

**February 22, 2022**

Jesus through example and teaching set a towering standard of unlimited love before us, a standard which is almost impossible to achieve. The point is that we need to struggle and to try! There is a story which I read years ago which speaks to this situation. It goes like this.

**THE STARFISH THROWER**

A man was walking down a beach at sunset. As he was walking along, he began to perceive another man in the distance. As he grew nearer, he noticed that the other man kept leaning down, picking something up, and throwing it out into the water. Time and time again, he repeated this action, i.e. hurling things into the ocean. As the first man approached even closer, he noticed that the other man was picking up starfish which had been washed up on the beach and - one at a time – he was throwing them back into the water. The first man was puzzled! He approached the other and said, “Hello, I was wondering what you are doing” The other responded, “I’m throwing these starfish back into the ocean. It’s low tide right now and all these starfish have been washed up on the shore. If I don’t throw them back, they will die for lack of oxygen.” “I understand,” the first man replied, “but there must be thousands of starfish on this beach. You can’t possibly get to all of them. There are simply too many. And don’t you realize that this is probably happening on hundreds of beaches up and down this coast? Can’t you see that you can’t possibly make any real difference?” The thrower smiled, bent down, and picked up yet another starfish, and as he threw it back into the sea, he replied, “Made a difference to that one!”

The moral of the story is – obviously - that everything you do, no matter how small it may seem, can make a difference in the larger scheme of things. Jesus, last Sunday in a portion of his Sermon on the Plain in Luke, talked to us about a number of those unattainable standards of behavior: “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, . . .” I can’t speak for everyone but I would have to guess that most of us do not do real well at loving our enemies or blessing those who curse us. I freely admit that I am unable to transcend my humanity to reach such lofty, demanding standards. But just because those teachings sound so difficult does not mean that each one of us can’t make an effort at implementing some of them into our lives. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. That sounds to me like a good place to start. Amen

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