

LOVE LOVE LOVE

THY NEIGHBOR



Love Thy Neighbor

Part 3

September 17, 2023

The Book of Romans 13:8-14, ⁸Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For 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.” ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. ¹¹Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. ¹²The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual

immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.” May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word, In Jesus Name! Amen!

Last Sunday, we continued in our current series entitled, “Love Thy neighbor” during which we discussed how the command to love our neighbor is more than an instruction, it is an expectation of culture in the kingdom as well as how the command to love our neighbor is more than a commissioning, it is an admonishment to protect the body of Christ from destroying itself. And lastly how the command to love our neighbor is more than a directive, it is a royal law that we should be willing to fulfill!

In light of these instructions and admonishments of Scripture, how do we go about making these instructions personal and how do we put them into practice? How do we translate the instruction into a manifesting action that makes the teaching tangible? How do we love our neighbor by the manifestation of action and not just have the instructions to do so inside our head? How do we transition these teachings from a philosophy into a practice? With that in mind, I would like to offer five ways that we can truly manifest the instruction to love our neighbor. Thus, Point #1...

1. If we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must Choose to Live a Life of Encouragement!

- a. The Book of Philippians 2:1-5, “So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus...”
- b. Friends, if we are to be the truest expression of Christ in the Earth then we must as the Church live a life of encouragement as we are led by the Holy Ghost!
- c. Note Paul’s words, “So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.”
- d. If we are to be complete in joy then we must have this same mindset, this same love, of choice to be in full accord and of one mind! Our world is weary, people are tired, hearts are failing...

- e. But as the Church of the living God, may we today choose to live a life of encouragement, of comfort in love, participation with the Holy Spirit, affectionate and sympathetic to others, all the while walking in the same mind, demonstrating love by being in accord and of one mind!
- f. Remember, If we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must Choose to Live a Life of Encouragement!
- g. Point #2...

2. If we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must Choose to Live a Lifestyle of Prayer and Power!

- a. Ephesians 1:15-23, ¹⁵For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰that he

worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”

- b. Friends, the way we live, conduct ourselves and carry ourselves as Christians will directly and indirectly impact every person around us. Note verse 15, ¹⁵ “For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints...”
- c. And when we live a life of faith, a life of prayer, a life of power in the Holy Ghost! Folks will hear and folk will know because there is a power and prayerfulness to our lives that will bring a lasting change to the lives of those whom the Lord has destined for us to interact with!
- d. We are the Church of the Living God, we are the very Body of Christ! We are the Church! And according to the Word of God, He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all!

- e. And if we have the fullness of Him through His Spirit then we have the power in ourselves to change the world because it is Christ that is in us, the very Hope of Glory!
- f. Remember, if we are going to Love our Neighbors, we must Choose to Live a Lifestyle of Prayer and Power! Point #3...

3. If we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must be Willing to Discern and Facilitate an Obvious Need!

- a. The Book of James 2:14-17, “¹⁴What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good ^bis that? ¹⁷So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”
- b. Church, we must not be willfully ignorant of the needs of those around us! We must be observant, discerning and willing to step in to help our brothers and sisters in Christ!
- c. But friends, it doesn't stop there! Our neighbors are not strictly defined as fellow believers but is open to all people!

- d. There are needs all around us; needs of relationship, needs of resource, needs of counsel, needs of insight, needs of prayer, needs of spiritual guidance and help. We don't have to look far to see needs; we are surrounded by needs because there is a resource in our lives that was placed there by Christ to be a witness of Him in the Earth!
- e. You and I both have a divine resource in us to meet the needs around us and those needs are there for Heaven to be made known in the Earth! Thus, again I state, we must not be willfully ignorant of the needs of those around us! We must be observant, discerning and willing to step in to help our brothers and sisters in Christ!
- f. We are in error when we tell our neighbor to go in peace, be warmed and filled, without giving them the things needed for the body!
- g. Christian, we love Christ and we love our neighbor thus we demonstrate Christ to our neighbor by striving to meet the needs of those around us!
- h. Remember, if we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must be Willing to Discern and Facilitate an Obvious Need! Point #4...

4. If we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must Choose to Include Them in Our Faith Community!

a. The Book of 1 Peter 2:9-12, “⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.”

b. Church family, we are community of faith before we are a Church! Church is what we do on Sundays, community is what we do throughout the week! Community is built on relationship; Church is built through partnership! Relationship and Partnership are the power twins of sustainability!

- c. Thus I state again that, we all need relationship! All of us! Sinner and Saint alike! The Creator of Heaven and Earth did not design us to do life alone! He built us for friendship and relationship with others!
- d. Note how in this passage of text that it describes our translation from darkness to light by the receiving of His divine mercy thus we are to live as sojourners in this life and build community around us as we walk together on the path of faith!
- e. And it is healthy faith community that not only sustains us in relationship and partnership but also creates a healthy environment to attract, connect with and disciple others who have found the road that leads unto salvation!
- f. And this is why it is so important to invite others to come and be a part of what God is doing here at The Assembly West Monroe!
- g. I am assured that there are those around you that need ministry, that need friendship, that need community, that need solid Biblical teaching and discipleship. They are all around you and they won't know unless you tell them!
- h. Remember, if we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must Choose to Include Them in Our Faith Community! Point #5...

5. If we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must Be willing to Listen and be willing to Restore those who are hurting!

- a. The Book of Galatians 6:1-3, “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”
- b. Beloved, the greatest demonstration of spiritual maturity is the ability to restore the hurting. The Church is meant to be a place for the hurting to be healed; not where the saints are to be pampered. It is our highest honor and burden a Christians to bear one another’s burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ!
- c. May we not fall into the deceptive nature of viewing ourselves higher than we ought; if we do so then we have deceived ourselves and not one in the faith!
- d. The greatest test of discipleship is the willingness to get on our knees in the midst of a failure of a brother or sister in Christ and help them put their lives back together.

- e. One of the greatest joys as your Pastor is walking with you through the Tragedies and Triumphs of Life to see Christ turn the Messes of Life into the Message of Life!
- f. May we remember today that if we are going to Love our Neighbors, We must Be willing to Listen and be willing to Restore those who are hurting! If we do this, then we do well and fulfill the Law of Christ!

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