

- Preparatory to Church, Community and Change...

## The Parable of the Good Punk Rocker

- Earliest definite memory of this parable
  - church hall in Brucefield...
  - Scotroc? (Ewan Vernal from Deacon Blue!); set on a train; sound of going over tracks with hands onto knees!!
  - minister, school teacher or social worker....
  - who is it that stops - **the punk!**
- I missed all the nuances, too young and protected to understand about punks!!
  - too sheltered, naive and immature to understand the seriousness of actually being beaten up or knifed!
- Perhaps we learn this parable too early, robbing of its power to shock?

## Learned many things about this parable...

- Background about the road from Jerusalem to Jericho:
  - steep, deserted, rugged
  - prone to robbers
- About the **priests and the Levites**:
  - the strict Temple regulations, the uncleanness of a dead body, the possible ritual uncleanness
  - impression of prissy, self-righteousness....
  - ...and often little ability to identify with them!
- About the **Samaritans**:
  - hated by the Jews, heretics, outsiders, hated the Jews too...
  - yet we identify with the Samaritan, unconsciously identify with him!
  - when the first hearers would have more naturally wanted to identify with the priest or the Levite
- Even heard many re-tellings:
  - like the parable of the good punk rocker!
  - or stories of people seeking to apply it - famous American leader (**Bill Hybels?**) in airport, rushing to get next flight home to his family or on to next engagement, certainly after busy period of ministry.... sees older couple confused in the melee... **help, or walk by?....** does decide to help, misses his flight (real cost), yet **looks back and says not just able to help them but test of reality, integrity of his faith!**

## But what about the injured man?

- What was the question that prompted this story?
  - was it about whether we should be like priests or Samaritans?
  - no, about **"who is my neighbour?"**
- So what about the **injured man**, the **"neighbour"** in the story?
  - very rarely hear anything about him!!
  - he is in real trouble!
  - **exposed, without resources, dehydration, animals, perhaps in agony...**
- Somehow, we've been guilty - as the priest and Levite were - of not seeing the need!
  - of glancing past...
- Jesus' message here is:
  - **be like the Samaritan - and don't just glance past the need!**

## Church, Community and Change

- History of coming to this point with the Kirk Session
  - how can we share the good news in this community where God has placed us?
  - conscious that ultimate need is of a Saviour, of sins dealt with
  - but also conscious that our message needs reality to speak into people's lives!
  - that our "love for our neighbour" cannot let us shut our eyes to the wide range of needs that people have and feel
- Being practical:
  - how can someone who is intensely lonely, isolated know that "Jesus is always with you" is not just an empty phrase? - because that person is drawn into supportive relationships!
  - how can someone who is struggling with addiction, either their own or that of someone they love, know the freedom of Christ? - because God's people seek to help them break free from the addiction that ties them!
  - how will they know unless we go and tell?
- Church, Community and Change is a process that will help us:
  - identify our attitudes, and seek to become more Christ-like in the way we think about and relate to those around us;
  - help us as we seek to listen to the needs of this community, always asking the question "how can Christ's love be known in the midst of.....?"
  - and support us as we decide on ways to respond