

West Point Grey United Church Sunday Oct 27 1996

Lessons: Deut 34:1-12
 Psalm 90 - NO 805
 Matt 22:34-46

This morning we will reflect on Commandments one and two as recorded in the Gospel lesson.

The so-called Great Commandment. -

Hear O Israel, The Lord is our God (the Lord alone)
 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might."

is found in the Book of Deuteronomy. That solemn story retelling of the forming of the Covenant between God and Israel. ^{or Jordan} The book closes with that warning to Moses - that ~~people~~ ^{people} of Israel like no other, who would not enter the promised land but glimpse it from afar - and then die to be buried in a forgotten grave

The commandment is prominently featured in the Book of Deuteronomy

The 2nd commandment - You shall love your neighbor as yourself is found in the book of Leviticus. - Buried in what is called the Holiness Code chapters 17 to 26. - It's not quite a throw away line. It is kind of in the spirit of the rest of the book. ^{repeated} ^{Banned}

Rules - Sacrificial system - includes butchering - ^{renew}

use domesticated animals or priests -

Same line - not to put down handicapped people

Concern around sacrificing & butchering - the notion that the blood represents the life of the animal - and that belongs to God - never to eaten & always sprinkled on the altar.

Given punishment for breaking strict animal code. At the same time admonition to be generous as you harvest grain + grapes - ^{don't take the best or} leave some for the poor

don't
 not to die - not to steal not to deal falsely
 don't take interest before a loan is given
 in trouble - treat aliens generously. Not to don't
 take vengeance or bear a grudge - but love your
 neighbor as your self.

admonition - in character with the general
 tone of the book - Earth, produce ^{living} life - belongs
 to God - no ultimate ownership - ~~to God~~
 only stewardship. Every 7 years
 land is to be left fallow. Every 7th year
 year of jubilee - resort to original owner.
 we debtors for men

However Commandment 2 is not pulled
 out & featured, and Commandments 1+2 do not appear
 together in any Hebrew Scriptures.

Pulling the ~~Two~~ must have been done later!
 Two Together.

Interesting that a reading of ^{the} story
 of the inquiry as to the greatest Commandment in
 the gospel written Matt Mark & Luke - makes
 it clear that at the time of writing ~~that~~ it
 could not be claimed that Jesus presented the
 emphasis or read the first commandments -

Matthew's story could be interpreted that
 way, as Mark's rendering - Scribe inquires, and
 when Jesus answers with the 2 Commandments together
 the Scribe says "You are right - they go together -
 to love your neighbor as yourself - is much more
 important than all whole burnt offerings & sacrifices
 - Luke - however - how do I obtain eternal
 life - what is in the law LAWYER - 2 together.
 - told to do it - counters with the self justifying
 "who is my neighbor -"

The purpose of linking these two commandments was
 to ^{cancel at the time of Jesus' mission} don't need to know who finds
 pulled this sleeper out of Leviticus and put
 it with the Great Commandment.

But I think it will do ~~us~~ good to reflect on what is said to us by ^{the} putting them together.

Is there a word here for two groups of people?

I Quest for God: concern for spiritual development.

Dorothea and heard an address given by The Bishop of New Westminster - Thursday evening at a gathering of the Auxiliary of Vancouver School of Theology. He quoted some analysts who claimed that the category of books publishing that earned the largest number of sales - had to do with books about Spiritual formation.
- Current wide interest search for a growing relationship with God.

People for whom

II What God bit a Problem.

Worship flat.

God talk doesn't seem to do any work

" " " be about anything

Prayer isn't going anywhere.

Is God real

" God experience real

can anything make it Real

Is there a word to these :-

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind - second is like it
Love your neighbor as yourself.

What's that - Loving God with all your heart and soul & mind?

- It's like Loving your neighbor as yourself.

If that coming to gether —

started some reflections in your own mind about
it's too bad if my discourse interrupts it.
Continue your conversation with the holy
spirit.

Vast overwhelming mystery of God.
acknowledgment of God
Relationship to God —

Like relationship with your neighbor.

Knowledge of God — God isn't object of our knowledge
much more than know ourselves known.

Faith in God — God the object of our faith.
much more like — know yourself believed in.

Getting that way with God.

LIKE getting that way with your neighbor
moment of breakthrough — known by another.
" " " — believed in by another.

Bigger than — LIKE — relationship with God.
— Mediates the relationship with God.

Henri NOUWEN — last Sunday I picked up
one of Henri NOUWEN's books our librarians
put on display. — journal of his stay in
Latin America during the dreadful 80's
— impossible not to get depressed

" When I have no eyes for the small signs of
God's presence in the smile of a baby, the
carefree play of children, the words of encouragement
and gestures of love of friends — I will always
remain tempted to despair "

OVERWHELMED — loving God

LIKE — OVERWHELMED by the smile of a baby

Words about God - TRANSCENDENCE

appropriate — what brings more fruitful
havoc upon the earth but the zeal
of people who move in the name of
God — but have made God over into their
own image.
unsearchable?
unbrowsable?

Discourse between Bouhoeffe & Baal.

Others dominated my era

Proposed that we let the notions of Transcendence
get its meaning from the experience of recognizing
the transcendence of the other — THOU.

The other person
whom we are recognizing — not as an object
subject.

Being — Centre unviolable.

I confront a THOU — especially difficult for me
Treat life that way
Treat creation that way
as Another THOU — sense Transcendence of God.

Last of my Thoughts

Forgiveness: — ~~truth of you are forgiven~~
~~leave me that~~

SHRUG —

Instead of Forgive your neighbor as you forgive yourself

Forgive yourself — as you forgive your neighbor.

What was it like — whenever you forgive
your neighbor

Think of a time when you were truly wronged
and you actually did forgive & were
reconciled with the wrong doer —

What was it like — what kind of an underdog was it?

There
2nd Counselor
approved

Getting forgiven is an undergoing like that.

is chap 9
22
verse

The writer of Hebrews ~~had~~ been running many lines of scripture through his mind until he becomes overwhelmed with the observation,

"Indeed, under the Law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

An observation like that - touches on what is undergone when forgiveness takes place.

Now

If I indeed interrupted your conversation with the Holy Spirit. Go back to it

What word to our God seeking us to be heard from the Understanding

that Love of God -
+ Love of your neighbor
one like each other.

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