

## Day 2

### *"Keep It Simple!"*

Inspirations of Brene Brown, thingsilearnt  
(wordpress.com), Dr. Mulkar  
Exodus 20: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20;  
Matthew 21: 33-46  
October 4, 2020

#### **Theme:**

Within our shared worshipful times together at Tippe over many years, we have often spoken about the power of the stories we tell ourselves to be either life giving or life stopping.

Tell the story (of your day, a part of your life) to yourself in a different way, with a different intent or focus, you change how it shapes the meanings you make. Different narrative, different meaning.

Our lives have many stories running through them concurrently: daily lives and long-term intentions, our projects and goals, relationships with different people.

And each story has a process or a storyline: a beginning, a middle, and an end. So, three acts: a Day One, Day Two, Day Three.

**Day 1** is the start...the "what?" and a deep realization, with deep emotions or lack of, a reckoning, of sorts, with the way things really are.

**Day 2** is the struggle...how to respond/move forward. It asks of us our vulnerability to honestly acknowledge what is happening, curious about new

questions and learnings. Wrestling with and ruminating on ideas and strategies, recognizing misunderstandings, faulty assumptions, projections...and owning them as a way of freeing yourself to new insights. We call this courage!

**Day 3** is the resolution...the new way, a new and maybe unexpected ending that makes much meaning...brings meaning to life. It creates a little revolution in your life...as you rally, recover, and reach out.

And, Day 2 is always the hardest.

The "what to do now" is hard and often leaves you feeling exposed, perhaps overwhelmed...and often tired!

Reminds me a bit of Advent.

It's also 'the point of no return' - a term borrowed from aviation. You're too far to turn back, but not yet far enough...to see the light, a new ending to your story, and your struggle.

Day 2 is a scary place at times. You just don't know what will come next but you do know...it is coming (you can't turn back...the clock) and you have a say in what will come next. The way you tell yourself this story matters!

Thing is:

**You can't skip day 2!**

Day 2 is the non-negotiable part of the process - when things are raw, and real, emotions are high. This is when the struggle seems too real and too large.

Life is a rumble. Sound familiar? The gut-wrenching, never-ending feeling of everything going wrong is Day 2.

But the only way to Day 3 is through Day 2. Because...  
you cannot resolve the challenge till you  
deeply FEEL the need to resolve it –  
REALLY FEEL THE NEED for it to be different  
in your bones, unleashing your true potential.

(Like angst of running up against a deadline you've avoided through procrastination can prompt your best work ...pushing you to stretch. Or, how often someone struggling in addiction must hit the bottom before they come back up.  
Like when you're backed up against a wall.)

It takes courage to stay in Day 2.  
Courage to be vulnerable in exploring the situation and options.

You have to choose courage over comfort (which may be cozy at first but sits you on the couch as an on-looker in your own life story as if powerless)

And, no amount of awareness or experience  
can give you a free pass from the daunting level of doubt  
which is part of the process of Day 2.

But what awareness and experience **will** give you is:  
“A little grace. A grace that whispers:  
“This is part of the process. Stay the course. You've done this before. I am with you.  
Together, we've got this!”

It's messy...and it's normal.  
It's okay.  
It's where the magic happens. Mystery unfolds.  
Holiness thrives within.

So: stay the course.

In this Covid/protest/politic season, most of us have been in Day 1 a while now...and are being pushed, no return now, into Day 2.

The way you navigate Day 2 will define the possible new outcome and peace of your story: Day 3.

The way you tell yourself your story, matters.

## **Before Exodus:**

Good news story...as they, we, cross over to the promised land...Day 3...no more will you have to do what you have always done...just to survive.

Listen to what you don't have to do and what you get to do...  
10 best ways to live the promised life in the promised land!

## **Before Matthew:**

What did you hear in those 10 best ways?

In case you missed the connection between promised land and new ways you "get" to be, Day 2 and Day 3,  
in case you need a clearer picture of the consequences of continuing to do what you've always done the way you've always done it,

Jesus shares a parable. This is not a metaphor like many other parables, but an allegory.

It doesn't point to something bigger than itself (like a metaphor does)

Instead it does a 1 to 1 comparison/correlation  
between choices and consequences...keeping it simpler  
so you can understand, sweetheart!

## **Prompting:**

Boy, tell me to do or not to do something...then, just watch me!

Or, how about, rule as are made to be broken...

or, you aren't the boss of me

or I am free to do what I want to do...

same things said differently?

All a bit Day 1ish...emotional, exhausting, no reckoning with what's happening.

There's something about "thou shalt not" that raises the "old Irish" in us and makes us want to challenge the laws, challenge the authority, assert our own authority.

After all, many of us have been burned by following the rules...because others don't or because those in charge do what they want to do, operate with a different set of rules for themselves.

So, what do you think?

Is that big God in the rock chair in the sky just waiting for us to be bad? Setting us up with these rules, commands!

Many of us certainly were raised with an image of God watching over us a threat *to get us to behave*.

Better be good, God is all knowing, sees everything.  
Has a list, checking it twice.

Didn't hold much water for Santa, I dare say  
it doesn't for God either!

The early Church may have portrayed God this way  
and hung things over people's heads as a tool (guilting folk!)  
to get them to behave.

But they got it wrong! We are not innately bad!  
The human concoction of Original Sin is all wrong...it isn't in the Bible! **What is in there is Original Blessing!**

Maybe God sees me as a blessing and really trusts me to think...and *thinks* more highly of me *than I do!*

Oh that *I could **resist*** the seduction of all my Day 1's  
faulty thinking and projections to set aside God's ways  
when I'm confronted with a situation or someone  
whose actions bring out the worst in me rather than my best.

...when I am wallowing in Day 1  
with little initiative to get to Day 2.

So, know this:

~God's laws are not threats cloaked in fancy language.

~God does not reward or punish...our consequences seem to do that in and of themselves!

~God's laws are not one more thing we have yet to do!

They are really the 10 best ways to live.

Poignantly, in the Promised Land,  
in the life you are poised to enter,  
you **do not** have to do things the way you always done them.

You can stop! You get to do it differently!  
Tell yourself a different story!  
In fact, if you don't, you'll never make it to Day 3!

God is not testing us in the usual sense.

God is tutoring us (a pre-test complete with answers)

...that's why Moses says don't be afraid.

**God is giving us a way to prove ourselves to ourselves, improve ourselves  
for ourselves!**

**Wants us to wrestle with ourselves  
in Day 2 to get to Day 3.**

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*You know, the story of the "days of our lives" are captured in the Bible...the Master Story! The human condition reflected in these stories...and it's helpful!*

When you can begin to see your story playing out in the Bible, then we hear and wrestle with the wisdom differently.

God is leading you to Day 3 and your promised land...  
*these are the 10 best ways to be able to stay!*

By the way, the first 4 laws center on our relationship with God and the last 6 our relationship with each other.

The laws begin by putting our focus on God...

I wonder how you might think about your day and your challenges if you thought about God and God's love for you **first, each day?**

Do realize...

I...and the Bible (not necessarily in this order!) do not teach morality and Jesus never once goes there. These aren't a morality code or standard!

What the teachings and Jesus are about is the notion that when you act in ways that are just and kind and simply life-giving to yourself and others...you'll be "happier"!

(The world may name what they see as moral. You will name it...freedom, peace, living Sabbath. It is the grounding of true justice.)

Keep it simple, sweetheart...even simpler.

Jesus says it all comes down to this:

~Love God....heart, body, soul....love into God moment to moment, use God as a resource for daily living.

~Love yourself...treat yourself the way the Divine Lover of Life would have you be treated whether you are arguing, working, playing, laughing.

~Love your neighbor as divinely as you love yourself.

You can't love anyone else till you love yourself. And, just listen to that self-talk of yours...wow!

Gotta' do something with that!

You can't love yourself until you see yourself the way God does...and change that self-talk, that narrative.

So...

what does God see in you as your unique Original Blessing?

Do you see what God sees?

How do you treat/value/love what you deeply see?

How you really value/love yourself is reflected in how you "let" others treat you.

And do you treat others the way you treat yourself? Proactively?

Jesus simplifies. Jesus doesn't do our thinking for us.

**God gives us the ability to think!  
The mandates of love and loyalty,  
respect and honor, justice and worthiness  
must stand inside each one of us  
*ready to direct us when we face  
trouble and temptation.***

God gives us Day 1, Day 2, Day 3 over and over again.

Yes, God did give us free will,

Yet while we are free to choose what are actions are,  
**we are not free to choose the consequences**  
**of our action.**

This is where the Matthew story comes in...a parable to help us see  
beyond the opportunity to make choices to the consequences  
**we are setting up for ourselves.**

There is a way God judges, sees clearly what is...but not for punishment's sake...but for  
do-over's sake!

The tenants had chances to do it over...and the consequences for them are clear!

Like them, like the Israelites, there is another chance for us to get it right!

To stop and get it right-er! Many stops on that journey!

We are accountable for our choices even when we need to help reshape an unjust  
system or are filled with enotion.

Every day we need the guidance of God's wisdom  
so engrained within us  
**that we see the temptation in front of us**  
**for what it is!**

We need to be aware of this wisdom...each time we:

We endorse violence as a form of cheap entertainment;  
laugh at inappropriate jokes.

We accept justifying greed as a striving for success;  
we depersonalize the poor and hungry and home-less by making them statistics or  
projects;

We settle for a "quick fix" instead of solving the underlying issue;

We shut out the cries of others in order to focus better on our own desires;

each time we use and discard friends, lovers, coworkers or family members as though  
they were disposable diapers.

Ouu....gee. Now that's getting a little personal, Lord!

Maybe these commandments/wisdom ways are more for us normally good folk that we would like to think!

When all the people had witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance and said to Moses,

“You speak to us, and we will listen; but-do-not-let God speak to us, or we will die.”

Moses said to the people,

“Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you (to give you the test in advance so you have the answers in advance)

and to put the fear of God upon you (the awe of the presence of God within you) so that you do not sin,

break away, turn away from God’s vision of freedom and joy that is...for YOU!

The peace God offers the world, and abundantly so,

begins with you, in you, in simple, simplifying ways.

You have been personally invited into the Promised Land.

You have received the 10 invitations to freedom, the ten best ways to live.

*You can stop your perpetual Grounds Hog Day of anxiety  
by telling yourself a new story!*

We are invited to be the kind of human being  
that when our feet hit the floor in the morning,  
the “devil” says...Darn! *She’s* up!  
(You can modify the exclamer there on your own!)

Again...

What is the story you are right now telling yourself about your situation...emotions and all? Self-Talk counts!

What in that story are you willing to own as your projections or judgements?

Will you move your story from Day 1...reckoning with your feelings and engaging your curiosity about what can come?

Will you move your story to Day 2. And stay there with courage and vulnerability to give peace and Day 3 a chance?

God knows how hard it is to be human being  
and invites us...

not to be right but to get it right!

We are invited into Day 2 and take the consequences  
rather than waste time trying to find what is the impossible:  
a solution that has no consequences!

**I can change my mind about myself.**

**I can change my life**

**and what it means to be a new being, human.**

Will you open the storyline...be curious, vulnerable, courageous? Are you willing to  
look at things differently?

When you change the way you look at things,  
the things you look at...change!

Just like that: 1, 2, 3!