

**A Timely and Encouraging Message:
How to Love Your Neighbor as Yourself
Luke 10:25-37**

The Greatest Commands

“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.”
(Luke 10:27).

I. The Greatest Command – Love the Lord with your all!

A. Colossians 3:4 – “When Christ, Who is our life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”

B. Philippians 1:21 – “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

C. S. Lewis said:

Give me all of you!!! I don't want so much of your time, so much of your talents and money, and so much of your work. I want YOU!!! ALL OF YOU!! I have not come to torment or frustrate the natural man or woman, but to KILL IT! No half measures will do. I don't want to only prune a branch here and a branch there; rather I want the whole tree out! Hand it over to me, the whole outfit, all of your desires, all of your wants and wishes and dreams. Turn them ALL over to me, give yourself to me and I will make of you a new self--in my image. Give me yourself and in exchange I will give you Myself. My will, shall become your will. My heart shall become your heart (*Mere Christianity*).

II. The Second Command – Love your neighbor as yourself.

A. James 1:22-27 – Know yourself

“Your time is limited – so don't limit your life by wanting someone else's” (Ann Voskamp, *The Broken Way*, p. 59).

It is time to accept yourself as God created you for His purposes. Start being grateful and celebrating Him! If I could, I would look you right in the eye as I cup your precious face and declare over you all that God says about you! You were created in the very image of God and He delights in you. In fact, He sings over you! You have infinite worth and purpose. Every spiritual blessing is yours in Christ. And all of the promises of God are for you!

That doesn't mean that we don't have work to do. When we look intently into the perfect law of God, we begin to see ourselves as we really are. God reveals those things that are darkening His image in us and preventing us from experiencing

all that Christ died to purchase for us. And our flesh will put up a fight—against giving up old ways of thinking, protecting, comparing, judging—in the place of thanksgiving, giving and celebrating.

Listen to the sound of the words. Who would choose the ways of the flesh over the ways of the Spirit? And yet, we do just that when we choose to coddle our flesh instead of crucifying it (Galatians 2:20). It sounds just like the descriptions of Wisdom and Folly in the Book of Proverbs. Who in their right mind chooses the path that leads to death? Sinners, that is who. Those who have not had their spiritual eyes and ears opened to all that God has prepared for those who love Him!

B. Notice your neighbor

As long as my eyes are on myself, I will not be able to see my neighbor.

What kinds of things do I do for myself? These are the very things I am to do for my neighbor.

Did you know that “those who perform five acts of giving over six weeks are happier than those who don’t, that when you give, you get reduced stress hormone levels, lowered blood pressure, and increased endorphins, and that acts of kindness reduce anxiety and strengthen the immune system. Five random acts of kindness in a week can increase happiness for up to three months later” (*The Broken Way*, p. 73,).

III. Who is My Neighbor?

Luke 10:30-37 – Compassion moved the Samaritan

Just as a father has **compassion** on *his* children, So the Lord has **compassion** on those who fear Him. (Psalm 103:13)

Seeing the people, He (Jesus) felt **compassion** for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

When He (Jesus) went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt **compassion** for them and healed their sick. (Matthew 14:14)

And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said, “I feel **compassion** for the people, because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way.” (Matthew 15:32)

Moved with **compassion**, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him. (Matthew 20:32)

#Bethegift – John 3:16

Now this *I say*, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;” (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NASB).

Live given -

“It is beyond the realm of possibilities that one has the ability to out give God. Even if I give the whole of my worth to Him, He will find a way to give back to me much more than I gave” (Charles Spurgeon, Quoted in *The Broken Way*, p. 65).

Ann Voskamp’s birthday celebration – (*The Broken Way*, p. 67-70)

Is it possible that we could overcome the darkness of a pandemic, fear, hoarding and even death by giving? “Letting His light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven?” (Matthew 5:12) **Could it be that the basket is the scarcity mindset?** “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house” (Matthew 5:14-15).

On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus was gleaming! We know that He is the Light of the World. Could it be that His light in us would shine brighter the more we give?

You don’t have to be wealthy to be generous – with your time, talents, creativity and material goods, the written word, a kind and encouraging word. We DO NOT live from a scarcity mindset – we live from abundance – (John 10:10b).

Matthew 25:40 – “And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’”

Isaiah 58:7-9 (MSG)

What I’m interested in seeing you do is:
sharing your food with the hungry,
inviting the homeless poor into your homes,
putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad,
being available to your own families.
Do this and the lights will turn on,
and your lives will turn around at once.
Your righteousness will pave your way.
The God of glory will secure your passage.

Then when you pray, God will answer.
You'll call out for help and I'll say, 'Here I am.'

"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water'" (John 7:38)

One of my 10th grade Life Group members, Emily, had a desire to bless health care workers. Her project grew as the church took it on for BLM after experiencing the delight of the workers who received the first 150 blessing bags. Now we are currently giving and assembling 15,000 blessing bags to bless all of the health care workers at 9 hospitals in the Memphis area. From 150 to 15,000 that is a 9,900% increase. That is what happens when we obey and give – God blesses and multiplies our giving – He does "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us," (Ephesians 3:20 NKJV).

Bellevue Women started an Instagram account to help us share creative ways to love our neighbor during this pandemic. It is @johnfifteentwelve. You can use #John1512Project - #loveoneanother.

What about you? Are you letting His light shine or is His light obscured by the clouds of doubt, selfishness and fear?

This is an invitation. The Kingdom life is available to all of us. He really is this good!