



In Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus sums things up for those of us who need to hear things straight and simple.....*'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'.*

Christians are pretty good at embracing the first part about loving God, and we understand that our relationship with God is actually the most important thing in the world. The second part is a little trickier. It's interesting that Jesus puts 'loving our neighbor' on the same level as 'loving ourselves'. He asks us to consider these two ways of loving to be equal. While it is true that some people *do* need to bring up the 'loving others' part, as a counselor I see more people (many many more) who are really really good at loving others, but not so good at loving themselves. They may give and serve their families, their co-workers, or their church for hours and hours, but when it comes to something like loving themselves through self-care it is nowhere to be found.

I think one reason God admonishes us to make sure these two things are equal....*loving others as we love ourself*.....is that ultimately he knows we won't be able to serve others well at all if we don't take care of ourselves. It's hard to serve others from an empty tank or an empty cup. When we look at the big picture, loving ourselves truly is a way that we can love others, because we will have much more to give!

What areas of self-care (spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, social, or lifestyle) do you need to focus on the most? In doing so, you will be loving yourself and loving others even more.

