

## Sermon Sparkler for the Fifth Sunday After Pentecost

This is such a familiar story, which can be dangerous; familiar stories, meant to scandalize and call to repentance, can have the opposite effect, can become trite and moralistic.

So, put your equivalent of a Samaritan (hopefully you already set this up on the 30<sup>th</sup>) into the story and hear it with fresh ears. Hear that the superficial charismatic pastor with the growing church who has no idea what the Bible says who irks you to no end is the Samaritan. Or, if you're brave, make it about religion, race, or ideology, or other subjects not to be trifled with in polite company.

Note that Luke again uses the word *planchnisthe*—the gut wrenching kind of compassion. Recognizing that this kind of gut level active love of another person is what makes for a neighbor. Mercy, not race or religion, makes a neighbor.

- ✎ How will you stretch your congregation's spiritual imagination with your re-telling of this familiar story?
- ✎ If you take the "courageous" route and talk religion, race, or ideology how are you prepared to follow up with your parishioners who will feel uncomfortable? How will you comfort the afflicted, having afflicted the comfortable in the sermon?