

8.30am BCP Trinity 13. Gal. 3.16, Luke 10.23

The Samaritan probably had places to be, people to see, important business to attend to, family to care for.

If you paid for a night in a hotel in this parish and something to eat, and a few bits from a pharmacy you wouldn't get much change from £150 or £200 I suspect.

The poor traveller was probably one of many battered, beggars on the roadside. He probably looked drunk, or dodgy, or like a thief laying a trap for kind idiots. How many unfortunate souls are there on the streets of our city that we daren't approach for fear of spending our time, our money, our health, our cleanliness, our safety?

The parable of the Good Samaritan is such a classic that its impact can easily become dulled by familiarity.

You and I, as baptised followers of Jesus Christ, cannot allow this uncomfortable story to become comfortable. If you're anything like me, as soon as I hear a difficult or costly teaching of Jesus or as soon as my conscience pricks I start stacking up, in my head, all the reasons why I'm alright, why more can't be expected of me, or its not practical or sensible to get involved.

Unfortunately for me, Jesus does not say that. He says, 'go and do thou likewise'.

Jesus does not transfer our responsibility for one another to official agencies.

Jesus does not put in place limits of class, gender, race, nation or anything else – all human beings, every single soul, is our neighbour.

Jesus does not establish a reasonable, bounded approach to our care for each other.

He says, 'go and do thou likewise'.

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.'

These teachings are not easy. Practically and faithfully applying them in our lives is even more difficult. But that is precisely what we are called to do. Not meanly, or apologetically, or cynically, but bravely and prayerfully and hopefully. Let us pray to the Lord our God who is Love himself, daily, to give us a share of His wisdom and love and perseverance in the Way.