

February 20, 2022

Epiphany 7

PEACE

or

“Jesus Continued”

Rev. Emma Chattin, Preaching

First Reading ~ *Luke 6:27-38, The Message Translation*

Jesus continued, “To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, take it. If someone grabs your shirt, offer your coat as a present. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice being a servant. No more tit-for-tat. Live generously.

Here is a simple guiding principal for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then take the initiative and do it for others! If you only love the lovable, and those who love you, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that’s truly giving? Pawnbrokers do that.

I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You’ll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God created identity the way our God lives toward us, generously and graciously-- even when we’re at our worst! God is kind-- you be kind.”

Don’t pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults— unless, of course, you want the exact same treatment. Don’t condemn those who are down; that hardness can come back on you. Be easy on people; you’ll find your life a lot easier. Give away your life; you’ll find life given back to you, but not merely given back— given back with blessing and more! Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity.”

Second Reading ~ *from Brené Brown in “The Gifts of Imperfection”*

I now see how owning our story and loving ourselves through that process is the bravest thing that we will ever do. I now see that cultivating a Wholehearted life is not like trying to reach a destination. It’s like walking toward a star in the sky. We never really arrive, but we certainly know that we’re heading in the right direction.