# Sermon - Year C, 4th Sunday after Trinity – 13th July 2025

Lectionary Readings: Deuteronomy 30:9–14, Psalm 25:1–10, Colossians 1:1–14, Luke 10:25–37

Sermon… Faith that Acts in Love

I wonder—what does faith mean to you?

It’s a word we hear often in church. We talk about people “having faith,” we describe others as “faithful,” we speak of faith in hard times. But what does that actually look like in our daily lives?

In our reading from Colossians, Paul gives us a picture. He begins his letter by praising the Colossians for their faith in Jesus Christ—a faith, he says, that is anchored in Jesus. It’s not just belief in a higher power, or a vague religious feeling. It’s a deep trust in a person. A commitment to Jesus that shapes everything else. And because it is rooted in Jesus, their faith bears fruit.

And what is that fruit? Paul says it clearly: love. Their faith is revealed in how they love—all the saints. That’s the test of real, living faith. It shows itself in love.

But how do we live that kind of faith today?

Our reading from Deuteronomy reminds us that faith, and the life God calls us to, isn’t something mysterious or impossible. “It is not too hard for you… not far away… but very near you—it is in your mouth and in your heart so that you may obey it.” In other words, this life of faith is not out of reach. It’s not about getting everything right or understanding everything fully. It’s about choosing God. About choosing to live the way of love and trust, day by day.

And it’s this very passage that Jesus echoes in today’s gospel.

You know, sometimes we make faith more complicated than it needs to be. In our Gospel reading, a lawyer—an expert in religious law—asks Jesus, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” And when Jesus turns the question back to him, he answers well: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, and love your neighbour as yourself.”

So far, so good.

But then, the lawyer asks another question: “Who is my neighbour?” It’s as if he wants to put limits on the command. He knows what the scriptures say, but surely, it can’t be that simple?

And yet, Jesus doesn’t give him a theological explanation. Instead, he tells a story—a story we know well: the parable of the Good Samaritan.

It’s a story of someone who sees a need and responds. Who refuses to cross over to the other side. Who doesn’t leave the responsibility to someone else. And it’s a story of someone unexpected—a Samaritan, an outsider, someone disliked by the Jewish community—who becomes the example of mercy and love.

Faith, Jesus says, looks like this. Not words, not status, not theory. But love in action. Sacrificial, inconvenient, interrupting love.

This is what Paul was praising in the Colossians. A faith that was bearing fruit in love. A love that stretched to all of God’s people, even the difficult ones, the outsiders, the ones it would have been easier to avoid.

And so, what does that mean for us?

Well, perhaps it means being open to the interruptions in our day. To the moments when someone needs help and we’re tempted to pass by. Perhaps it means refusing to leave it to someone else. Perhaps it means loving not just the people we like, or agree with, but even those we’d rather avoid.

And it means choosing God—not just on Sunday mornings—but in the conversations we have, the choices we make, the way we respond to the needs around us. Choosing God means choosing love. Every time.

As Paul reminds us in Colossians, faith is not static. It is growing, deepening, and strengthening. We are being made more and more into people who live with compassion, humility, patience, and kindness. But it begins with this: choosing to trust Jesus, and to let that trust shape how we live.

So today, let’s ask ourselves:

- Are we living a faith that bears fruit in love?
- Are we loving where we are, or crossing to the other side?
- Are we open to the interruptions God sends our way?

Because faith, friends, is not just a belief we hold. It’s a life we live. And it begins simply: Love the Lord your God with all your heart… and your neighbour as yourself.

Let us pray:

Loving God,
Thank you that your word is not far off, but very near.
Help us to choose you each day,
To trust in Christ and live out our faith in love.
Make us attentive to the needs around us,
And willing to respond with compassion, even when it costs.
May our faith bear fruit,
And our love reveal your kingdom here on earth.
Amen.