

The background of the slide is a light gray gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across it. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The text is centered on the slide.

JUSTICE IN GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

SHEILA CURRAN RSM

OUTLINE OF THE MORNING

- ❖ 10-11 AM: PARABLES: JUSTICE IN THE VINEYARD AND TALENTS.
- ❖ COFFEE BREAK: 11- 11:20AM
- ❖ 11:20-12:15PM MATTHEW 25: THE FINAL JUDGEMENT
- ❖ 12:15-1:45PM: CANAANITE WOMAN

IMITATE GOD IN ALL WE SAY AND DO

- ❖ IN MATT 5:20 JESUS TELLS US THAT OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST SURPASS THAT OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES.
- ❖ HE ALSO INSISTS, WE MUST IMITATE GOD AS THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT DEMANDS (MATT 5:48).
- ❖ IN TODAY'S WORLD WE ARE BEING CALLED TO SEE THE NEEDS OF THE CROWDS.
- ❖ WE ARE CHALLENGED TO HEAR AND LISTEN TO ALL, WITH EARS AND HEARTS FILLED WITH COMPASSION AND LOVE WHICH ARE THE INGREDIENTS OF UNDERSTANDING.
- ❖ EXAMPLES OF JUSTICE IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL



JUSTICE IN THE VINEYARD: MATT: 20:1-16

- ❖ THOSE WHO WERE HIRED FIRST ARE PAID LAST!
- ❖ V. 12 WORKERS VOICE WHAT IS PUZZLING.
- ❖ DOES NOT JUSTICE DEMAND THAT THOSE WHO WORKED MORE EARN MORE?
- ❖ OWNER PROMISED TO PAY WHAT IS JUST (V. 4) AND INSISTS THAT HE IS NOT ACTING UNJUSTLY (V. 13).
- ❖ HE ASKS “AM I NOT FREE TO DO AS I WISH?”
- ❖ ARE YOU ENVIOUS BECAUSE I AM GENEROUS?” (V.15).



FIRST POINT

- ❖ IF THE LANDOWNER IS A FIGURE FOR GOD, HIS ACTIONS SHOW THAT GOD'S GENEROSITY IS FREELY LAVISHED ON THOSE MOST IN NEED.
- ❖ GOD'S GENEROSITY IS NOT INJUSTICE, BUT NEITHER CAN IT BE CALCULATED OR EARNED.
- ❖ THE STORY IS ABOUT PEOPLE GETTING WHAT THEY DESERVE.
- ❖ ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO EAT FOR THE DAY.



DAY LABOURERS

- ❖ ARE ON THE LOWEST ECONOMIC RUNG
- ❖ THEY STAND WAITING ALL DAY (V.6), WANTING TO WORK TO FEED THEIR FAMILY FOR ONE MORE DAY.
- ❖ LESS THAN A DENARIUS WOULD BE USELESS.
- ❖ FROM THEIR PERSPECTIVE, THOSE WHO WORKED ALL DAY HAD THE SATISFACTION OF KNOWING THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO FEED THEIR FAMILIES.
- ❖ IN GOD'S REALM JUSTICE MEANS THAT ALL ARE FED.
- ❖ IT DOES NOT MEAN GETTING WHAT WE DESERVE, EITHER IN TERMS OF RETRIBUTION FOR WRONGDOING OR RECOMPENSE FOR GOOD DEEDS.



SECOND POINT

- ❖ “EVIL -EYE” ENVY IS THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE FORCE IN A COMMUNITY.
- ❖ THE QUESTION IN VERSE: 15 IS LITERALLY, “OR IS YOUR EYE EVIL THAT I AM GOOD?”
- ❖ IN A FIRST-CENTURY WORLDVIEW OF LIMITED GOOD, ANYONE’S GAIN MEANS ANOTHER ONE’S LOSS.
- ❖ WHILE THOSE WHO GRUMBLE FOCUS ON THEIR PERCEIVED LOSS, THEY MISS THE LIMITLESS GOODNESS.
- ❖ DANGER OF RICHES: NEEDS TO REJECT HOARDING.
- ❖ ATTEND TO THE NEEDS OF THOSE WHO ARE IN POVERTY.



PARABLE OF TALENTS MATT: 25:14-30

- ❖ OFTEN INTERPRETED AS AN EXHORTATION TO USE ALL ONE'S GOD-GIVEN GIFTS TO THE FULL.
- ❖ HOWEVER, THE GREEK WORD *TALANTON*: MONETARY UNIT OR WEIGHT MEASUREMENT.
- ❖ IN THE PARABLE IT DENOTES A VERY LARGE SUM OF MONEY.
- ❖ STORY IS ABOUT TWO SERVANTS WHO INVEST AND DOUBLE THE MONEY THAT WAS ENTRUSTED TO THEM.
- ❖ THE THIRD SERVANT, BY CONTRAST, BURIES THE MONEY, THE BEST WAY TO SAFEGUARD VALUABLES IN ANTIQUITY.
- ❖ HE EARNS HARSH PUNISHMENT FROM THE MASTER.



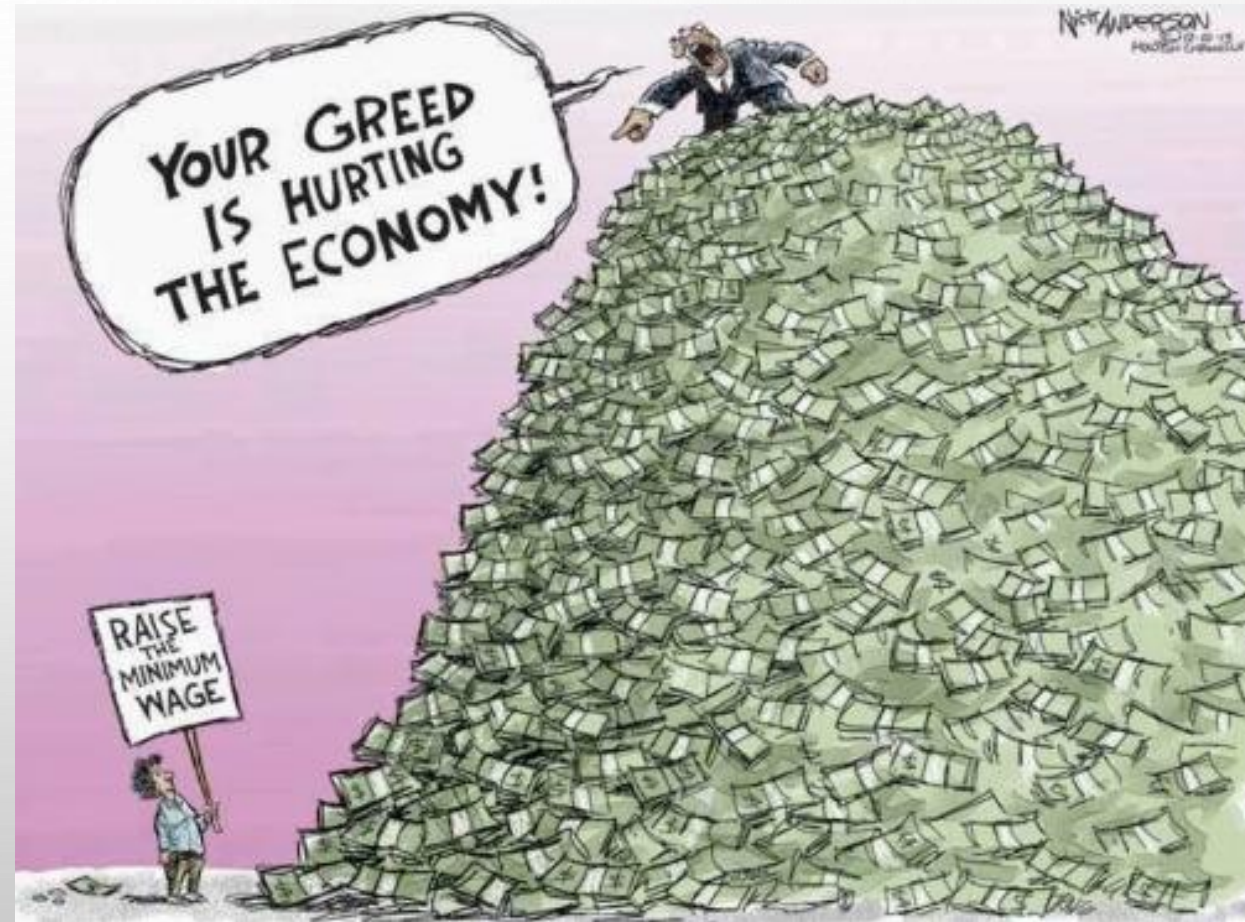
KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE PARABLE

- ❖ JESUS DID NOT LIVE IN A CAPITALIST SYSTEM.
- ❖ PEOPLE HAD A NOTION OF LIMITED GOOD: THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH WEALTH, AND ANY INCREASE IN ONE PERSON TAKES AWAY FROM ANOTHER.
- ❖ THE AIM IN LIFE FOR A PEASANT WAS TO HAVE ENOUGH TO CARE FOR HIS FAMILY.
- ❖ THOSE WHO AMASSED LARGE AMOUNTS FOR THEMSELVES WOULD BE SEEN AS GREEDY AND WICKED.



BACK TO THE PARABLE

- ❖ IF THE MASTER IS NOT A FIGURE FOR GOD, IT IS THE THIRD SERVANT WHO IS THE HONOURABLE ONE.
- ❖ HE REFUSED TO COLLABORATE WITH HIS MASTER IN HIS UNFETTERED GREED.
- ❖ THE PARABLE WARNS RICH PEOPLE TO STOP EXPLOITING THOSE WHO ARE POOR.
- ❖ IT ENCOURAGES POOR PEOPLE TO TAKE COURAGEOUS MEASURES TO EXPOSE GREED FOR THE SIN THAT IT IS.





FINAL JUDGMENT 25: 31-46

- ❖ THIS IS UNIQUE TO MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.
- ❖ THE TIME OF JUDGEMENT HAS ARRIVED AS THE HUMAN ONE COMES IN HIS GLORY (V. 31)
- ❖ THE SCENE IS LINKED WITH 28:16-20, WHERE JESUS INSTRUCTS HIS FOLLOWERS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS (28:19), A COMMAND THAT THIS PARABLE PRESUMES HAS BEEN FULFILLED.
- ❖ ALL NATIONS (V. 32) ARE NOW ASSEMBLED TO RENDER ACCOUNT.
- ❖ SHEEP SEPARATED FROM GOATS, UNCLEAR BOTH ARE VALUABLE.

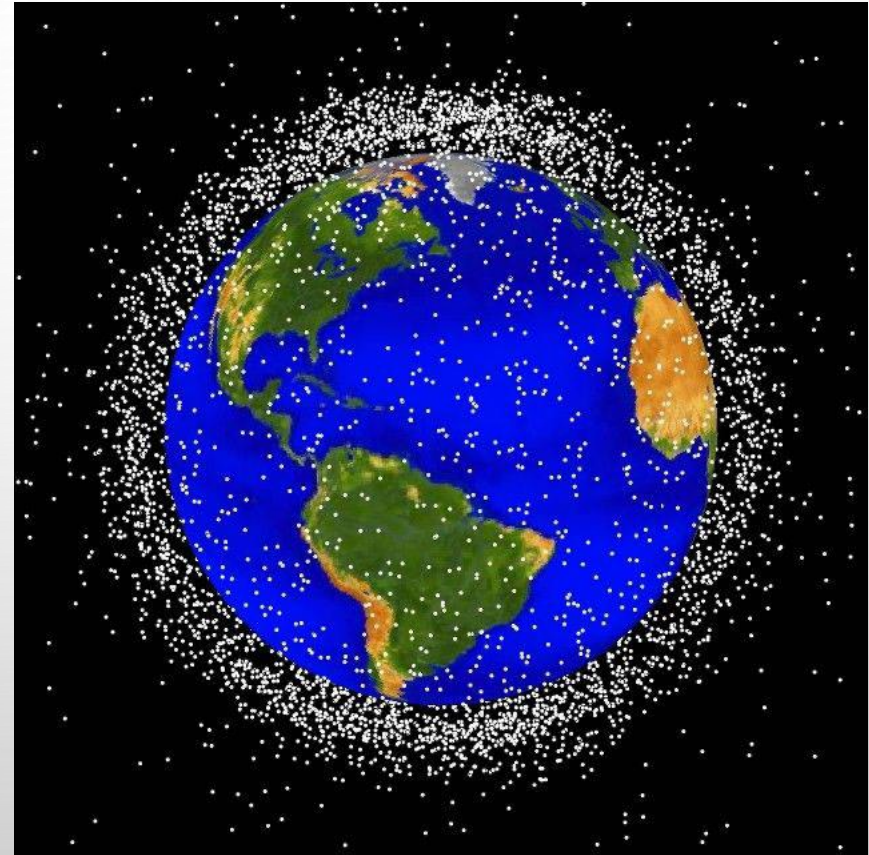


- ❖ IMAGE OF JESUS SHIFTS FROM SHEPHERD TO KING (V 34, SEE 2:2; 21:5).
- ❖ LIKE MOSES, WHO LAID OUT BEFORE THE ISRAELITES THE CHOICE OF BLESSING OR CURSE (DEUT. 11:26), JESUS SEPARATES THOSE “BLESSED BY MY FATHER” (V 34) FROM THOSE “ACCURSED” (V 41).
- ❖ GOD’S INVITATION GOES OUT TO ALL (5:45; 13:3-9), AND THE CHOICE TO ACCEPT OR REJECT IT RESTS WITH EACH ONE.



“COME YOU THAT ARE BLESSED BY MY FATHER, INHERIT THE KINGDOM ...MATT: 25:34

- ❖ WE HAVE TO BE REALISTIC
- ❖ THE BEAUTY OF WHAT HAS BEEN CREATED IS IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL THAT IS DESTRUCTIVE-EGOISM-INDIFFERENCE IN OUR WORLD.
- ❖ THE HORROR AND INHUMANITY OF TERRORISM AND WAR, THE DEVASTATION OF NATURAL CATASTROPHES, CLIMATE CHANGE ETC.
- ❖ WE NEED TO BECOME LIKE JESUS, CAPABLE OF DENOUNCING THE ATTITUDES THAT KILL, THE PRACTICES THAT MAINTAIN UNJUST SYSTEMS.
- ❖ IT IS A PROPHETIC CALL FOR CONVERSION, BOTH AN ECOLOGICAL ONE AND ONE THAT IS ON THE SIDE OF THE POOR.



MATTHEW 25:31-46

- ❖ A CALL TO LISTEN TO CLAMOUR, THE LAMENT FROM THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY, THIRSTY, SICK OR ENSLAVED ETC.
- ❖ THE TEXT DOES NOT HIGHLIGHT THE BEAUTY OF CREATION NOR OF THE HUMAN PERSON, RATHER IT SHOWS THE VULNERABILITY OF WHAT HAS BEEN CREATED AND HOW THE HUMAN PERSON CAN BECOME MISGUIDED.
- ❖ THE TEXT CALLS ATTENTION TO THE POOR AND THE PRECARIOUS SITUATIONS IN WHICH THEY FIND THEMSELVES.
- ❖ THIS IS WHERE WE HAVE TO LOOK TOWARDS AND MAKE A PREFERENTIAL OPTION, WHICH IS URGENT.



GOD IDENTIFIES WITH THOSE ON MARGINS

- ❖ THE TEXT PLACES IMPORTANCE ON DAILY ACTIVITY.
- ❖ GREAT TRANSFORMATIONS BEGIN SMALL, SOLIDARITY WITH OTHERS AND WITH ALL OF CREATION, INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, THOSE WITH WHOM WE COME IN CONTACT ON A DAILY BASIS.
- ❖ CHANGE ALSO HAPPENS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS.
- ❖ FOR US CHRISTIANS, THE TEXT CULMINATES IN A THEOLOGICAL CONCEPT, “TRULY I TELL YOU, JUST AS YOU DID IT TO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE WHO ARE MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY, YOU DID IT TO ME.” (25, 40).
- ❖ GOD IDENTIFIES WITH THE POOR AND INSIGNIFICANT (BETHLEHEM: MANGER, GALILEA, CROSS).
- ❖ NOT ONLY PRACTICALLY BUT SPIRITUALLY...



THE POOR TODAY INCLUDES PLANET EARTH

- ❖ “EVERY ECOLOGICAL APPROACH NEEDS TO INCORPORATE A SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE WHICH TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE POOR AND THE UNDERPRIVILEGED.” (LS 93).
- ❖ MATTHEW 25 SHOWS THE WAY: LOOK TO THE MARGINS: THE POOR, NATURE, ETC AND WE CAN SEE HOW THE GOODS OF THIS WORLD ARE ADMINISTERED.
- ❖ ARE THEY ADMINISTERED IN A WAY THAT ALLOWS **ALL** OF LIFE TO FLOURISH?



“I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE ME TO EAT, I WAS THIRSTY AND YOU GAVE ME TO DRINK”

- ❖ HUNGER AND THIRST ARE SIGNS OF BAD ADMINISTRATION OF THE EARTH GOODS.
- ❖ THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS WHICH THREATENS OUR NATURAL WORLD CAUSED BY UNCONTROLLED URBANISATION, EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES, FOSSIL FUELS, CONTAMINATION ETC.
- ❖ THIS HAS LEAD TO THE MAJORITY OF THE WORLD’S POPULATION NOT HAVING THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE: FOOD AND WATER (DROUGHT, FAMINE, CONTAMINATED DRINKING WATER, WATER SHORTAGES ETC).
- ❖ OTHERS HAVE LITTLE TO EAT OR DRINK AND LIVE IN PRECARIOUS SITUATIONS.
- ❖ THE TEXT DEMANDS JUST DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD AS WELL AS UNCONTAMINATED FOOD AND WATER FOR GENERATIONS INTO THE FUTURE.



“I WAS A STRANGER, AND YOU WELCOMED ME”

- ❖ THIS IS SO EVIDENT TODAY...AND EXPRESSES A BREAKDOWN IN COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS.
- ❖ STRANGERS: THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING A BETTER WAY OF LIFE: WHO LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY BECAUSE OF INSECURITY OF WAR, FAMINE, VIOLENCE ETC.
- ❖ FROM A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE: WE KNOW THEY ARE A PRIVILEGED GROUP IN THE BIBLE ALONGSIDE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS. WHY?
- ❖ THESE WERE CONSIDERED THE GROUPS WHO HAD NO RIGHTS, AND WERE VULNERABLE AND OPEN TO EXPLOITATION.



- ❖ DT 24, 14, LEV 19,34 EPHESIANS 2,19 EX 22,21, Y23,9 Y PSALM 146,9
- ❖ “THERE HAS BEEN A TRAGIC RISE IN THE NUMBER OF MIGRANTS SEEKING TO FLEE FROM THE GROWING POVERTY CAUSED BY ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION. THEY ARE NOT RECOGNIZED BY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AS REFUGEES; THEY BEAR THE LOSS OF THE LIVES THEY HAVE LEFT BEHIND, WITHOUT ENJOYING ANY LEGAL PROTECTION WHATSOEVER.” (LS 25).
- ❖ WE KNOW THAT HUNGER AND THIRST PRODUCES MIGRATION: THOSE WHO END UP AS STRANGERS ON OUR SHORES.
- ❖ THEREFORE, FROM THIS CONTEXT WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “RECEIVE” THE STRANGER?

I WAS NAKED AND YOU GAVE ME CLOTHING

- ❖ IN THE BIBLICAL TRADITION, CLOTHING IS SYNONYMOUS WITH POWER AND SURVIVAL AND NAKEDNESS IS SYNONYMOUS WITH POWERLESSNESS AND DEATH.
- ❖ NAKEDNESS IS THE RESULT OF UNJUST RELATIONSHIPS.
- ❖ EX 22: 26-27 “IF YOU TAKE YOUR NEIGHBOUR'S CLOAK IN PAWN, YOU SHALL RESTORE IT BEFORE THE SUN GOES DOWN; FOR IT MAY BE YOUR NEIGHBOUR'S ONLY CLOTHING TO USE AS COVER; IN WHAT ELSE SHALL THAT PERSON SLEEP? AND IF YOUR NEIGHBOUR CRIES OUT TO ME, I WILL LISTEN, FOR I AM COMPASSIONATE.”
- ❖ TODAY, WE SEE MANY WHO ARE “NAKED” DISPLACED FROM THEIR HOMES, LAND, ETC

DISPOSAL CULTURE

- ❖ “THE ECONOMIC POWERS CONTINUE TO JUSTIFY THE CURRENT GLOBAL SYSTEM WHERE PRIORITY TENDS TO BE GIVEN TO SPECULATION AND THE PURSUIT OF FINANCIAL GAIN, WHICH FAIL TO TAKE THE CONTEXT INTO ACCOUNT, LET ALONE THE EFFECTS ON HUMAN DIGNITY AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. HERE WE SEE HOW ENVIRONMENTAL DETERIORATION AND HUMAN AND ETHICAL DEGRADATION ARE CLOSELY LINKED.” LS 56.
- ❖ WHAT DOES IT MEAN TODAY TO GIVE CLOTHING?



YOU WERE SICK AND YOU VISITED ME

- ❖ TODAY, WE ARE WITNESSING NEW ILLNESSES WHICH ARE CONNECTED TO THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WE LIVE.
- ❖ CONTAMINATION OF WATER AND FOOD, THE QUALITY OF THE AIR, COVID ETC.
- ❖ PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES: (PFIZER MADE NEARLY \$37BN (£27BN) IN SALES FROM ITS COVID-19 IN FEB 22– MAKING IT ONE OF THE MOST LUCRATIVE PRODUCTS IN HISTORY – AND HAS FORECAST ANOTHER BUMPER YEAR IN 2022, WITH A BIG BOOST COMING FROM ITS COVID-19 PILL PAXLOVID SOURCE: GUARDIAN)
- ❖ QUALITY OF HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS: WHO IS CARED FOR? WHO GAINS?



I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU VISITED ME

- ❖ THE MAJORITY OF THOSE IN PRISON ARE THE POOR:
- ❖ *PRISONERS ARE 23 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO COME FROM (AND RETURN TO) A SERIOUSLY DEPRIVED AREA, COMPARED TO THE LEAST DEPRIVED AREAS (IRISH PENAL TRUST).*
- ❖ “WE RISK BEING IMPRISONED IN A JUSTICE THAT DOESN'T ALLOW ONE TO EASILY GET BACK UP AGAIN AND CONFUSES REDEMPTION WITH PUNISHMENT.....IT IS RIGHT THAT THOSE WHO HAVE MADE A MISTAKE PAY FOR THEIR MISTAKE, BUT IT IS EVEN MORE RIGHT THAT THOSE WHO HAVE DONE WRONG SHOULD BE ABLE TO REDEEM ONESELF FROM THEIR MISTAKE. THERE CAN'T BE SENTENCES WITHOUT WINDOWS OF HOPE.”(POPE FRANCIS)



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: “THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE’S GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS ([GRETA](#)) HAS URGED THE AUTHORITIES IN IRELAND TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING, NOTABLY BY IMPROVING THE PROSECUTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKERS AND PROVIDING SPECIALISED SHELTERS AND COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS” (SEPTEMBER 2022).

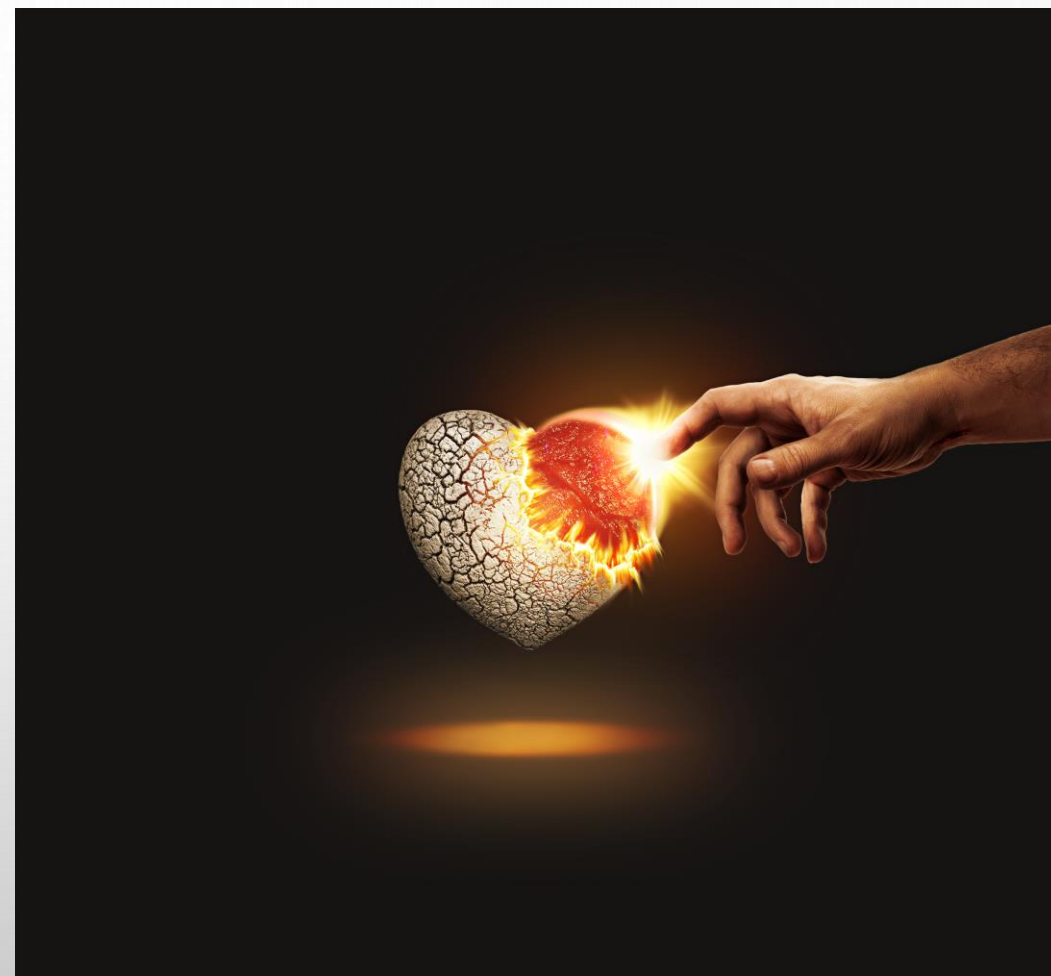


RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

- ❖ WE BEGAN WITH THE STATEMENT “COME, YOU THAT ARE BLESSED BY MY FATHER, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.” (25:34)
- ❖ RESTORATION OF RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS: WHEN YOU DO IT TO ONE OF THE LEAST YOU DO IT TO ME: UNIFYING INCARNATION WITH HISTORICAL PRACTICE OF FAITH.
- ❖ “AN INTEGRAL ECOLOGY IS INSEPARABLE FROM THE NOTION OF THE COMMON GOOD, THE COMMON GOOD IS RESPECT FOR THE HUMAN PERSON AS SUCH, ENDOWED WITH BASIC AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS ORDERED TO HIS OR HER INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT.” (LS 156-157).
- ❖ “SEEKS ALSO TO RESTORE THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF ECOLOGICAL EQUILIBRIUM, ESTABLISHING HARMONY WITHIN OURSELVES, WITH OTHERS, WITH NATURE AND OTHER LIVING CREATURES, AND WITH GOD” (LS 210).

CONVERSION IS NEEDED

- ❖ THIS IMPLIES THAT WE RECOGNISE OUR WRONG DOING AND OUR SIN, WHAT WE HAVE NEGLECTED OR OMITTED, THAT WHICH OFFENDED GOD'S CREATION...ALL THAT GOD CREATED AND REPENT SO THAT WE CAN CHANGE.
- ❖ CONVERSION IS NECESSARY: THIS IMPLIES BOTH CHANGE IN OUR OWN HABITS AS WELL AS STRUCTURAL CHANGE, LAWS AND ECONOMIC ORDER.
- ❖ IT IS FOR THE LONG HAUL!



CANAANITE WOMAN IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 15:21-28



CANAANITE WOMAN

- ❖ ENCOUNTER BETWEEN TWO CULTURES: TENSION BETWEEN CANAANITES AND THE ISRAELITES.
- ❖ THE WOMAN INTERACTS WITH JESUS DESPITE HER ETHNIC, GEOGRAPHICAL OR GENDER ORIENTATION.
- ❖ INTERESTINGLY, THE WOMAN KNOWS THE RIGHT JEWISH PRAYER FORMULA AND PROPER MESSIANIC TITLE FOR JESUS.
- ❖ SHE IS SEEKING HEALING FOR HER DAUGHTER. JESUS SAYS NOTHING. NO RESPONSE.
- ❖ SHE IS PROACTIVE, NOT SILENT.
- ❖ FOR THE WOMAN, THIS WAS NOT JUST A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY, RATHER, SHE WAS ENSURING IT WAS A DOOR FOR HER TO WALK THROUGH.
- ❖ WE ARE SHOCKED THAT JESUS INITIALLY DOES NOT RESPOND TO HER CRY FOR MERCY.

WOMAN ANSWERS BACK

- ❖ WHEN SHE PLEADS THE SECOND TIME JESUS' RESPONSE IS VERY INSULTING.
- ❖ SHE DOES NOT TURN AWAY, RATHER SHE REDIRECTS HER HURT AND FINDS A WAY TO RESPOND TO JESUS, "YES, LORD, YET EVEN THE DOGS....."
- ❖ SOMETHING CHANGES IN JESUS. HE RECOGNISES THAT SHE IS CORRECT, HIS VISION HAS BEEN TOO NARROW.
- ❖ JESUS IS CONFRONTED WITH HIS OWN ETHNOCENTRISM.
- ❖ HE RECOGNISES HER GREAT FAITH...
- ❖ JESUS HEALS HER DAUGHTER.

CRUMBS THAT FALL FROM THE TABLE

- ❖ THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE WOMAN WAS THE CATALYST THAT ENABLED JESUS TO SEE DIFFERENTLY AND MOVE TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE PRACTICE.
- ❖ JESUS BEGINS TO REMEMBER WHO AND WHAT HE IS. HE MAY BE THE SON OF MAN –FULLY HUMAN, CULTURALLY BIASED – BUT HE IS THE SON OF GOD.
- ❖ THE CANAANITE WOMAN, WITH HER INNER STRENGTH AND COURAGE, TRANSFORMS FOR JESUS THE UNIVERSALITY OF GOD’S LOVE AND HEALING.
- ❖ JESUS CHANGES HIS MIND. HIS MISSION IS NOW ENLARGED. MERCY HAS NO LIMITS.
- ❖ CANAANITE WOMAN MIGHT HELP WOMEN TO INSIST THAT ALL DESERVE TO BE MORE FULLY FED BY HEARING FEMALE VOICES AS WELL AS MALE INTERPRET SCRIPTURES IN THE PREACHED WORD, AND BY RECEIVING BREAD BLEST AND BROKEN FROM FEMALE HANDS AS WELL AS MALE.

TWO OTHER EXAMPLES OF JESUS AND THE STRANGER

- ❖ A CENTURION PLEADING FOR HIS SLAVE (MATT 8:5-13),
- ❖ AND A TAX COLLECTOR NAMED MATTHEW (9:9-13).

Thank
YOU!

The text "Thank YOU!" is rendered in a highly decorative, black calligraphic font. The word "Thank" is in a cursive script, while "YOU!" is in a bold, blocky font. The text is surrounded by intricate flourishes, including large loops and swirls. Small decorative elements like diamonds and circles are scattered around the text. The background is a light gray gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes, some in the top-left and bottom-right corners.

COLLEEN FULMER CHOOSE LIFE

