

“Loving Thy Neighbor”

Matthew 22:37-40

Preached Sunday Morning, December 18, 2011, by Rev. James R. Reynolds, Sr.

INTRODUCTION

Matthew 22:37 *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

For our sermon, I am using the thought in the Scripture: loving thy neighbor. Strange that I hear an awful lot of words said to people and some are not good. They speak as if they want to hurt somebody. But if we knew what the Word of God says, **we would love them**. The Bible speaks very plainly to us that we need to love our neighbor.

A few weeks ago we spent time on *God's Love for Us*. And last week on, *Our Love for God*, but today we will talk about *Our Love for Our Neighbor*. Does God say for us to love our neighbor as we desire to? As we want to? Or as we think we ought to? No, God says to love our neighbor *as thyself*. And nobody every hated himself. We need to love our neighbor as ourselves. Amen?

I. Loving Thy Neighbor According to the Old Testament

The O.T. has a lot to say about our neighbors and I am not going to reiterate all that is said throughout all of the scripture but I am going to touch on a few of them.

Exodus 20:16 *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

If you have been reading your papers this week, then you know A lot of people are bearing false witness against their neighbors. We need to love our neighbor. If we love our neighbor we wouldn't bear false witness.

Leviticus 6:2 *If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;*

If a person lies to his neighbor he is committing a trespass against the lord!
Leviticus 19:15 *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.*
Deuteronomy 5:20 *Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

Now that may not take in all of us, but the devil has a tendency to get into us and we speak wrongly concerning our neighbor.

Psalms 101:5 *Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.*

The Lord has a lot to say about what goes on with a person and his neighbor.
Pr 14:21 ¶ *He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.*

That is pretty rough talk. “Well, they are no good.” Well, be careful what you say about your neighbor!

Proverbs 25:18 ¶ *A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.*

That world *maul* has to do with something that is able to *break things up*. The false witness can break things up and destroy his neighbor and others around him.

Habakkuk 2:15 *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!*

That doesn't mean juice or water. It has to do with strong drink (alcohol).

You don't have to look far to find people that give strong drink to their neighbors. I was out back here and I saw a guy come across and I knew what he was doing. He was giving his neighbor strong drink. Will he be judged? Yes, God says it!

Zechariah 8:16 *These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:*

Now there is a lot more in the OT, but we want to turn to the NT and see what God has to say there about loving your neighbor.

II. Loving Thy Neighbor According to the New Testament

Romans 13:10 *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

Does that speak to us or remind us of anything that maybe we ought to do differently? How do we treat our neighbor? Do we understand how our neighbors depend on us to show them the light and truth? They might never find the truth without us. If it wasn't for my brother I would not be here. That makes me understand there are people out there that must see reality. I saw reality. I saw the real thing in my brother. How is the world going to see that? Let them see Christ in you!

Romans 15:2 *Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.*

Please your neighbor. "Ah, they're no good!" Be careful. God loves them. God loves everyone. How many know that God loves everyone?

John 15:13 *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

God showed us the greatest love in His son on the cross.

Ga 5:14 *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

James 2:8 *If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:*

Isn't it so important that we go according to the Scripture!?! Maybe your neighbor might not be so far from God if they could find God in you? Amen?

This is very important. Whether you understand or not. God wants us to be good to our neighbors. How will they very know and find the truth? Will they see it in you? Fulfill the royal law, love thy neighbor as thyself!

Love is proof of discipleship. You say you are disciple of the Lord, but are you really?

John 13:15 *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

Now, Christ's love is the standard. We don't love just because we decide to, but because and as He as loved us.

John 15:12 *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

Love one another. Love your neighbor as I have loved you! It might be that guy is not as mean that you think he is if you loved him as Jesus loved you. Don't squirm. Just look at the Word and let the Word find a place in your heart and when you go out among your neighbors, let them see the reality of Christ in you.

Somebody was telling me and I forget now who it was, but they were telling me they went to this one store and they said Christians come in here to buy cigarettes and liquor. NOT CHRISTIANS! That soul needs to see the truth. SEE IT. Not just hear it. Not enough to say I am a Christian, but let them SEE it. See reality. Dear God, help us. Christ is the standard... as I have loved you.

Love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

Matthew 22:39 *And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

You might not like what I am saying but this is the Word of God. How many love yourself? No man ever hated himself, the Bible says. And the Scripture also says, love your neighbor as thyself.

Love will not lie to his neighbor.

Ephesians 4:25 *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.*

Maybe you need to go back and correct some things. And when you love, you need to love fervently.

1 Peter 1:22 *Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*

The world does not need a put on. How many know the world knows the difference when you put it on or if it is real? They might not know how to be real themselves, but they can sure tell if you are pretending.

Love fervently and love sincerely.

Romans 12:9 *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*

Turn away from evil and hold onto that which is good.

Romans 12:10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*

Jesus told a story in Luke about our neighbor.

Luke 10:29 *But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*

"You tell me to be good to my neighbor, but who his neighbor?"

Luke 10:30 *And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.*

In the first place, what was he doing going from Jerusalem to Jericho? Whenever you go from Jesus it is always down and never up.

And he fell among thieves. He was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho on what they call the bloody road. Why was it called the bloody road? Many people lost their lives on that road, because it

was infested with robbers, crooks and thieves. Isn't that the same old story? When you fall from the Lord, you fall among thieves. The devil comes to steal rob and destroy you.

The Lord is saying a lot when he says this: *stripped him of his raiment*. When we came to the Lord, we had nothing to clothe ourselves with. We had no raiment. He had something to cover himself with, that is, raiment or godly character and goodness. That is what the devil is after. He is after your raiment—godly character.

Thieves not only stripped him of his raiment but wounded him. Oh my. No wonder it is so necessary to come to the Christ that is able not only to save us but heal us and make us well! The devil comes to steal, kill, destroy but Jesus came that we might have life and that more abundantly. There is abundant life, peace, and joy in Christ. He has it all. Amen!

The thieves stripped, wounded him, and departed leaving him half dead. Then Christ tells us the saddest part of the story.

Luke 10:31 *And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*

With his nice pressed uniform, what did he do? When he saw him did he run to him? No, he didn't! Here the man is wounded, robbed, and stripped and the priest wanders to the other side of the road. He didn't want to touch that filthy man on the road. He passed by on the other side.

Luke 10:32 *And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.*

I am sure he looked. Not getting too close, he looked and then he passed by on the other side.

Luke 10:33 *But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,*

This is what the whole lesson is about: Loving our neighbor and even loving those we wouldn't even want to know.

When he saw him he had compassion. Dear God, when I was reading that and studying that I thought, "What is wrong with some of the people here at the Deliverance Center?" We should have compassion on those that are out there robbed, lost, and left to die in their sin Lord help us to be moved with compassion!

You say, "That is not my job." Let me tell you something. When we started the Deliverance Center back years ago, we spent more time in the street than in the church.

I was reminded today when I was dealing with this part of the message that I never had trouble with my young people as long as I took them out on the street night after night. We went to the parks and yeah sometimes they came and arrested me. They wouldn't bother anyone else, but they would haul me off. I told you about the captain who lost his composure and his lieutenant grabbed him shouting, "Get a hold of yourself, Captain." The captain was grabbing for his gun right in the room full of police officers. But, I never had trouble with the young people when I was bringing them out night after night preaching and singing about Jesus.

When I got busied about with other things, I saw my young people drifting. That is sad. That hurt. I had one young lady who came with her mom and dad and she would leave every morning to go up town to Portland schools with her Bible. She went to school with her bible every morning. She carried her bible with her on the street and testified about Jesus. Slowly, things began to develop and she drifted and got away. I won't tell you her name, but you need to pray because she is far from God today.

She carried her Bible unashamed of Christ to grammar school and high school but then slowly drifted. This was one particular girl that really trouble me because she had a real experience with God.

God give us compassion. I went up the other night on the street and you know as well as I do I can't stand long on my leg. Wish I could, but as I sat in the car my heart was broken. I think there was that man right there and I believe that there was one other one out there in the dark filled with compassion. They were out there because they don't want people to be lost and go to that awful place called hell. How many know that hell is forever and ever and ever? God, give us compassion. Are you trying to encourage us to go on the street? Yes.

I did it all those years even when they arrested. In fact, one night when they arrested me, we were set up across from McDonalds. McDonalds had a loud speaker that announced across their parking lot. They arrested me saying we were "loud and obnoxious." They even got the McDonald's manager to say we were "loud and obnoxious." I said to the judge, "Can you tell us what loud and obnoxious is? The judge said, "Preacher, if the hearer doesn't want to hear what is said, it is loud and obnoxious. Even a whisper can be loud and obnoxious to those not wanting to hear it."

The next night, we went back to the Yudy's parking lot for a street meeting and it wasn't too long before the police came running at us. One suddenly stopped and stopped the other one with his hand." Hey, I don't even think they had it on (the loud speaker)." I did that to prove to them, it wasn't loud and obnoxious, but they just didn't like what was being said.

Let us have compassion. *He had compassion and went to him.*

What is their trouble? Some are drunks. Some are addicts. Some are sex fiends. You have no idea what comes down that street. One guy came down and said, "You want a blow job." I told him, "You will burn in hell." He sarcastically responded, "At least I will be warm." They are sick! God help us to have mercy upon them.

Luke 10:34 *And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*

Not from that which comes from a bottle but that which comes from heaven.

He set him on his own beast and took care of him. He ends this all with verse 36.

Luke 10:36 *Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?*

The priest walked on the other side. Yes they come by, but they couldn't care less for those on the street. But I also see these men go out there and lift up their voice and tell the people, "God loves you. God sent his son for you. Calvary is for you. He died that you might live."

The priest and Levite had nothing to offer. The Levite speaks about the law and the law could not help. There are a lot of people in our state that go to state agencies for help but end back up where they started. The law cannot help them.

CONCLUSION – GO and DO thou likewise

Luke 10:37 *And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.*

Reach out to them because your neighbor needs you. You say, "Oh but they are a rotten mess." Everyone without Jesus is a rotten mess, but everybody that knows Christ can be changed. No wonder he says go and do thou likewise. Don't just sit, GO and do thou likewise. If you need to come to this altar this morning and repent then do that. Ask Jesus to help you to be more compassionate. You can't

produce it yourself. He can give it to you. You can love the souls of men like Christ did going to that cross. He knew what he was facing but went to that cross because some were robbed, beaten and left along the bloody road, the road of evil and wickedness.

Jesus said, *Go and do thou likewise*. Do we need to reach our neighbors for Christ? Does anybody have any neighbors that are lost? I see a few hands. Are there neighbors all around us without hope and without God? Go and do likewise.

Be like the Samaritan that went and had compassion and did something for that one and dying on the road to hell.

Oh I want to see him look upon his face. As we sing that, Did something touch your heart from the Word of God and you want to go and do likewise? You want to reach them, you want to help them, pour in some oil and wine? Tell them there is a savior that can help them. Tell them that there is a better life. Church can't do it. Religion can't do it. Only Christ can do it.

John 3:36 *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*