

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

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JULY 21, 2024

Love (Do unto others)



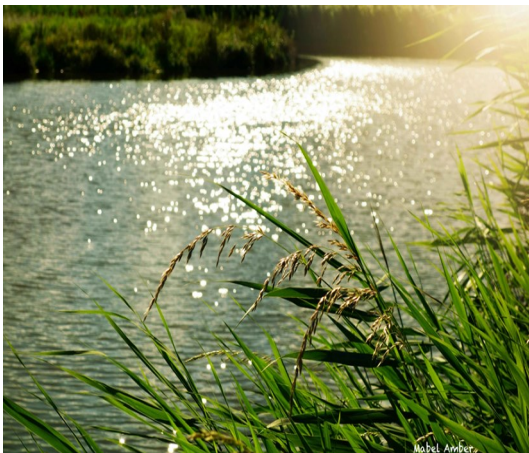
In our last episode, we briefly looked at several world religions. In our abbreviated tour, we discovered a version of the golden rule weaves a common thread among the major world religions, as does a shared idea for what it means to be human.

Page 2

**EVERYONE
HAVE A
WONDERFUL
WEEK!!**

DONATE

Ways (Like a river)



According to the National Geographic Society, "A river is a ribbon-like body of water that flows downhill from the force of gravity." There are over three million rivers in the world, according to the US Geological Survey. And each river carves its own path towards its destination, pulled by the same invisible force that makes life on earth possible.

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Love (Do unto others) *cont. from pg 1*

In this episode, we focus our attention on Christian ideas of what it means to be human. Like other religions, love of self and others plays a central role in Christian ideals. Leo Buscaglia writes, "There are no strings attached to Christian love." God's love is unconditional and so must our love be if we truly model our lives after Jesus.

Christianity differs from other religions in one very dramatic way. We believe God lived among us fully human. And we strive to model our own lives after His example. This means being human for Christians is to reflect God's image in the daily choices we make.

One does not have to believe Jesus is God in order to model your life after Him. But without God's help it is impossible to reach such high standards for loving others. It is only through God's grace that we recognize Jesus is our Way to eternal life.

Unconditional love forms the foundation for the Way Jesus offers for eternal life. We're called to love God and others unconditionally. And Jesus offers a living demonstration of unconditional love.

We began our series with the question, "What does it mean to be human?" And discovered a state of humanness psychologists call self-actualization. Simply be the best version of ourselves we can be.

This does sound simple, so what doesn't it happen for more of us? And what does love have in common with self-actualization?

Leo Buscaglia suggested this addition to loving others as we love ourselves. "Give unto God and the world all that you are and all that you can be." We enter the world eager to be the best version of ourselves, totally dependent on love for survival and ready to discover all that's out there to love.

Then life gets in the way. We get hurt, and our humanness takes over, beginning with our instinct for survival. Perhaps we touch a hot pan, recoil and store away for daily use to not touch hot pans. Since the pan is inanimate, it can't love us back. And the hurt came out of our own action. It's a learning experience. We heal and only occasionally forget and repeat our mistake.

More often, our burn isn't physical, but emotional, and comes from other humans. Sometimes, harsh words from someone we love wounds us. Sometimes, the hurt includes physical harm. The scars left behind may not always be visible to others. And others feel the impact of the wound, usually without understanding its source. They too may feel wounded or rejected by us.

Here in lies the problem. Humans naturally tie strings to love driven, at least in part, by our own desire to be loved. And life experiences point us toward love qualified by exchange. Quid pro quo. I'll love you if... And this simply doesn't work as well as we might think.

Let us love one another; because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:7-12

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom Jonathon Misner
 Sylvia Pittman Terrance Williams
 Mirium Watson



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
 HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux
 Norma Buzzard Nancy Elston

COMING UP THIS WEEK

JULY 22 - 28

July 22	Mon	2:30pm	Staff Meeting
July 23	Tue	10:00am	Food Distribution
		3:00pm	CDC Board Meeting
July 24	Wed		
July 25	Thu		
July 26	Fri		
July 27	Sat		
July 28	Sun	10:30am	New Beginnings Contemporary Worship

(We are live on [Facebook](#) and our newly launched [YouTube channel](#). You can find these links along with more information about us on our website at [FlintAsbury.org](#).)

Upcoming Worship Series "Personhood"

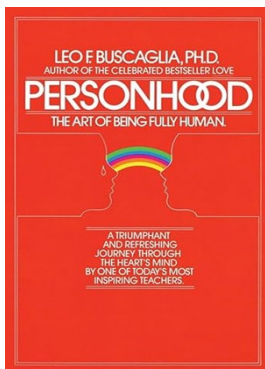


Next Sunday we begin a new series based, in large part, on *Personhood: The Art of Being Fully Human*, by Leo Buscaglia, PhD.

We often talk about salvation as beginning with spiritual rebirth. More importantly, the results of spiritual rebirth is seen by others as we change our focus from ourselves to others.

A downside emerges when our enthusiasm results in losing ourselves. However, while Jesus often asks us to leave our baggage behind, He never asks us to leave who we are behind.

Book Club News



We finish our current worship series, *Doubt*, on Sunday June 23. We were guided along the way by Adam Hamilton's book, *Wrestling with Doubt, Finding Faith*.

Being Fully Human, by Leo Buscaglia, PhD.

Felice Leonardo Buscaglia (March 31, 1924 – June 12, 1998) spent his early childhood in Aosta, Italy, according to Wikipedia. But as an adult, he was known as "Dr. Love."

Education at the University of Southern California.

The Professor was known for introducing himself on elevators. With his back to the door he would say something like, "This might be the only chance I'll ever get to meet you and I don't want to miss this chance."

Our companion book for our new worship series beginning on Sunday, June 30, is *Personhood: The Art of*

Professor Buscaglia earned this title by his passion for offering insight to others as an author, motivational speaker, and professor in the Department of Special

In *Personhood*, Buscaglia offers an historic view of the ethical principles guiding our common humanity. He emphasizes our individual responsibilities, through our own uniqueness, for completing our contribution to a vast universal tapestry. The full actualization of the world depends on yours and my self-actualization. Therefore, the challenge facing all of us is to work at being fully human.

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Cyndi Worship Leader
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Jonathon & Terrance Production Team
Yasheah & Mirium Nursery
Christine Cafe

Upcoming Worship Series — “Personhood” ..

Dr. Buscaglia’s life passion was for all of humanity to reach our full potential of personhood. Because of his focus and training, the context he knew was psychological science. The foundational understanding for much of his view of humanity came from the works of Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

Buscaglia writes in his book’s forward:

Loren Eiseley describes our world as a place “where even a spider refuses to lie down and die if a rope can still be spun to a star.” Like the spider, there are those of us who refuse to stop spinning, even when it would appear to be far more sophisticated to be without hope. Our rope, though perhaps frail, can still be spun with optimism, curiosity, wonder, love and the sincere desire to share a trip to the stars. Our goal is worth the struggle, for in this case, the star to which we aspire is full humanity for all.

My context comes from my knowledge and passion for following Jesus Christ. My own experience of rebirth is direct correlation between spiritual awareness and self-actualization.

No one can see the Kingdom of God without being born again ...

John 3:3

Our theme text for this series comes from the 3rd chapter of John’s Gospel which begins with the story of Nicodemus. He is confused when Jesus begins their conversation with the idea of spiritual rebirth.

Likewise, I’m guessing that most persons are confused by the idea of self-actualization.

Here is the outline if you want to read the chapters from our companion book, as we progress through our series:

June 30	Chapters Intro-I
July 7	Chapter II
July 14	Chapter III
July 21	Chapter IV (through Connectiveness)
July 28	Chapter IV & V

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We share our weekly episodes on [Facebook](#) and our [YouTube channel](#). We go live at 10:30 am. You can find these links along with more information about us, or join our live broadcast on our [website](#) at FlintAsburyChurch.org.


Pastor Tommy

Leo Buscaglia. *Personhood: The Art of Being Fully Human*. NY: Random House, 1986.

“Feed Flint”



“Feed Flint”



A meal goes a long way for a senior living alone, a family struggling to make ends meet, or a child fearful of empty shelves at home. But for the residents of Flint who carry the effects of lead-tainted water, nutrition is critical. Feed Flint provides locally grown, chemical-free, fresh produce to residents living in and around Flint. And we're hoping that you can help us provide 10,000 meals this summer.

Feed Flint includes takeout meals, produce boxes with recipes, and home deliveries as part of our work to guide and support families in moving to sustainable abundance. The reality is that Michigan's food insecurity levels got worse during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this summer's recovery is leaving behind those at the most risk of having to miss meals.

Flint families continue to struggle with the ongoing effects of the water crisis.

We're bringing together the resources of the Asbury Community Development Corporation. This includes Asbury Farms, the South Flint Soup Kitchen, the Asbury Community Help Center, multiple food pantries, and our Sizzling Culture Mobile Food Trailer. Our plan is to care for our neighbors when they need it most. We accept all people as they are, and our doors are always open to anyone.

Asbury Farms provides locally grown produce used to create fabulous and nutritious meals. Our seed-to-table approach is community-based. This not only helps families make it through emergencies and crises. We help move families towards sustainable abundance.

Our Sizzling Culture program provides jobs and new skills to our city's youth. This includes year-round employment. Our staff and most of our volunteers come from the neighborhoods we support. We call this sustainable abundance because families move from need-based on scarcity to enough based on community-generated abundance.

Our work is also about food and justice. Our vision is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into active citizens. And all residents can enjoy safety, good health, and a culture that fosters life-long learning and satisfying lives. This summer, help us address food insecurity and strengthen Flint's budding local food system by supporting the Feed Flint campaign. Thank you for taking the time to see what we're doing and considering how you can help.

**Donate to our Feed Flint Campaign by visiting:
flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate**

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

Let us love one another, because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:7-12

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read 1 John 4:7-12 and Luke 6:27-28. What does the phrase “God is love” mean for you? What enemies are you called to love that you believe don’t deserve your love?
2. Read this week’s articles titled Love. What does love look like for you? How can you show love towards others with whom you disagree?
3. How can the members of your group help you this week and on-going to help you to be more receptive to hearing and understanding the Word of God? Pray for each other to have the Holy Spirit bless you with more courage.



South Flint Soup Kitchen ...

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Our clients need bottled water for cooking,
going with sack lunches, to bathe and brush
their teeth with, and MORE!

Donations are accepted Monday-Friday

11:00am-12 Noon at South Flint Soup Kitchen,

3410 Fenton Rd (3 blocks north of Atherton Rd)

Flint MI 48507

Any questions, please call 239-3427 or 235-0016 or

Email us at southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

To donate: www.mightycause.com/feedflint



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We need your help to purchase fencing to keep our furry friends from eating up all our crops and not sharing with us.

How You Can Donate

- Text "FARMCDC"
- to 53-555
- Scan QR Code

Donate Now



More Information :



(810) 235-0016



funding@flintasbury.org

We'll have a limited number of copies of *Personhood*. But copies are available through most book retailers and libraries. The price on Amazon as of the publication of this article is \$13.99 for paperback, published in 1986. Used copies are available for under \$10.00. The original hardcover, published 10 years earlier sells for just over \$6.00.

Here is the schedule of chapters for our *Human Series*:

June 30	Chapters Intro-I
July 7	Chapter II
July 14	Chapter III
July 21	Chapter IV (through Connectiveness)
July 28	Chapter IV & V

Our Book Club does not meet as a group. However, our weekly messages reference that week's chapters. You can anticipate spoiler alerts unless you keep up with the pace. You can purchase your own copy or visit your local library.

You can contact our office with questions, by phone or simply type your question or enter a prayer request on our website's homepage — FlintAsburyChurch.org.

Pastor Tommy

Leo Buscaglia. *Personhood: The Art of Being Fully Human*. NY: Random House, 1986.

Cash or checks can be sent to/dropped off at South Flint Soup Kitchen, 3410 Fenton Road, Flint, MI 48507. Please make checks out to South Flint Soup Kitchen!

Online at www.mightycause.com/feedflint

Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday 11am-12Noon. Calling ahead is not necessary, but our needs change frequently, so calling ahead of time is a good idea!

Give time! We need volunteers!!! Volunteers arrive at 9:30am and are done by 12:30pm. Tasks include handing out lunches, assisting in the Angel Closet, light cleaning, putting together items to pass out to clients, and more.

Refer people!!

Questions??? Call 810-239-3427
or email southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

The writer of Ecclesiastes makes the claim, "Every river flows into the sea, but the sea is not yet full. The water returns to where the rivers began, and starts all over again." Which isn't technically true. But, as a metaphor, rivers get the writer's point across that history repeats itself.

However, rivers also illustrate fluid change. Since the water flows toward the sea, each time you enter the river, you're in different water.

People often describe differing religions as rivers, with each one flowing toward a common destination. Our comparison suggests a subtle, yet undeniable pull, outside of human control, to which all are affected. Most rivers flow to the sea, but not all. Nevertheless, this common idea symbolizes the commonality shared by different religions.

Rivers also have special meaning in religions. Because Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, no trip to the Holy Land is complete unless one visits the Jordan to reenact our baptism. For Hindus, the Ganges River is personified by a goddess, Ganga Ma. And is thought to be a purifier of sins and granter of salvation. For Buddhists, rivers serve as metaphors for the path to enlightenment. And since the Mekong River flows through multiple Southeast Asia countries, it is a source of life and a path that connects various Buddhist communities.

And religions offer a path. A Way towards a destination.

Taoism is one of several ancient religions that either explicitly or implicitly offer its followers a prescription for living known as "the Way." Taoism was founded by Lao Tzu who described the way in a rather short book of scripture sometime around the 3rd or 4th century. The Way is described in less than 6000 words. Taoists oppose violence, oppression and power.

Confucianism, founded around 550 BCE, offered no formulas for humanity or divine commandments focusing instead on tangible, day-to-day activities, complexities and dilemmas of life. One of its axioms says simply, "What you do not wish others should do unto you, do not do unto them." Confucianists pursue their role in ordering and harmonizing the world.

Around the same time as Confucius lived in China, in India, Prince Siddhartha Gautama left behind great wealth and power on a quest to eliminate suffering. Followers live by a moderate, but comprehensive and practical system of ethics known as the "Middle Path." The goal of Buddhists is to achieve harmony with the ultimate Oneness.

Followers of the ancient religion Hindu strive for truth, goodness, and righteousness. And their scriptures offer a way for followers to live in harmony with the world and others.

Mohammed lived by example, a life exemplifying justice and charity. His revelation, compiled into the Koran, offers a way that calls for Muslims to offer hospitality and show kindness and respect to others. Followers experience a deep feeling of community.

The Way adopted by Hebrews profoundly influenced Islam and Christianity. Followers of Judaism seek to create a happier world for all towards a divine unity where each person has freedom of choice and is, therefore, solely responsible for wrong choices, misdeeds transgressions and loss of self.

These are just a few of the observations made by Leo Buscaglia in this week's chapter from our companion book. Neither of us dare think we can speak about what others believe without risking misrepresentation. Our observations are from a distance, so any comparisons are void of nuances that differentiate one worldview from another.

Nevertheless, we expect common threads since all religions are rooted in a human interpretation of the mysterious power that binds humanity together and explains our origins and the expectations of the God who created us. As such, each religion offers a way of life that recognizes our humanness and desperate need to know ourselves and to be all that we can be. *Page 14*

According to Luke, one day Jesus was asked by an expert on interpreting scripture about the Way to eternal life. Jesus responded with a question. "How do you interpret what scriptures tell us?" The expert quickly answered by quoting text. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind", the man said and, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

Which one acted like a neighbor towards the man attacked by the robbers? The one who was kind to him. Go and do the same.

Luke 10:36-37

This expert knew the scriptures upon which followers of Judaism look to for their Way. He had this in common with Jesus, who acknowledged He agreed with the expert's answer that comes from two different places in scripture.

Luke tells us the expert was testing Jesus. After all, he already knew what he believed, but wanted to know what Jesus believed. What did they have in common? Perhaps Jesus knew the expert's question was meant to challenge Him. To draw out whatever discrepancy, no matter how insignificant, that existed between their respective worldviews.

If Jesus was annoyed, His words didn't show it. Instead, Jesus told the man, in front of all present, "Good answer," And Jesus encouraged the man to go and do what he said he believed.

But Luke's story doesn't end there. The expert responded with another question. "Who is my neighbor?" he asked. Who are my people, my neighbors? Which others are included in the group I'm to love as much as I love myself?

Jesus tells a story to illustrate. A man is robbed and left dying from his injuries. It's understood the injured man was one of them because he was traveling from Jerusalem. Two people walked by, crossing to the other side of the road. They belonged to the same religious group as the expert. They shared the same religious beliefs. They followed the same way. And both passed by the person in desperate need.

Jesus then says a Samaritan stops and helps the man. Hold on! Samaritans are the other. In fact, they're among the worse other. They believe different things, worship differently, and don't do good deeds for people from Jerusalem.

Jesus didn't seem to care what the Samaritan believed. He focused on what the Samaritan did for the person in need.

In fact, actions dominate this story. The expert's question was about what he needs to do. Not what he believes. And who is

included in his circle? So Jesus tells a story illustrating that beliefs only matter when put into action.

As Christians, we believe Jesus is the Way to eternal life. And that this is all that's needed for salvation. Hold on! If this is true, and I believe Jesus is the Way, why wasn't Jesus worried about what the Samaritan in His story believed?

Because, while beliefs matter, without action, beliefs are simply theory at best and likely a sign we're lying to ourselves and others. To believe in Jesus is to model our lives after Jesus.

You can join us each Sunday in person or online by clicking the button on our [website's](#) homepage - [Click here to watch](#). This button takes you to our [YouTube channel](#). You can find more information about us on our website at [FlintAsburyChurch.org](#).

A reminder that we publish this newsletter that we call the *Circuit Rider* each week. You can request this publication by email. Send a request to FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com or let us know when you send a message through our [website](#). We post an archive of past editions on our website under the tab, Connect - choose [Newsletters](#).

Pastor Tommy

Love is an act of free will. We are given the freedom to make choices, including choosing who we love. However, as Christians, in modeling our lives after Jesus, we strive to make decisions according to God's will.

Jesus tells us unconditional love extends beyond those who love us back, including our enemies. Including persons who have done us harm. This includes those with whom we disagree and even those whom we firmly believe are inconsistent with God's will.

This sort of love is hard, but conditional love is not God's intent. Scripture is clear. God is love. Also, God wants us to love ourselves unconditionally. And this is one place where self-actualization is critical.

Our best self is being the best version of ourselves. The version reflecting God's image. And we reflect God's image when our love shows through.

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Pastor Tommy

Parts of our series was inspired by Leo Buscaglia. *Personhood: The Art of Being Fully Human*. NY: Random House, 1986.



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Flint Asbury Community Development Corporation

South Flint Soup Kitchen

3410 Fenton Rd. Flint, MI 48507

Meet up

Eat up!



Ages
0-18

Mon - Weds - Friday

Breakfast

9-10am

June 17 - Aug 30

Lunch

12-1pm

www.SouthFlintSoupKitchen.org
www.FlintAsburyCDC.org



MEET UP and EAT UP!!

Healthy food to fuel your
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Served at: Asbury UMC 1653 Davison Rd Flint

When: Summer 2024

Meals: Breakfast 8:30am—9:30am

Lunch 12Noon-1:00pm

Days meals are served: Monday—Friday

For more information: (810) 235-0016



Southside Community Resource Hub

3410 Fenton Rd

Flint, MI 48507

Work: 810-239-3427

Cell: 810-347-6633

For more info: Contact Tyonna McIntyre-Owner

FOOD GIVE AWAY

FREE

UPCOMING
DATES

July 19

Aug. 21

Sept 18

Oct. 16

Nov. 20

Dec. 18

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southflintsoupkitchen.org

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TABLE RENTALS ARE \$20, AND YOU CAN RESERVE ONE BY JULY 20TH AT 810-394-2755.





Dear Friends in Christ in the Michigan Conference:

Unwinding following an eventful week at the North Central Jurisdictional Conference, I heard the shocking news of the shooting at a campaign rally for former President Donald Trump. The shooter and one rallygoer are dead, others are injured, and former President Trump was struck in the ear by a bullet.

Such violence has no place in our politics or our society. In the name and spirit of Jesus, I encourage us to continue to find ways to decrease violence and foster peace. I invite us to pray for President Trump, his family, and all affected by this horrific act of violence.

Grace and Peace,

David Alan Bard

Michigan Area Bishop