



# The Shepherd's Voice

October 30, 2012

By Fr. Joe Rees

## “Love your enemies?”

**“But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.” Luke 6: 27-28**

We are a church that says, “WWJD” or “WWJS”...that is...“What would Jesus do? Or ‘What would Jesus say’?? As Christians we try to emulate the life example of Jesus. We try to “Do what Jesus would do!” This teaching from Jesus quoted from Luke’s version, sometimes known as the Sermon on the Plain, makes you stop, ponder and say, “How is that possible?”

It’s tough to love your enemies. Personally, at this point I pray, ‘how do I do that Jesus?’ But, Jesus’ teaching is clear. He goes on to say, “Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either.” (vs. 29ff) Sometimes it’s too hard to love your enemies...Al Qaida? Yet, herein begins the God-moment, the opportunity to go deeper with the Holy Spirit to search the depths of the mind of Christ.

Our first relationship always has to be with and in Christ Jesus. The first reaction to a threat or wrongful act of attack or violence ought to be to turn to Jesus. In the moment of antagonism or sensing those feelings of retribution, anger, or revenge, we need to stop and pray, “Jesus, have mercy on me; a sinner in your sight.” Then, pray “Lord Jesus, give me Your mind on this and help me to offer my other cheek.” Ultimately, this is an administration of His pure grace that will enable us to gain His peace on the issue, whatever it may be. So, just what is an enemy and why do we counter-act with such vehemence at times?

An enemy might be described as anyone, who being absolutely opposed to God’s will, does violence with the intent to destroy or otherwise bring malady upon God’s people. A true enemy is an enemy to God. Isn’t it interesting that we might be considered to be an enemy of the Taliban. We are their enemy. But, we see them as our enemy. It’s a matter of positional morality as determined by reference to God. Then, we must define the character and meaning of God, and His purposes for His people. If the definition of God derived from that analysis leads us to believe that God is vengeful to those who break His laws and dishonor His person, a group might be led to act on behalf of the God they have agreed to know in their religious community. They might take up His vengeance to correct those who in their minds dishonor their God. Thus, the Taliban and Al Qaida might think that secular, western, and immoral Americans are to be blamed for all the evils of the world and therefore need to be annihilated. We become their enemy because their law says we are. And their system of belief must have avenging of law-breakers, the consequence is death to the infidel. Well, I’m just thinking out loud in all of this.

Isn’t it also revealing that at one time the Japanese and the Germans were our enemy at the same time. Now, they aren’t enemies, in fact, they are major allies and important trading partners in the world economy. Of course, it was not all the people of those countries that were enemies, perhaps it was just the depraved leaders who were seeking power or world domination. But, many joined in with them who wanted the pre-eminence of their own nation to be as we say “Number 1”! “We will rule the world!” I hope I’m not hearing that when it comes to radical Islam today. What do they really want then? Their intent seems to be that ‘we need to all be like them and live under Sharia law to satisfy their positional moral desires’.

Then again, there is Jesus and His Way. What shall we do then with these potent enemies who use terror to achieve their goal of transforming the world to live under their notion of law? Turn the other cheek? Well, we've turned the cheek many times. It seems we've turned the cheek even when an ambassador and his protectors are killed on our recognized American territorial soil! Are we to bring them to our notion of justice? Or are we to send a predator drone in and strike them dead in a car traveling to engage in a meeting to foist another terror attack on innocents in the U.S.? Is it a crime or a terrorist attack? It is both! It's a crime against humanity and against the true nature of God and His will for His people to live in peace. So, how do we do good to those who hate us?

Why is it that I have not seen as yet a world meeting of key Christian leaders with key leaders of Islam? Say the Pope and the Grand Imam of Iran? Or dare I say the Archbishop of Canterbury? Why not get the Islamic leaders here in the U.S. to agree that the radical jihadists be censored or chastised? And that the U.S. would not prosecute any further warfare in Islamic countries? Haven't we lost enough blood of our young service-men and women?

So, then, how do we love our enemies? Perhaps we need to find a way to understand God together and agree to minor disagreements on practices of religion. Perhaps we need to seek the peace that God wants for all His people. Perhaps we should start with our own lives, our own circumstances, and pray that we would turn to Jesus and seek His will in all these things. Let's pray we might be His peace-makers. However, for those who belligerently are on Satan's side, perhaps we need to stand up to them, ready to destroy his advances to kill or maim God's people and thereby turn this world into hell's kitchen. But, let us be sure that they really are on Satan's side and doing his bidding before we send in the drones.

As we approach All Saints Day, let us remember so many 'saints' who gave their lives to advance the Kingdom of God through His Church. Let us pray for the persecuted in foreign lands just trying to be Christians. And let us pray for the 'saints' today that are trying to love with Jesus' love to bring peace to an increasingly hostile world.

Love in Christ,  
Fr. Joe

**Sunday Servers this week...**

<b>November 4, 2012</b>	<b>Proper 26</b>	<b>8:00 a.m. Service</b>	<b>10:15 a.m. Service</b>
First Reader		Pam Theobald	Frank Comstock
Psalm Reader		Choir	Frances Slaughter
Second Reader		Jani Dubski	Stephen Painter
Intercessor		Acolyte	Acolyte
Lay Euch. Ministers		Joan Jacobs, Alfred Focke	Carolyn Blumberg, Frances Slaughter
Acolytes		Mitch Dubski	Caitlin B (C); Zachary J (T1); Kalani C (T2)
Welcomers		Myrna Lipnicke, Cheryl Martel	Myrna Lipnicke, Cheryl Martel
Ushers		Doug Hall, Jackie Lansing	Dink Nash, Ted Vallas, JR Fox, April Knowles
Vestry Person of Day	Carolyn Blumberg		
Healing Ministers		Rudy Theobald, Jan Simon	Connie F, Kari C, Sarah Fuller, Donna S
Announcer		Trish Snider	Alex Teixeira

**Angel Tree Sunday  
November 4<sup>th</sup>**

Be sure to pick up a name of a child to buy gifts for Christmas. These are children with at least one parent who is incarcerated. Your gift may be the only present they receive at Christmas.

**November 12, 2012**

**OSL Healing Conference  
at Grace with Mike Endicott  
See flyers for more information and to register.**

## Sunday at Grace

8:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist with Choir  
9:30 a.m. – Fellowship &  
Adult Forum  
10:00 a.m. Nursery opens  
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist with  
Worship Music

Mike Endicott  
Healing Conference  
November 12<sup>th</sup>  
(See flyers in Narthex)  
Sponsored by OSL

## Readings for Sunday

Ecclesiasticus 2:1-11  
Psalm 149  
Ephesians 1:15-23  
Luke 6:20-36

We are using the English Standard  
Version of the Bible and the Lectionary  
from the Book of Common Prayer (Year B)

### This Week at Grace –Oct. 30-Nov. 6

#### Tues. October 30

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study – Isaiah  
4:30 p.m. Healing Eucharist at the Oasis  
6:30 p.m. Potluck Fellowship Dinner  
7:15 p.m. "Christianity Explored"

#### Wed October 31

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer  
9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting  
6:30 p.m. Youth Group

#### Thurs. November 1

7:00 a.m. – Bible Study  
8:00 a.m. Clergy Meeting  
10-Noon Play Group  
11:30 a.m. Healing Eucharist – Oasis  
3:30 p.m. Alpha Club  
6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

#### Fri. November 2

6:00 p.m. Evening Prayer and Healing at Grace

#### Sat. November 3

8:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study

#### Sun. November 4

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Choir  
9:30 a.m. Fellowship & Adult Forum  
10:00 a.m. Nursery opens  
10:-15 a.m. Family Worship Service  
& Children's Church  
Angel Tree Sunday

#### Mon. November 5

6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer

#### Tues. November 6

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study at Grace  
4:30 p.m. Healing Eucharist at the Oasis  
6:30 p.m. Potluck Fellowship Dinner  
7:15 p.m. "Christianity Explored" – new series.

### Rector's Bible Study

Tuesdays  
11:30 a.m.

Fr. Joe is leading the group through a study of  
the Book of Isaiah. Everyone is welcome.  
B.Y.O.L. (Bring your own lunch)

**Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m.**  
**Morning Prayer At Grace Anglican**  
**All are welcome to attend.**

**Weekly** – There are over 25 small groups meeting  
during the week. Check our newsletter for a list of  
all the groups or you can find the list on our website:  
[www.graceanglicanchurch.com](http://www.graceanglicanchurch.com).

## Save the date!

Oct. 30 New Tuesday night teaching –  
Christianity Explored  
Nov. 4 Angel Tree Sunday  
Nov. 10 Prayers & Squares  
Nov. 10 2:00 p.m. – Helen Fritz Memorial Service  
Nov. 12 Mike Endicott – OSL Healing Conference  
at Grace Anglican Church  
Nov. 17 Military Outreach – Childcare for shoppers.

## Did you know?

There's a service of Evening Prayer and Healing on  
Friday evenings at 6:00 p.m. Stop by on your way  
home from work and decompress for the weekend.