

RESET!

Spirit·Mind·Body



A Compassionate Life

By Joe Kirkenir, Director of Development and Communications

Matthew 25: 34-40 NRSV

³⁴ Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family,^[9] you did it to me.'

It's **really** easy to be nice to people we like or think are important. Who hasn't gone the extra mile for their boss, significant other, cute puppy, best friend, or family member? It's not as easy to be nice to people we don't like or who we're conditioned not to think are important. Who hasn't told themselves that it's not their problem to help the person experiencing homelessness, convicted criminal, suffering farmed animal, office bully, rude customer, or estranged family member?

This verse tells us that God is in everyone, no matter who they are or where they come from, so we need to be there for all members of her family. This verse rings true for me because I find that praying for people I, quite frankly, don't like is one of the most rewarding actions I can take. I'm still working towards constantly being there for "the least of these," but I think it's safe to say I'm not alone in this struggle. I simply need to keep reminding myself we're all equal in God's eyes and that our worldly concepts of value make no difference to her.

Dear RESETers, I hope that you will join me in practicing love and not judgement, not only these next few weeks, but for as long as God permits us to live in this world. Who are some people in your life you can be compassionate towards who you've been ignoring? Maybe it's as simple as picking up the phone and calling that estranged family member or striking up a conversation with the man who has been sleeping on the park bench you pass on the way to work. Let's all take one small unified step to living a more compassionate life!