Who is my neighbor?
November 18, 2009 Chapel talk    Mike Wanous


This summer I read a book by Richard Stearns, U.S. President of World Vision, called The Hole In Our Gospel. Stearns argues that American Christians have done a pretty good job of at least recognizing the importance of the first great commandment, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. But we have failed miserably at the second great commandment, to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Who is my neighbor?

Data:

- 15% of the world's people (1 billion people) live on $1 or less per day. 40% of the world's people (2.6 billion people) live on $2 or less per day. Think about what that would be like.

- If you make $25,000 per year, you are in the world's top 10% for income. If you make $50,000 per year, you are in the world's top 1% for income. Most Augustana professors make at least 50K per year—so we are in the top 1% globally!

Who is my neighbor?

Many people in the world are caught in a web of poverty. The spiders that prey upon them are: hunger, disease, lack of education and knowledge, armed conflict, exploitation, and corrupt governments. I asked myself, how would I fare if I were dropped down in the middle of Africa somewhere, hungry, impoverished, uneducated, and sick? Honestly, probably not very well. Much of my ability to succeed is due to the blessings that have surrounded me from birth.

In Jesus’s parable of Lazarus and the rich man, what did the rich man do that was so bad? He didn't abuse Lazarus, he wasn't even mean to Lazarus. He just ignored him. His great sin was his apathy to the poor man's suffering. When I stand before Jesus, I want to be one of the sheep, not one of the goats. I want to hear him say that I honored his name by caring for those he cares about--the poor, the hungry, the orphans, the widows, and the refugees.

Who is my neighbor?

In 2006 Muhammad Yunus received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on microfinance. Microloans have been recognized as one of the most effective strategies for lifting people out of poverty. Microloans aren't charity. People pay them back and in the process develop entrepreneurial and business skills.

About the same time that I read The Hole In Our Gospel, I learned about a revolutionary way that an ordinary person can make a difference in alleviating poverty. Kiva is an organization that enables people to make microloans online to people all over the world. "Kiva's mission is to connect people through lending for the sake of alleviating poverty".
I was so excited about this discovery...and I thought "how can I expose my students to the need in the world AND show them that they can make a difference?" My Genetics class has four labs, and I set up four teams on Kiva.org. I told my students that whichever lab raised at least $500 and was the highest lab could do whatever they wanted to my hair on the last day of lab.

http://www.kiva.org/team/augustana_college_genetics_lab_a
http://www.kiva.org/team/augustana_college_genetics_lab_b
http://www.kiva.org/team/augustana_college_genetics_lab_c
http://www.kiva.org/team/augustana_college_genetics_lab_d

There's good news and bad news. The bad news is that my hair is definitely going down. The good news is that as of yesterday, my students have raised $2,900 on Kiva.org!

Who is my neighbor? I like St. Francis of Assisi’s conception of the gospel: “Preach the gospel always; when necessary use words.”
HOLY COMMUNION  
Wednesday, November 18, 2009

PRELUDE  Chorale Prelude on “Beach Spring”  Aaron David Miller

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING LITANY  “With Eyes Apprised”

L: With eyes apprised by the urgency of Heaven, with lungs in harmony; with hands contrite - no fear, no fright - we raise our humble plea.

C: Christ in your mercy, enslave every malice, transform every heartache to glee. Rain mercy upon us; Beloved, conform us, to Heaven’s harmony.

L: All virtue and valor, bestow on our way. Consign all contempt to the flame. Be thou my vision - freed from its prison - with hope confess, proclaim.

C: Christ in your mercy, enslave every malice, transform every heartache to glee. Rain mercy upon us; Beloved, conform us, to Heaven’s harmony.

L: In grace let us linger, content to remember that life can’t be had on the cheap. Extravagant splendor - lived in surrender - to the bountiful harvest complete.

C: Christ in your mercy, enslave every malice, transform every heartache to glee. Rain mercy upon us; Beloved, conform us, to Heaven’s harmony.

HYMN  “Light Dawns on a Weary World”  ELW #726

SCRIPTURE  Isaiah 58:6-11; Matthew 22:35-40; Luke 16: 19-31

HOMILY  “Who is my neighbor?”  Mike Wanous, Biology

COMMUNION  “I Will Sing With the Spirit”  John Rutter  
Collegiate Chorale, Jeanne Carter, Dir.  
Alex Eykamp, accomp.

BENEDICTION, DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE  “When the Saints Go Marching In”  arr. John Rutter  
Marilyn Schemp, piano  
Chris Hill, clarinet  
C.J. Meyer, drums

CAMPUS MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOOD COLLECTION - Campus Ministry will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Food Pantry during the month of November. Simply drop off your offerings on the altar steps. We will deliver the food to the Pantry on Nov. 24th.

GUATEMALAN GIFT MARKET - Once again this year, we are hosting a sale of handmade items from Guatemala. The profits from these items assure a sustainable income for women in Guatemala. The sale is located in the Commons by the Dining Room and will be available on Thurs., 19th from 9:30-3:00 pm, and Fri., 20th from 10:30 - 3:30.

CLEAN WATER PROJECT - *For All Who Are Thirsty:* Let's work together to eliminate dirty water! USF, Sioux Falls Seminary, and Augustana are partnering to bring clean water to people who need it - here and abroad. If you're interested in helping, sign up in the narthex or email Hannah Miller at hmmler08@ole.augie.edu or Kayla Rockwell at kerockwell07@ole.augie.edu. Project will culminate in a silent auction and concert on Monday, Nov. 23rd, 7 pm in the chapel.

Chapel Schedule:

Friday (20th)  Worship, 10 am - Sam Eisele, Sr. Spkr.
Sunday (22nd)  Thanksgiving Hymn Fest, 11 am
Monday (23rd)  Worship, 10 am - Heather Bart, Comm.  
- Silent Auction 5:30 pm - Charity Concert - 7:30 pm - chapel

THANKSGIVING BREAK - 25th - 28th

Sunday (28th)  Chapel Decorating Party - 8 pm. All are welcome!!
Monday (30th)  Worship, 10 am - Bob Preloger, Marketing
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