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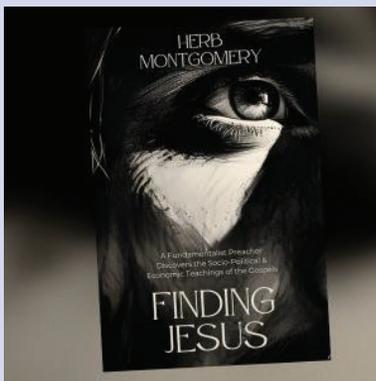
## ***Finding Jesus: A Fundamentalist Preacher Discovers the Socio-Political & Economic Teachings of the Gospels***

by Herb Montgomery

**Available now on Amazon!**

In *Finding Jesus*, author Herb Montgomery delves into the profound and often overlooked political dimensions of the gospels. Through meticulous analysis of biblical texts, historical context, and social discourse, this thought-provoking book unveils the gospels' socio-political, economic teachings as rooted in a profound concern for justice, compassion, and the well-being of the marginalized. The book navigates the intersections between faith and societal justice, presenting a compelling argument for a more socially engaged and transformative Christianity.

*Finding Jesus* is not just a scholarly exploration; it is a call to action. It challenges readers to reevaluate their understanding of Christianity's role in public life and to consider how the radical teachings of the gospels can inspire a renewed commitment to justice, equality, and compassion. This book is a must-read for those seeking a deeper understanding of the social implications of Christian faith and a blueprint for building a more just and inclusive society.



## **Thank You!**

We want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who supports the work of Renewed Heart Ministries. Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue our mission of love, justice, and compassion—even in a time when ministries like ours are being called to do more with less.

Your support means the world to us. Whether we're speaking into the broader society or engaging within our faith communities, we remain committed to advocating for a world that is inclusive, just, and safe for all. Your partnership helps keep that vision alive.

From all of us at Renewed Heart Ministries, thank you. We are so deeply grateful for you—and **we couldn't do this work without you.**

If you'd like to join them in supporting our work, please go to: [renewedheartministries.com](https://renewedheartministries.com) and click "Donate."

or you can **mail your support to:**  
Renewed Heart Ministries  
PO Box 1211  
Lewisburg, WV 24901

**From all of us here at Renewed Heart Ministry,**

**THANK YOU.**

**"We may say, then, that we seek the Kingdom of God, in part, by our economic behavior, and we fail to find it if that behavior is wrong."**

**Wendell Berry  
*Two Economies***

[renewedheartministries.com](https://renewedheartministries.com)



*Front cover artwork by Ali Montgomery.*



# Who Is My Neighbor

by Herb Montgomery

Our reading this month is from the gospel of Luke:

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

He answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.” (Luke 10:25-37)

Our reading in Luke is rooted in two previous narratives from both Mark and Matthew. Let’s begin by taking a moment to consider at those.

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

*continued on page 4*



## Upcoming Events

**AUGUST 16, 2025**

**Good News Fellowship**

Toronto, Ontario Canada

For info or Zoom link, email us at:

[info@renewedheartministries.com](mailto:info@renewedheartministries.com)

or call: 304.520.0030



## Weekly HeartGroup on Zoom Every Wednesday Night!

Each Wednesday evening, Glendale City Church hosts a Zoom HeartGroup led by Herb Montgomery. Our discussion each week will focus on the content in Renewed Heart Ministries weekly eSight articles and the *Jesus For Everyone* podcast published each Friday. The time of each Zoom session will be on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. Pacific/10:00 p.m. Eastern.

To receive the link for the Zoom meeting, email us at:

[info@renewedheartministries.com](mailto:info@renewedheartministries.com)



## Recommended Reading for August

*Brown Church: Five Centuries of Latina/o Social Justice, Theology, and Identity*

by Robert Chao Romero

Foreword INDIES Book of the Year Finalist

Interest in and awareness of the demand for social justice as an outworking of the Christian faith is growing. But it is not new. For five hundred years, Latina/o culture and identity have been shaped by their challenges to the religious, socio-economic, and political status quo, whether in opposition to Spanish colonialism, Latin American dictatorships, US imperialism in Central America, the oppression of farmworkers, or the current exploitation of undocumented immigrants. Christianity has played a significant role in that movement at every stage. Robert Chao Romero, the son of a Mexican father and a Chinese immigrant mother, explores the history and theology of what he terms the “Brown Church.” Romero considers how this movement has responded to these and other injustices throughout its history by appealing to the belief that God’s vision for redemption includes not only heavenly promises but also the transformation of every aspect of our lives and the world. Walking through this history of activism and faith, readers will discover that Latina/o Christians have a heart after God’s own.

### [Who Is My Neighbor](#) continued from page 3

When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions. (Mark 12:28-34)

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:34-40)

Luke’s version of this story is a little different from both Mark’s and Matthew’s. Luke’s author uses the dialogue regarding the greatest commandment to tell the story of the good Samaritan, which only appears in Luke’s version of the Jesus story.

The parable’s context is the deep-rooted hostility between Judean Jews and Israelite Samaritans. The story portrays a Samaritan in a positive light contrasted with a Judean priest and a Judean Levite. The story then transgresses Judeans’ negative stereotypes about Samaritans and challenges their lens of “us” versus “them.”

In the story, Jesus portrays the Samaritan as operating at a higher level of moral development than the priest and the Levite. The Samaritan comes to the aid of a man—likely a Judean—who has been beaten and left for dead after two religious figures pass by without helping. In doing so, the Samaritan transgresses significant social, political, economic and religious boundaries. For Jesus’ audience, who were primarily Judean, the parable invites them to see the story through the eyes of the wounded man in the ditch. It also pushes them to recognize their “neighbor” in someone who isn’t only different from them, but also an Other they considered to be morally inferior. In these ways, the story calls its audience to a new kind of social reality by subverting the way they thought about Samaritans and luring the audience into transgressing social boundaries, too.

Today, this story of the good Samaritan could have many applications. In matters of race, it could be used to transgress racial supremacy, bias, and prejudice. In matters of gender, this story could be used to challenge patriarchal privilege and gender-based exclusion. This narrative could tell a powerful “good Samaritan” story today in the context of South American migrants here in the U.S., to challenge the xenophobic way some folks view migrants. The story could also be told in the context of the LGBTQ community where the question “who is my neighbor” could be used to transgress homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

Who today in our social context has their differences used against them? What religious or social boundaries does this story call us to transgress? How does it challenge us to reach across differences and consider the other person to be our neighbor?

In a world marked by the beauty of our diversity, we can choose to make our differences walls that separate us or we can choose to lean into our rich diversity as humans, recognizing we are still connected to each other, and allow that diversity to enrich our community and make us stronger, more compassionate and broaden what justice looks like in a world that is transformed into a safe home for all of us. Our differences are part of the rich tapestry of humanity. Recognizing and respecting them is essential, and it’s equally important to see the other person as our “neighbor.” This is not just a matter of tolerance or civility; it is a deeply moral and spiritual vision that calls us to our shared humanity.

Differences are often the first things we notice. They can shape our assumptions and interactions, and even trigger our fears. Whether the color of someone’s skin, the language they speak, the person they love, or the faith they follow, markers of difference can trigger feelings of unfamiliarity or anxiety. History is filled with examples of how divisions based on difference have led to injustice, violence, and the dehumanization of those deemed “other.” But we can choose a different response to our differences. To live

*continued on page 6*

# SOCIAL JESUS

*A Blog Exploring the Intersection of Faith and Societal Justice*



## Recent Social Jesus Blog Posts on Patheos:



### ***A World Where Everyone Has Enough*** (Part 1 of *Bending Our World's Arc Toward Justice*)

It's a world where everyone has enough to thrive and no one is hoarding more than they need while others have needs that are not met.

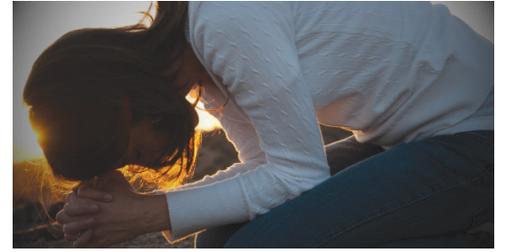
[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/world-where-everyone-enough/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/world-where-everyone-enough/)



### ***Jesus as Prophet of the Poor*** (Part 1 of *The Moral Dilemma and Challenge of Wealth*)

And in the gospel stories, Jesus emerged in Galilee as a prophet of the poor. These stories place Jesus squarely on the side of the poor.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/jesus-prophet-poor/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/jesus-prophet-poor/)



### ***The Lord's Prayer and Unrealized Justice*** (Part 1 of *A Prayer For Liberation*)

Many of us today have come to understand that it is problematic to only allow the male gender to be represented in the Divine.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/lords-prayer-unrealized-justice/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/lords-prayer-unrealized-justice/)



### ***A More Just Distribution of Wealth*** (Part 2 of *Bending Our World's Arc Toward Justice*)

This is why the poor, the hungry, the mourning are blessed: a community of just distribution will care for them.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/just-distribution-wealth/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/just-distribution-wealth/)



### ***Each Other's Fate*** (Part 2 of *The Moral Dilemma and Challenge of Wealth*)

The dilemma is that we are each other's fate. Society can become mutually supportive or collectively self-destructive.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/each-others-fate/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/each-others-fate/)



### ***A Gospel of No Interest and Debt Cancellation*** (Part 2 of *A Prayer For Liberation*)

If they fell on hard times, they were to be helped. No interest or profit was to be made and their debt would be ultimately forgiven.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/gospel-interest-debt-cancellation/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/gospel-interest-debt-cancellation/)



### ***Bending Our World's Moral Arc Toward Justice*** (Part 3 of *Bending Our World's Moral Arc Toward Justice*)

That famous moral arc of justice requires deliberate and courageous efforts from those who choose to stand on the side of justice

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/bending-worlds-arc-toward-justice/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/bending-worlds-arc-toward-justice/)



### ***The Problematic Responsibility of Wealth*** (Part 3 of *The Moral Dilemma and Challenge of Wealth*)

Faith traditions, moral philosophies, and humanitarian values all speak to the sacred responsibility that comes with wealth.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/problematic-responsibility-wealth/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/08/problematic-responsibility-wealth/)

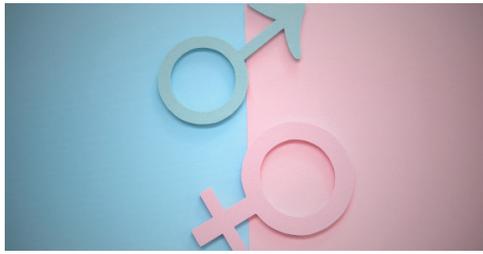


### ***Forgive Us Our Debts*** (Part 3 of *A Prayer For Liberation*)

It was less about forgiving general sins and trespasses and more about restoring the original Torah ethic of debt forgiveness.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/forgive-us-our-debts/](https://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/forgive-us-our-debts/)

*continued on page 6*



**Mary, Martha, and Gender Equality**  
(Part 1 of *The Bible and Gender Equality*)

In story of gender equality, women were not to be treated as less than, but recognized fully as teachers, too.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/mary-martha-gender-equality/](http://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/mary-martha-gender-equality/)



**The Bible and Gender Equality**  
(Part 2 of *The Bible and Gender Equality*)

The Bible and gender equality is a subject of ongoing theological debate drawing passionate voices both complementarian and egalitarian.

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/bible-gender-equality/](http://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/bible-gender-equality/)



**Gender Equality and Patriarchy in the Bible**  
(Part 3 of *The Bible and Gender Equality*)

We must ask ourselves today whether gender equality or patriarchy life-giving? Who is being hurt?

[patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/gender-equality-conflicting-statements/](http://patheos.com/blogs/socialjesus/2025/07/gender-equality-conflicting-statements/)

in a just and compassionate world that is a safe home for us all, we must learn to embrace our differences, viewing each person, no matter how different, as our neighbor: someone worthy of empathy, care, and dignity.

The parable of the Good Samaritan told in Luke’s gospel is a powerful illustration of this principle. When asked, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus responds with a tale where the hero is not a familiar priest or Levite, but a member of a group the Judeans despised. The Samaritan’s compassion for the injured man defines what it means to be a neighbor. It’s not just about shared identity, tribe, or affiliation; it’s also about shared humanity and an act of compassion by a compassionate person who happens to belong to a despised community.

In an age of social media echo chambers and our polarized society, it is easy to limit ourselves to those who think or believe as we do. But real community begins when we allow ourselves to see the humanity in someone who is different. When we do this, we challenge not only our own biases but also the broader social structures that perpetuate exclusion and inequality.

Seeing the other as our neighbor does not mean ignoring differences or pretending they don’t matter. It means recognizing that differences can enrich our collective experience and that empathy is the foundation of just society. Our reading this month calls us to humility—to listen, to learn, and to serve, even when it is inconvenient or uncomfortable.

Ultimately, seeing others as neighbors is a choice. It is a spiritual and ethical discipline that transforms how we relate to those with whom we share our world. It invites us into a larger story, one in which love transgresses human-made boundaries, dignity is upheld, and justice and peace become possible. If we are to build a future that honors every human being, we must begin by looking at the person beside us, no matter how different, and saying, “You are my neighbor.”

Thanks for checking in with us today.

Right where you are, keep living in love, choosing compassion, taking action, and working toward justice. ■



The work of helping people find life-giving ways to live out their faith through love, compassion, and justice are needed now more than ever. At Renewed Heart Ministries, we provide resources of faith and healing with the aim of renewing hope and inspiring action as we allow the Jesus story to inform each of us as we work together to shape our world into a compassionate, just and safe home for everyone.



Renewed Heart Ministries is a 501(c)3, grassroots ministry on the margins that prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities, especially those who have been the recipients of misinformed, faith-based harm. Your support enables us to be a life-giving, healing light in our faith communities and continue to be a voice for desperately needed change.

*You get to decide what shape our faith communities take and what voices get to be heard.*

You can support Renewed Heart Ministries with a one-time gift or by becoming one of our monthly contributors. Your donation can be made online at: [renewedheartministries.com](http://renewedheartministries.com) or by mail at:

Renewed Heart Ministries  
PO Box 1211, Lewisburg, WV 24901

**Whether you give \$5 or \$5,000,  
every amount helps us to continue our work.**

Please make sure you are receiving all of RHM's free resources by going to our website and clicking "sign up."

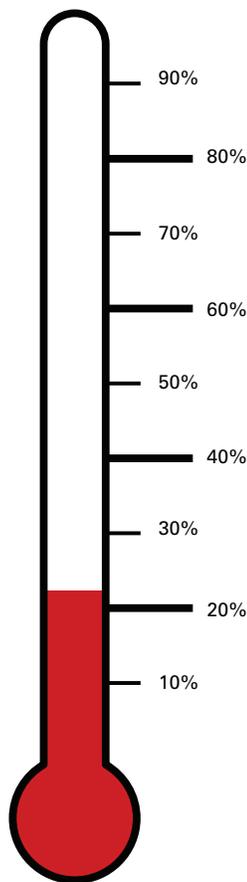
And **THANK YOU** for reading, listening to, sharing and supporting RHM's work. Thank you for the decisions you make every day to make our world a safer, compassionate, just home for everyone. Thank you for your dedication to engaging our world and the care you demonstrate, and for being such an important part of our community.

**2025 Projected Budget Goal:**  
**\$150,000.00**

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**YTD Budget \$100,000**  
**YTD Donations Received:**  
**\$32,850.60**

*Thank You!*



**Weekly YouTube Show!**

**Just Talking  
with Herb and Todd**

Each week, we'll be talking about the gospel lectionary reading for the upcoming weekend. We'll be talking about each reading in the context of love, inclusion, and social justice. Our hope is that our talking will be just talking (as in justice) and that during our brief conversations each week you'll be inspired to also do more than just talking.

If you teach from the lectionary each week, or if you're just looking for some thoughts on the Jesus story from a more progressive perspective within the context of social justice, check it out, you might like it.

You can find the latest show on YouTube  
[@herbandtoddjusttalking](https://www.youtube.com/@herbandtoddjusttalking).

Please Like, Subscribe, hit the Notification button, and leave us a comment. All of this will help us get this new YouTube channel off the ground.

Thanks in advance for watching!



## Are you receiving all of RHM's free resources each week?

You can find RHM on Blusky, Facebook, Instagram and Threads for daily posts. Our JFE podcast can be subscribed to through the podcast platform you use. You can also receive inspiration in your inbox from RHM delivered to you email inbox daily or weekly.

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*Sign up today so you don't miss a thing!*

You can find Renewed Heart Ministries on Blusky, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Meta's Threads. If you haven't done so already, please follow us on your chosen social media platforms for our daily posts.

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**"Choosing to keep working for justice, even when the challenges seem impossible, is a powerful act of hope that refuses to surrender to despair."**



[renewedheartministries.com](https://renewedheartministries.com)



## The Social Jesus Podcast

A podcast where we talk about the intersection of faith and social justice, and what a first-century, Jewish, prophet of the poor from Galilee offers us today in our work of love, compassion and justice.

**Find The Social Jesus Podcast at:**

<https://the-social-jesus-podcast.simplecast.com/>



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