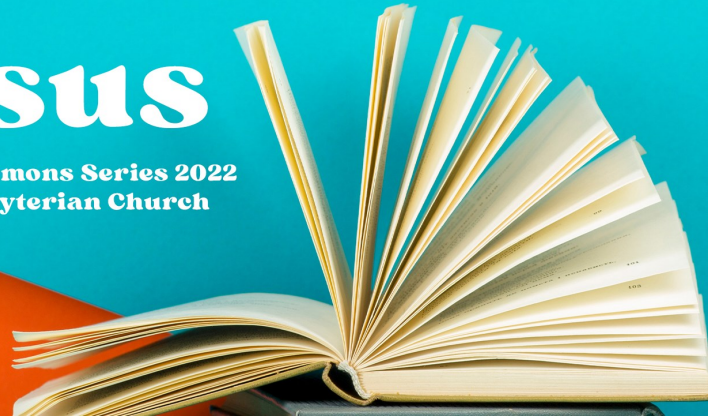


Stories Jesus Told

Spring Sermons Series 2022
First Presbyterian Church



Sermon-based Guide for Reflection and Discussion

Week of May 8

Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Sermon Title: The Good Samaritan

Love, we hear, is patient and kind (1 Corinthians 13:4). Then we mistakenly try to *be* loving by *acting* patiently and kindly and quickly fail. We should always do the best we can in action, of course; but little progress is to be made in that arena until we advance in love itself — the genuine inner readiness and longing to secure the good of others. Until we make significant progress there, our patience and kindness will be shallow and short-lived at best.

It is love itself — not loving behavior, or even the wish or intent to love — that has the power to “always protect, always trust, always hope, put up with anything, and never quit” (1 Cor 13:7-8, par). Merely trying to act lovingly will lead to despair and to the defeat of love. It will make us angry and hopeless.

But taking love itself — God’s kind of love — into the depths of our being through spiritual formation will, by contrast, enable us to act lovingly to an extent that will be surprising even to ourselves, at first. And this love will then become a constant source of joy and refreshment to ourselves and others.

- Dallas Willard, Renovation of the Heart

Questions:

1. What are all the different ways people define “neighbor”? What definition of “neighbor” does this scripture point to?
2. List all the people in your life who might need help with something. Brainstorm ways you could show compassion or love to those people.
3. Think of someone who is different from you or someone you have trouble getting along with. Spend some time in prayer with one another asking God to help you show compassion to these people.