

“Like a Good Neighbor...”
Galatians 5:14

More important than having a good neighbor is being a good neighbor!

“For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” **Galatians 5:14**

Two Parts of Being a Neighbor from Galatians 5:14

I. Command to Love – “For the whole law is fulfilled in one word:”
Galatians 5:14a

“So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.”
Galatians 3:24-26

“And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?’ And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.’” **Matthew 22:35-40**

Why should we love? Because the law of God, given through Moses and through Christ, tells us the same thing: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR!

II. Person to Love - “...’You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”
Galatians 5:14b

“But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’”
Luke 10:29

Three Types of Neighbors in Jesus’ Parable:

- **Selfish Neighbors:** What can the neighbors do/not do for me?

“Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead.’” **Luke 10:30**

- **Indifferent Neighbors:** What’s the bare minimum?

“Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.” **Luke 10:31-32**

- **Good Neighbors:** How can I show love to my neighbors?

“But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the

innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’” **Luke 10:33-35**

Important Question: “Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘You go, and do likewise.’”
Luke 10:36-37

We have a natural inclination to love our family, friends and acquaintances, but we must push past that limitation to see neighbors in need of love all around us. How can we love our neighbors?

Practical Suggestions:

- **New Neighbors:**
 - Introduce Yourself
 - Give a ‘Welcome’ Gift
 - Exchange Contact Information
 - Look for a Way to Serve
- **Established Neighbors:**
 - Make Time for Conversation (slow down)
 - Invite them to Dinner
 - Share Something Personal (not too personal)

“Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”
Romans 13:10

“...This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself...” **Matthew 22:38-39 (Great Commandment)**

“If we don’t take Jesus’s command literally, then we turn the Great Commandment into nothing more than a metaphor. We have a metaphoric love for our metaphoric neighbors, and our communities are changed – only metaphorically, of course. In other words, nothing changes.”
Pathak and Runyon

The only way we can possibly love others is by receiving the love of Jesus ourselves.

“We love because he first loved us.” **1 John 4:19**

This **Tuesday**, we are going to gather for a **Night of Worship** to pray diligently for our new neighbors here on Staten Island. This **Saturday**, we are going to invite all our neighbors out for a fun afternoon of free music at our **Outdoor Concert**. It will be an introduction of our church to the community and a friendly face saying, “Welcome to the neighborhood.”

Please invite your neighbors to join you!

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:

- *The Art of Neighboring* – Pathak & Runyon (2012)
- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* – Elwell & Comfort (2001)
- *Who is my neighbor, biblically speaking?* – GotQuestions.org

