



Love Your Neighbor

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:39

Opening Thought

Jesus commands us to love our neighbor. As a matter of fact, He teaches us it's so important that it is the second greatest commandment, right after loving God. One day when Jesus was teaching this message, He was asked by an expert in the law, "And who is my neighbor?" To this, Jesus replied with the "Parable of the Good Samaritan":

A man was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

So too, a Levite when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said, "and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have."

Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

QUESTION: Who Is My neighbor?

Jesus teaches us that every person is our neighbor, especially someone whom we know is in need.

QUESTION: How Do I Love My Neighbor?

From the “Parable of the Good Samaritan,” we learn that the Samaritan diverted from what he was doing in order to **care for someone else** who was in need.

The Samaritan **gave** his time, **gave** his donkey, **gave** his money, and **gave** his care.

QUESTION: Why Should We Love Our Neighbor?

Aside from the fact that this is a command from Christ, the scriptures teach us that when we love others we are displaying our faith in Christ.

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13: 34-35

Application

While there are many acts of kindness we can list as ways to love our neighbor, generally, we commence to love our neighbor by **being aware of our surroundings**. Sometimes its easy to spot other people’s needs, other times we have to bother to get involved in their lives. Either way, every person we cross paths with presents an opportunity for us to love them, because we all have needs.

Commit to taking time out of your schedule for someone else. It doesn’t have to be a lot of time, but enough time to make a positive impact in someone else’s life.

Give something. Christians are called to be givers. Whether it’s time, money, a ride, advise, encouragement, a bible verse, or a smile, there is always something, which we already have, that we can give to someone else who may be in need.

Prayer

Close your gathering in prayer. Accept prayer requests from the group and include them in your prayer. Also, challenge your group to pray for each other. The following is a sample prayer you may use for guidance.

Father God, thank you for this day and for your message. Please help us apply this commandment into our lives. Provide us with opportunities to love our neighbor and allow us the insight to act upon them. Help us to acknowledge the needs of those around us so that we may be a blessing to them. Ultimately, help us express our love to others so that the world may see our faith in You. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

Additional and Optional Scriptures

“You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Leviticus 19:18

“Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:8-10

“And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.” 1 John 4:21