



## Grain

“Justice goes across racial and economic barriers – like the good Samaritan.” –John Perkins

## Field

<sup>25</sup>Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup>He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” <sup>27</sup>He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>28</sup>And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.” <sup>29</sup>But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” <sup>30</sup>Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers... Luke 10:25-30.

## Thoughts by Rev. James Lynch, Lakeside Lutheran Church, Kenosha, WI

The lawyer, one versed in the Law that God had given as a gift to Israel, and the traditions and writings that had grown up around it, asked Jesus: Who is my neighbor? Jesus replied, more or less: Think about it, friend. Who ISN'T your neighbor?

Neighbors, Jesus points out, are people in need, whatever those needs may look like. The obvious ones: they are bleeding in a ditch by the side of the road. Those that may be a little less apparent to the naked eye but no less real. You don't let skin color, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, education status, housing status, anything at all get in the way of seeing neighbors and being neighbors.

Everyone needs help in some way, which makes everyone our neighbor. That scares us. We may not want to be neighborly to just anyone. We may want to pick and choose. We may want to decide on our own who needs our help and – more to the point – who is worthy of our help. We may want to make sure that if we put ourselves out there, we will get the desired result.

Who is your neighbor? People you agree with and don't. The guy across the street with the Let's Go Brandon flag snapping in the wind? Really? People who look like you and don't. The woman at the food pantry with 4 kids in the beater car who can't speak but a few words of English? Seriously? The girl who is being harassed, the man who can't find a job to support his family no matter how hard he tries, the teen who is questioning their gender identity. The list goes on.

We, though, are on the list. We all need help in some way. Just as Jesus is calling us to be neighborly, to be caring, to be aware of the needs of others – and act on them – so too he is calling others to be neighborly, to be caring, to be aware of our needs – and act on them.

Jesus didn't see helping others as anything out of the ordinary. Quite the contrary. To him, it was just – say it with me – the neighborly thing to do. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Jim