**FAITH365 SUMMER SESSION**

**August 2019**

**A Stranger’s Need Becomes Our Call**

**WELCOME:**

**Thanks for coming today and sharing in this session of Faith 365. It is wonderful to see you.**

Let us be in the moment, to be still, to leave the cares of life to the side, if for just a moment.

Take a moment and go around the table and introduce yourself. In your introduction, using one sentence, tell the group the most memorable thing that has happened for you so far this summer.

 **(Discussion at table in small groups)**

To help us become centered in the present moment, we will listen to a song of meditation. The table leader will give out the lyrics.

**SONG OF MEDITATION: BUT FOR YOUR GRACE**

But for Your grace I could not be saved

But for Your grace I would go my way

I'm forever grateful

That You have been faithful to me Lord

And for Your amazing grace

Amazing grace how sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me

I once was lost but now I'm found

Was blind but now I see

**FOCUS:** The author Elizabeth Gilbert writes, *a family in my sister’s neighborhood was stricken with a double tragedy, when both the young mother and her young son were diagnosed with cancer. When Catherine told me about this, I could only say, shocked, “dear God that family needs grace.” She replied firmly, “that family needs casserole,” and proceeded to organize the entire neighborhood into bringing that family dinner, every single night, for an entire year. I do not know if my sister fully recognizes that this IS grace.*

As followers of Christ, we believe that God’s grace is all around us. It is not our education or our assets, but the grace of God that helps us rise and serve others in their need. Many times, those who are in need touch our hearts because of who they are and the circumstances they find themselves in. And grace enables us to serve them, even if it is hard. But the same grace also pushes and guides us to answer the call to service in the lives of people we may not know or understand or even trust.

**Reminders: (don’t need to read word for word…just to give general idea)**

**PARTICIPATE** Everyone has some wisdom; while no one is forced to share, sometimes the comment you think is not profound actually is the one that many remember.

**BE PRESENT** Make every effort to leave problems and things you need to do at the door; please turn off or silence cell phones.

**BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE** Don’t be afraid if there is silence or feel the need to say something –unless you want to—just because no one is speaking.

**BE GENTLE ABOUT DIFFERENCES** We may see things differently, but we are on the path together.

**OUR AGENDA IS PEACE NOT POLITICS** Be cautious about injecting political agenda that is not central to the conversation. No bashing of individuals, but respect always for those with whom we do not agree.

**~Would someone be willing to read our scripture passage:**

From the Gospel of Luke 21: 29-31

There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test him and said, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you read it?” He said in reply, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” He replied to him, “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.” But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, ‘Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.’ Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers’ victim?” He answered, “The one who treated him with mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

We will now have a discussion at our tables on the questions listed at the end of the reading. We will take a few moments of quiet and then feel free to share as you are ready.

**WHAT DID I HEAR?**

**WHAT DO I THINK IT MEANS?**

**WHAT CHALLENGE DOES IT OFFER?**

 **(Discussion at table in small groups)**

**(The session leader will need to keep track of time and estimate when the groups are ready to continue.)**

**We will now watch the following video clip about an unlikely encounter between 2 strangers and how that encounter brought forth an unexpected calling within each person.**

**VIDEO:**

 **A FACE BOOK MESSAGE THAT SPARKED HOPE**

**FOR DISCUSSION AFTER THE VIDEO:**

 **(Discussion at table in small groups)**

Was there a word, phrase of image that stood out for you in the video?

The video speaks about wasting time. Have you ever had an experience when something that looked like a waste of time turned out to be something else? How do you define a waste of time; does our culture define things as a waste of time that Jesus would suggest are not?

The grace of God is mentioned a few times in this video. How do understand or how have you experienced the grace of God in your life?

The reporter says to Ben, you were wrong about him. Have you had an experience from which you had to admit you were wrong about someone or something?

Ben set aside doubt and distrust and opened his mind. What makes it hard for you to set aside doubt and distrust? Has faith opened your mind in some new way?

A bitter enemy might be a friend in disguise. How does Ben’s story reshape or even change how you understand the meaning of the Good Samaritan parable?

Joel never saw himself as a scammer. How we see ourselves may not always match how others perceive us. Have you experienced that in your life? How has seeing yourself as a follower of Christ shaped your life; has it ever been misunderstood?

Joel said he was looking for friendship. How do we find friendships as adults? Do you consider yourself a friend of Jesus? How does that impact your life choices?

I set out to embarrass a guy and wound up helping a guy. Have you ever set out seeking to one thing and wind up doing something you never expected.

Joel realized the opportunity for him to be charitable may be the best thing to come from this. Can you think of a time when your receiving help, charity or kindness become an opportunity for you to be a different person?

**PRAYER AND RESPONSE**

Each time we meet, we bring to our prayer the challenges we face and the blessings for which we are grateful. So, we will spend a few moments now in quiet. And as you feel moved, share either a challenge or blessing you would like to bring to prayer (or both.)

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**—let us now pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Thanks so much for being here. We will continue to have monthly sessions September thru December. Details will be announced at masses and information can be found in upcoming bulletins.

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