

AN ENCOURAGING WORD FOR TROUBLING TIMES #133 (by Rev. Dr. Alice Wolfe, 11/3/20)

“Do to others as you would have them do to you!”

In these crazy times in which we live (with all the hatred, violence, intolerance, prejudice, anger, meanness, fear, sorrow, pandemic fatigue, etc.), I sometimes find myself speechless—and that’s significant for a preacher! 😊 I think one word sums up lot of what we’re experiencing—MESS! So much in our nation right now is simply a mess! (God, please help us!!!) However, my friends, IT DOESN’T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY! Each of us has a choice, and Jesus compels us...

“But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them.

Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

DO TO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE THEM DO TO YOU.

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.

And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that.

And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full.

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

(Luke 6:27-38, NIV)

Do you want someone to steal your political sign? If not, then don’t steal someone else’s.

Do you want someone to boast if their favored presidential candidate wins? If not, then don’t boast if yours does.

Do you want someone to be mean and rude to you because you look different from them? Then don’t be mean and rude to others who look different from you.

Do you want someone to be treat you as less than human? Then don’t treat others that way.

Do you want someone to love and forgive you when you make mistakes? Then love and forgive others.

Do you want someone to listen to your fears and concerns? Then listen to theirs.

Do you want someone to show you mercy? Then show mercy to others.

Do you want someone to encourage you when you're feeling down or discouraged? Then encourage others!

Each of us has a choice: (1) Perpetuate and exacerbate the mess, or (2) choose to love and do to others as you would have them do to you. Each of us makes a difference a difference based on what we choose. What kind of difference are you making?

PRAYER:

Loving God of all creation, we need you! Our nation is a mess, and we can't clean it up without you. Forgive us, Lord, for all the times we have perpetuated the mess... Forgive us for the times we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves... Forgive us for the times we have focused on ourselves and not cared about others or what they thought... Thank you for loving us no matter what... Help us to love others as you love us..., and help us to treat others as we want to be treated... Help us, here and now, to surrender our lives to you... Be the Lord and leader of my life so that in all I am and do and say, others see you and your love. We pray for healing in our nation and commit our lives to spread your love... In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.