

“Who’s My Neighbor?”
Life’s Most Important Relationships, Part 8
September 6th & 9th, 2018

Spirituality in a Nutshell

Luke 10:25-37 (NIV) ²⁵On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ²⁶‘What is written in the Law?’ He replied. ‘How do you read it?’ ²⁷He 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.’²⁸‘You have answered correctly,’ Jesus replied. ‘Do this and you will live.’”

Spirituality in a nutshell: Love **GOD** with all you have; love your **NEIGHBOR** as you love yourself (quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 & Leviticus 19:8)

The language of love of God is **OBEDIENCE**
John 14:15 (NIV) “If you love Me, you will obey what I command.”

Two Big Questions:

1. **Who is my neighbor?** Anyone God brings across **MY PATH**
2. **What does it mean to “love” our neighbor?** Treat them exactly as you want **TO BE TREATED**
Matthew 7:12 (NAS) “In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you,…”
Romans 13:9 (NIV) “The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not covet,’ and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”
Galatians 5:14 (NIV) “For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”
James 2:8 (NIV) “If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing right.”

From Idealistic Theory to Real-Life Messiness – 5 Guiding Principles

1. **When it comes to loving my neighbor, we can’t have **IMPACT** without **CONTACT****
Matthew 5:13&14 (NIV) “[Jesus said] You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.”
We must be salt that is out of the **SALT SHAKER**
We must be light that isn’t isolated but **INFILTRATES**
God’s plan is not only for His followers to walk through life and see who God puts in our path, but also to be going **TOWARDS** people as well – we must **VALUE** contact
John 17:15 (NIV) “[Jesus prayed for His followers] My prayer is not that You [God] take them out of the world, but that you protect them...”
2. **Justice without **JESUS** is just a **BAND-AID****
A popular sentiment in our culture: Help those in need, but don’t talk about **JESUS**
Mark 8:36-37 (NLT) “[Jesus] ³⁶And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? ³⁷Is anything worth more than your soul?”
What good is it for someone to have all their earthly problems fixed and miss out on their **GOD** problem?
John 14:6 (NIV) “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”

Don't fall into the trap that as Christians we will have more **OPPORTUNITIES** to help more people, if we **SHUT UP** about Jesus. It is our job to look for the **OPPORTUNITY** to bring Jesus into the situation

3. **Start with your JERUSELUM**

Acts 1:8 (NIV) "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

God's strategy for reaching the world: start in your **TOWN** (Jerusalem), then your **REGION** (Judea), then **GROUPS** you normally stay away from (Samaria), then to the ends of the earth

Mission Myth: the needs **OVERSEAS** are greater, more important & more noble than the needs **NEXT DOOR**
Loving your neighbor as yourself doesn't start overseas, it must start **HERE**

4. **Not all needs are EQUAL – Not all needs should be MET**

Matthew 26:6-13 (NIV) "6 While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the Leper, 7 a woman came to Him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on His head as He was reclining at the table.

8 When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. 'Why this waste?' they asked. 9 'This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.' [see John 12:5]

10 Aware of this, Jesus said to them, 'Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to Me. 11 The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have Me. 12 When she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. 13 Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.'

Be careful of **JUDGING** how others use their money

All God asks of you is how you use **YOUR** money

5. **Love without sacrifice is just CONVENIENCE**

If you really want to love others as you love yourself & to love others as God loves you, you need to remember He died for us while we were His **ENEMIES**

Romans 5:8 (NIV) "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Galatians 6:9-10 (NIV) "9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

If we have to be told this, it means loving others Christ's way is **HARD** and we won't always receive a **PAYBACK**

Loving my neighbor is **SIMPLE** in concept, but **DIFFICULT** in practice; that's why God has given us His **SPIRIT**

My Next Step Today Is...

- I am asking God to help me be more aware of daily opportunities to love my neighbor
- Which of the 5 principles meant the most to you personally? # ___; will you ask to help you in this area?

Next week: Join us as we begin a new message series "Killin' It" Invite a friend!