



love where you live

Love Where You Live Part 3 - *Why Should I Love?*

Oct 10 & 11 | Speaker: Armando Lopez, Associate Pastor

KEY SCRIPTURE: On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus.

“Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the Law?” He replied. “How do you read it?”

He answered, “‘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, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by 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, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day

he took out two denarii 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.”

Luke 10:25-37 (NIV)

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Over the past two weeks, we’ve seen that Jesus said that the 613 commandments found in the Hebrew Bible, our Old Testament, hinge or are based on two commandments: To love God with all your heart and with all of your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and to love your neighbor as yourself.

But if we are honest, there are some neighbors, there are some people, that are just hard to love.

Jesus is saying that we are to love even those we find hard to love.

Why Should I Love?

Because God loved me first.

“We love because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19 (NIV)

If we get this clear in our hearts and minds, then loving other people will become easier for us to do, not easy, but easier to do.

In other words, Jesus said that the commandments to love God with all your being and to love your neighbor as yourself is fulfilled in treating every individual, despite who they may be, as worthy of love. Treating being the key word in this.

To the question of “Who is my neighbor?”

Jesus answers, “Everyone you come in contact with is your neighbor.”

This story shows us that Jesus has removed all barriers that we might have established about who our neighbor is. It doesn't matter their race, or their socioeconomic status. It doesn't matter what legal status they have, or their sexual orientation. If they are in your vicinity, if you can see them, then they are your neighbor, and you are to love them, and act in ways that show you love them.

What does this mean for us as we pursue loving our literal neighbors?

It means we must have eyes to see our neighbors.

3 Lessons from the Good Samaritan Story:

1. Loving our neighbors means being interruptible.
2. Loving our neighbors means burdening ourselves.
3. Loving your neighbors means looking beyond the facts to the person.

God created every individual in His image. It doesn't say He created a particular group of people in His image, but all humans, both male and female, were created in His image.

And seeing that reality, leads us to love other people. If everyone we come across is someone who has been created in the image of God, then I must do nothing to reduce that fact and make them subhuman or unworthy of love.

On this journey of neighboring, we will run across people that are hard to love. And the facts will all be there, present, ignorable.

And still, we must make the decision to love them as they are, because we've been loved by God first. Our job is not to convert them or make them better people, our job is to love them.

On this neighboring journey,

1. Let's learn our neighbors' names.
2. Let's learn their stories.
3. Let's pray for them regularly.

The only way we can be like the good Samaritan is to see that Jesus was our Great Samaritan. He took our burdens. He looked beyond the facts of our sin and ugliness and loved us. He allowed Himself to be interrupted, taking on flesh, becoming a human, and living the life that you and I were meant to live.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

(for personal and small group discussion)

- What was most impactful to you from this weekend's service?
- Read Luke 10:25-37
- What stands out to you in this passage?
- Is it hard for you to be interruptible?
- What does seeing every person as made in the image of God do to the way you look at people?
- How does God's love for you impact the way that you treat others?
- Check out Damascus.com/neighbor and select the things you can do to better equip yourself to love your neighbors.
- Make sure you share stories with others in the church community by posting them in the Share Your Story section.

