

Scout Sunday, February 10, 2019
Matthew 7:1-14, 24-29

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It seems appropriate that the Gospel reading for Scout Sunday, Matthew 7, addresses judging others, profaning the holy, Ask / Search / Knock, the Golden Rule, the narrow gate and hearers & doers. These are the same values that scouting embraces.

On my honor, I will do my best, to do my duty, to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight. Scouting BSA, Scout Oath.

The Scout Oath says "Obey the Scout Law", we have just heard the Scout Law - Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean & Reverent, and the Scout Oath says "at all times." This can be a big challenge. Are we expected to follow these guidelines 24/7?

As a Scout progresses through each of the 7 ranks of the Scouting program, they participate in a board or review to check on how they are doing. One of the questions asked by Mr T at these boards (even the Eagle Scout Board of Review) is "Which of the 12 points of the Scout Law is most important to you, and why?" There is no right answer. There is probably a different answer for each review and for each Scout!! These changes reflect a Scout's growth, maturity and the events that are shaping their lives at school, at home and in their community. The important point of the question is to have a Scout think about how Scouting values are part of their daily lives.

The Gospel today tells us "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged". Scouting tells us to be friendly, courteous & kind. Does a friend judge you? Do you judge a friend? Or do you accept one another for who you are and find ways to work together and help one another to achieve a common goal? What is the best way to find and keep friends? By being a friend.

The Boy Scouts of America helps young men make friends by integrating them into a close group where they are allowed to have fun, explore, and solve problems together. Even though there are a lot of different activities that are qualified as scouting events or even just one for relaxation such as going to a sound tigers game, The Golden rule is always going to be a very important factor in everything that we do.

The golden rule states, "In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." If you don't want someone to throw popcorn at you, don't throw popcorn at someone else. Just like how Scouts promise to themselves and God to be kind and courteous to people, everyone should make it a point to be kind and courteous, and not only to everyone but everything.

There was a point when I had just become patrol leader early 2015, and we went to a once in a 3 year, weekend camping trip called Connjam in Orange Ct. And on that trip, all of the scouting executives kept repeating in every speech "The Power of One" so I sat down with Bruce Tomasko, and we talked about the meaning of the power of one. And what we had come up with is that, the power of one person is so intense, that one person can do whatever they put their mind to. We went deeper and came to the conclusion that the power of a community or even a scout troop is something that is unmatched. It really wasn't put into perspective for me until the Saturday afternoon of that weekend. I was sitting in a chair in our camping area, and there were some kids running in a no running area due to tents and cooking equipment that may be around. So being a new Patrol Leader, I raised my voice and told the group of kids to stop running. They shortly did but took off running again, that's when at the time Senior Patrol Leader Jon Baronavski, went after the kids and told them that they should respect authority even if they didn't know who the person was. I was surprised to see Jon even chase after the kids so that they would stop running. and that is when I realized that the power of one, can quickly be changed into the power of many.

Although the power of many is astonishing, one strong leader is the backbone to any group of people. When a group of people have an experienced, outspoken, leader, anything is possible. The road to eagle was not one well traversed. There were a lot of ups and downs and times of wanting to give up. but as the narrow gate Matthew 7:13 says, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it." This means that whoever has the easy road is going down the path of destruction. The path with many hardships is the one that will lead you to a successful life. Mrs B. always told the scouts during our weekly meeting, that you will only get out of scouting what you put into it. Taking the easy way may feel like the right decision when doing it, but in the end, the satisfaction isn't comparable to taking the hard way and working through problems to finally get to the end.