

One Neighborhood Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time Monday, October 8, 2018
Gal 1:6-12; **Lk 10:25-37** (We cannot divide people by language, color, place of origin,
some other ethnic trait.)

“Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers’ victim?”

One of the greatest problems in human life, in human history, including in the modern time, is what we could call **tribalism or divisions rooted in ethnic differences**, so much so that people who belong to a different group aren’t regarded as actually fully human. A notorious example of this of course is found in Papua, New Guinea. In the 1920s there was a sociologist, anthropologist, Margaret Mead, that went to New Guinea, and she said oh, these people are wonderful; they are the most welcoming, sweet, kind, lovely people. And that was true everywhere she went. But what she didn’t say, what was learned later, is if one of these lovely people went from his village to a different village, they would kill him for trespassing. And in fact they had a murder rate in the 1950s and 60s worse than New York City per capita. And it’s all about **tribalism. It’s all about, well, this is my spot or this is our spot, not your spot; you don’t belong here; you don’t belong to us; we are different.**

Jesus is trying to break that down with the story of the Good Samaritan because for Jews Samaritans were aliens. They were aliens. They were foreigners, and in no way could they be considered good. So this very idea “good” Samaritan is itself an oxymoron for them. But Jesus is trying to get across this idea that **we cannot divide people by language, color, place of origin, some other ethnic trait.** It doesn’t matter. All of us are created to be neighbors to each other. **This whole world is one neighborhood**, one—one neighborhood, not many, not millions and billions, one neighborhood! And **we need to learn to regard all people as our neighbor.** That’s the actual reason he told this story of the Good Samaritan.