

(organ music) (choir music) (organ music) (congregation sings)

- God, whom we gather to worship this day, takes gregarious carbon, sturdy iron, precious gold, fluctuating mercury, volatile phosphorus, scarce argon, nurturing nitrogen, and a multitude of other wonderfully diverse elements and forms with them an astonishing, fruitful, enduring universe. Come, let us worship God. And to God let us make our confession. Oh, God, author of eternal light, we confess to You our desire to turn away from the brightness of Your presence, to cling to the security of life as we know it, to stop our ears to the call, follow me. Forgive our hesitancy. Speak to us yet another time. Show to us once more the presence which promises life, for we pray, trusting as little children in the light of Your love. Amen. My sisters and brothers, hear and believe the good news. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. In Jesus, the Christ, you and I are forgiven. Let us give thanks for God is good and God's love is everlasting. Thanks be to God, whose love creates us. Thanks be to God, whose mercy redeems us. Thanks be to God, whose grace leads us into the future. It is the seventh Sunday after Epiphany, and I am glad to be able to welcome each of you to this special service of worship in the Duke University Chapel. I would remind you that there will be the celebration of the Eucharist in Memorial Chapel following this service. And I encourage you to stay for that brief service. I am pleased to introduce our guest preacher of the morning, the Reverend Doctor Grant Shockley and to welcome Dr. Shockley to the Duke Chapel pulpit. A man of immense warmth and energy, Dr. Shockley is presently Duke Divinity School Professor of Christian Education and Director of Black Church Affairs. A United Methodist minister, he has served parishes in New York City, in Brooklyn, and in Dover, Delaware. Dr. Shockley is also recognized as an able writer, teacher, lecturer, and administrator. In addition to several distinguished professorships, he served also as president of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia, and Philander Smith College in Little Rock, Arkansas. A native of Philadelphia, Dr. Shockley is married to Doris Taylor Shockley. And I am delighted to welcome both of these gracious people to Duke Chapel and to this service. The Art of Human Relations is the title of Dr. Shockley's sermon.

- Let us pray. Almighty God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of Your word. And give us grace that we may clearly understand and heartily choose the way of Your love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen. The Old Testament message is from Genesis chapter four, verses eight through 16. Cain said to Abel his brother, let us go out into the field. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel, your brother?" He said, "I do not know. "Am I my brother's keeper?" And the Lord said, "What have you done? "The voice of your brother's blood is crying "to me from the ground. "And now you are cursed from the ground, "which has opened its mouth to receive "your brother's blood from your hand. "When you till the ground, "it shall no longer yield to you its strength. "You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on this earth." Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. "Behold, thou has driven me today away from the ground, "and from the face I shall be hidden. "I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, "and whoever finds me will slay me." Then the Lord said to him, "Not so. "If anyone

slays Cain, "vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who came upon him should kill him. Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Here ends the reading of the Old Testament. (organ music) (choir music) Will the congregation please stand for the reading of the Gospel lesson? The Gospel lesson is from Luke chapter 10, verses 25 through 37. And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the Law? "How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God "with all your heart and with all your soul "and with all your strength and with all your mind, "and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right. "Do this, and you will live." But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem "to Jericho, and fell among robbers, "who stripped him and beat him and departed, "leaving him half dead. "Now by chance a priest was going down that road, "and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. "So likewise a Levite, "when he came to the place and saw him, "passed on the other side. "But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, "came to where he was, and when he saw him, "he had compassion and went to him and bound up his wounds, "pouring on oil and wine. "Then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn "and took care of him. "And the next day he took out two denari "and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ""Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, ""I will repay you when I come back." "Which of these three, do you think, "proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go, and do likewise." Here ends the reading of the Gospel lesson. Amen. (organ music) (congregation sings)

- Let us pray. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in Thy sight, oh, Lord, our strength and our redeemer. Amen. For more than 50 years, American churches have observed Race Relations Sunday. It was a time to reflect upon the ideal of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humankind. It was a time to sing with great lust in Christ there is no east or west. In Him no south or north. The words of the prophet Malachi would ring out from our pulpits. Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning his covenant? We would also listen to the words of Luke in the book of Acts. And he made from one every nation to live on the face of the earth that they should seek God and find Him. Now I am well aware of this great heritage. I know the many very positive things that have been done to sensitize insensitive people in the area of better race relations, To encourage others and not to be weary in their well doing, and to remind still others that there is yet so much to be done in black-white relations in our churches, in our communities, on our campuses, and in our nation. This morning, however, I would like us to look at race relations from a different and with a deeper perspective. Very simply, I want us to view it in the wider and more inclusive context of the desperate need for improved human relations on interpersonal, inter-group, international and global levels. For here lies the root and stem of the problem. And here, latently at least, is the hope for solving what the renowned black scholar W.E.B. Du Bois called the critical problem of the 20th century, namely the color line. Now we need not look too far to understand the urgent necessity for this expanded view of race relations into a scene of human relations. Consider, if you will, this scenario for the 21st century, which is less than 20 years away. By the year 2000, the earth's population will be closer to 8 billion than anything else. Almost two thirds of whom will be none-white. In America, the population will be about 300 million, at least 33rd percent of those will be non-white. The balance of world power and the centers of decision making have already shifted dramatically in the second half of this century in terms of continents and nations and classes

and races. We are at the end of an era of domination by and Anglo-European ethos. Western ascendancy has declined and that seriously. With the advent of nuclear weaponry, the day is gone when right can be sustained by might. Or orthodoxy by power. Or supremacy by threat. The rising expectations of more than 50 new nations in the last two decades and their new-found political muscle in the United Nations have changed forever the power equations between east and west. The revolutions for food, for civil rights, for women's rights, for human rights, and for national liberations are still vibrant and they indeed are irreversible. The eminent late historian Arnold Toynbee was quite right when he said, and I quote, "the revolution through which we are living today "is world wide, penetrating to the cultural "and spiritual depths. "Living together as a single family is the only future "that mankind can have. "The alternative is mass suicide. "Yet learning how to live together "is going to be very difficult. "We have suddenly become one another's next door neighbors, "physically, that is, while our hearts and minds "remain far apart." He goes on to say that ignorance breeds fear. And fear breeds hostility. Human beings have had 6,000 years to become strangers to one another. And now we hardly have any time at all for learning the most difficult art of dwelling together in unity. Now in the face of this situation, those who are leaders and those who aspire to leadership might well feel like Hamlet, who said, "the time is out of joint. "Oh, cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right." But this is our time. There is no other time in which we can live or shall live. This is the day which the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. You and I are His leadership, His present leadership and His future leadership. And perhaps both of our generations had better hear what Benjamin Disraeli once said when he told us that, "now God be thanked who matched us "with this fateful hour." Now what seems to be the word of the Lord in all of this? What do scriptures say? The word may be found in the two well known stories that you have just heard, Cain and Abel and the Samaritan. The Cain and Abel story in Genesis is well known. Cain rose up against his brother, Abel, and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel, your brother?" Cain said, "I do not know. "Am I my brother's keeper?" The Samaritan story in Luke is in the Samaritan parable. Note we did not say the good Samaritan. We are assuming that there were more than one of the Samaritans who were good. But nevertheless, the story is this. A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers. They beat him and stripped him and departed, leaving him half dead. But a Samaritan came to where he was, and he did four things. He stopped and had compassion. He went to him. He bound up his wounds, and he set him upon his own beast and took him to an inn. Now there are many sayings in the Bible that speak about human relations. In Deuteronomy and Leviticus, we read, "You shall love the Lord your God "with all your mind and with all your strength "and with all your soul, "and your neighbor as yourself." In Matthew, we read, "I was hungry and you fed me, "thirsty and you gave me drink. "I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, "naked and you clothed me. "I was sick and you took care of me, "in prison and you visited me." But none of these passages speaks as vividly to the human relations theme of our day than these stories in Genesis and Luke. These stories challenge us as people of faith and as Christians to love, to respect, and to respond to people as individuals and to people as groups or to people as nations or to people who have dominion in various parts of the world. People who are the brothers and sisters of our common Father Mother God. What then is the art of human relations as we ponder these two stories? It is people skilled in relating to people in ways that are caring, meaningful, helpful and responsible, irrespective of differences in circumstance or advantage or color or religion or time and place. The art of human relations is the cultivation of the capacity to act toward others as God in Christ has already acted toward us. Now there are particular challenges in the two stories that were read by our lector this morning. But first a brief analysis of our stories. It is more than of passing

interest that a Samaritan offered aid to the one who fell among the robbers. A Samaritan, mind you, one whose race was often cursed, whose word was unacceptable in any court of law, who could not co-mingle with other religious people of his time. A Samaritan saw him and had compassion. A Samaritan went to him and bound up his wounds. A Samaritan took him to a hotel and provided for his future care. The story on Cain and Abel and the parable of the Samaritan are very clear, very direct and very simple statements about Christian human relations. And they say two things. We are our brother's keeper. We are our neighbor's neighbor. The revolutionary nature of these statements must be understood against a background of that period of time. In the Old Testament, neighbor clearly referred only to Israelites. In the time of Jesus, neighbor referred only to Jews. Neighbor did not include Romans. Neighbor did not include Greeks or Syrians. Most of all, it did not include Samaritans. Not a single hero of that parable failed to get that message. Here Jesus was laying bare the barriers to good human relations, which include racial exclusiveness, which include social snobbery, which include cultural conceit and spiritual arrogance. He was getting, therefore, at the very basic principles of good human relations. Care, respect, and responsibility. It is this word care then that Erik Erikson tells us is "a deep concern for the life and development of persons." It comes from the word *charis* which means love of a deep kind. Cain did not care about his brother, Abel. Some friends do not care for each other. They simply want to use each other. This is an example of poor human relations. Some couples are going together who are supposedly in love, but their relationship is simply one of mutual exploitation. Some husbands and wives after they do not care for each other enough, do not extend their marriages to seek every possible recourse before taking the easy course of divorce. These are poor human relations. Parents sometimes do not really care enough for their children to give their lives for them. Often they view them as burdens, as troublesome. The result, therefore, could easily be child abuse. This is an example of a poor human relationship. The second foundation of good relationships is respect. It is a way of looking at people from their inside situation outward. Not just a sense of muted awe in the presence of some person we respect, but a concern that people become who they are. Respect is the absence of the need to change people before we can love them. We love people for what they are and not for how they could be if we could remake them. We love people for what they can be and we help them to become that. This is respect. This is looking at them until we see what God has truly placed within them that it is our task to bring out. If we could see the peoples of our world in terms of what God's intention was for them, we could indeed be for them as the Samaritan was to the robber. In keeping with this then, Christians and others, all people of good will, should engage those issues of human rights in our world that affect good human relations. We become concerned, therefore, about, and we become involved in programs to resolve the inequity syndrome affecting the poor people and the hungry people of our world. Our planet earth is really divisible into two large segments. One is very rich, and one is very poor. On the rich side are two dozen or so industrialized states whose one billion people control and produce and consume most of the world's resources. On the other side, about 100 so-called underdeveloped states and nations comprising three billion people control very little, produce very little, and consume very little. They consequently exist in the shadow of death and starvation and deprivation almost 24 hours a day. Respect then means seeing these as children of God for what they can become with our help and through our sharing. Helping them to become that is our mission. This is the person we encounter on our Jericho road. Helping them at our level of competence, whether it is person to person, whether it is as a citizen, whether it is as a Christian or a religious person of faith, or whether it is simply as a member of the human community. The third keystone for good human relations is responsibility. Basic to the word of responsibility is the word

to respond. The root meaning then means to discover the needs of others and do something about them. This was Cain's sickness, and often it is ours. After murdering his brother and being called to account for it, he asks a very stupid question. Am I my brother's keeper? Well, of course, he was his brother's keeper. And the Lord made that quite plain to him, but he wanted to cop out of the situation.