



Today's Lesson

No Trespassing

Power Point notes available at:
www.unityofbakersfield.org

No Trespassing

When you hear the word trespassing what comes to mind?

The Oxford Dictionary defines trespassing two ways:

- 1) Entering someone's personal property or land without permission;
- 2) Committing an offense against a person or set of rules as in a form of transgression or wrongdoing.

No Trespassing

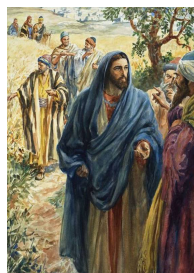
**NO
HUNTING
OR
TRESPASSING**
WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION
VIOLATORS
WILL BE PROSECUTED



First definition:

Every fall my mother would make sure my dad posted no trespassing signs around our 30 acre farm that was part of a 200 acre woodland.

No Trespassing



Second definition:

Even Jesus had something to say about trespassing: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Matt 6:12

No Trespassing

The idea that anyone has the right to come into the life and affairs of another with their own ideas, comments, should and shouldn't do's, judgments about who they can and cannot be, is trespassing. So it begs the question:

How far can someone go in pointing out to a relative, a friend, or even a chance acquaintance a need for change in conduct or actions without trespassing?

No Trespassing

In her book Take Command, Unity minister Vera Dawson Tait had this to say about trespassing:

"We respect a '**No Trespassing**' sign on a piece of property. Why is it then that there are areas in the lives of persons whose lives touch ours, even superficially, upon which we sometimes feel we have the right to encroach? The obvious answer is that we may feel that our love and concern for another give us the right to try to show him or her where they are going wrong.

No Trespassing

Yet, do we have the right (unless he or she is too young or are unable to evaluate what is right or wrong) to say, 'You should not be doing this or that?' Should we not respect the 'No Trespassing' sign in their life, invisible though it may be?"

Jesus again warns his disciples to "Take heed to yourselves: If your brother trespasses against you, rebuke him." (Luke 17:3)

No Trespassing

There is a fundamental ideal that people try to live by:

No one has any right to coerce another to accept their beliefs. Every person has a right to keep their own beliefs until they have a desire to change them.

However, that fundamental right goes out the window when a person sees a friend or loved one engaging in a behavior that is detrimental to their well-being.

No Trespassing

The act of trespassing can take on many forms so here is an example of how it happens on a daily basis in some people's lives:

How many of you believe in a physical place called hell? How many of you believe you're not saved? How many of you believe that unless you belong to a certain religious belief you will not go to heaven? How many of you believe that it is your duty to save people from the devil?

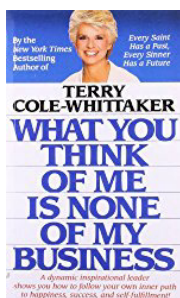
No Trespassing

Jesus never taught any of these things! Yet, there are people who see you and me and anyone not of their way of thinking acting in detrimental way to our spiritual well-being.

Do you let them tell you how to believe? How to develop and have a relationship with the Lord of your being? Do they have a right to trespass on your beliefs?

Jesus said, "NO!" If anyone trespasses against you, rebuke them!"

No Trespassing



In her book What You Think Of Me Is None Of My Business, Terry Cole-Whittaker writes:

Learning to post "No Trespassing" signs is not so hard once you realize that no matter what is going on in your life, others are not the source.

No Trespassing

People may be the avenue, the channel, through which you receive happiness, well-being, and prosperity flow, but they are not the cause. The source is God--your Higher Self. Unhappily, we often see ourselves as open fields allowing anyone, our parents, children, mates, employers, and friends to give us security, abundance, and happiness. And, as we think that what we want emanates from others, we allow them to trespass against us.

No Trespassing

To start posting your no trespassing signs requires you to use your own mind, to go within to the all knowing mind of God and there make the connection only you can make. And when you have made that connection you will become conscious of your spiritual self, and with that divine awareness give up your dependence on people, places, and things as the source of your good. "No Trespassing Here."

No Trespassing

Since recorded time people have trespassed against each other time and time again. When we stop and look how we have gathered information to define ourselves much of what we took is there because of someone trespassing on our belief system.

And it starts at an early age, as in the case of this story about a boy named Joe:

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Joe entered school with great enthusiasm. He liked his classmates and they liked him. He liked his teacher and in the beginning received encouragement from her. All signs pointed to success, and yet success was to elude Joe.

As time passed, Joe had a hard time grasping the rapid pace of his surroundings. Just as he was on the edge of understanding a subject, the teacher would move to another subject or to another harder lesson.

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By the end of his first year in school Joe had fallen far behind his classmates and became discouraged. Thinking Joe was slow, his parents put him in summer school, hoping it would prepare him for second grade. It didn't, and by the end of the second year the teacher suggested to his parents that Joe be kept back. They said no. Joe was just slow and needed more time than the other kids.

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During his third year, Joe fell further behind his classmates. So this time the principle suggested that Joe should repeat the third grade. Again, his parents said no.

Fourth grade started, and Joe was a nervous wreck. He didn't want to go to school. He had suffered through three years at the bottom of the class, and he certainly did not want to be there again. He had heard that fourth was supposed to be a very hard grade. And it was.

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He struggled every day and studied every night, but he remained at the bottom--until one black, dreary, rainy afternoon.

Teachers have a sixth sense about the weather. Difficult concepts like fractions call for the sunniest of days. The day began that way, but as the teacher started the lesson, a blackness covered the sky, and the downpour set in. Distracted by the storm, the children were not grasping the math. Except for Joe.

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He understood. He had all the answers correct. She patted him on the back and told him to go around to the others and explain what he had done. Smiling and happy with his newfound success, Joe moved quickly around the room.

As math time ended, the teacher handed each child a sheet of white paper. It was time for art. And all the children did the expected--dark, dreary days called for using dark crayons and making dark pictures.

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Except for Joe. Joe used bright yellow, orange, and red. A big, bright, glowing sun filled his paper.

Joe started improving and earned his promotion that year. His fourth-grade teacher was curious about the changes in him, and she followed his progress through his high-school years. Why had that one dark and dreary day changed Joe?

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Joe never made it to the top of his class. He didn't have to. He had succeeded that faithful day and he knew it, and after graduation Joe joined the service and was sent to Vietnam. He did not make it home.

Hearing of Joe's death, the fourth-grade teacher went to his home to pay her respects. Joe's mother welcomed her and told her there was something in Joe's room she wanted to show her.

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As they entered his room, the mother pointed to Joe's most cherished possession. Hanging on the wall over his bed, neatly matted and framed, was his picture of the bright yellow, orange, and red glowing sun. It celebrated the rainy day when he woke up to his own realization of who he really was. At the bottom of his picture, in big capital letters, Joe had printed:

THIS IS THE DAY I GOT SMART.

No Trespassing

THIS IS THE DAY I GOT SMART was Joe's "No Trespassing" sign that he posted in his mind so that no one else could define who he was anymore.

As the late Vera Dawson Tait reminds us:

In the area of soul unfoldment, any attempt to trespass can be very touchy. Perhaps we have found something that has changed our life and we want to share it; we want a loved one to know the joy which we have experienced.

No Trespassing

Our desire to share may exceed what is right. We may be guilty of proselytizing, which is an attempt to change another's way of thinking and acting to one that fits our standard.

We have no right to infringe on another's right to find God in his own way. To be ready to give assistance when asked directly or indirectly is quite a different matter. If we keep close to our own inner spiritual center, God will guide us as to what help we need to render.