



380 S. Rosemead Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91107

Service is on
Sundays

945 AM
Heart
Preparation

1000 AM
Worship

The Fourth Pillar of Discipleship Building: CHRIST-LIKE LOVE

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 foremost commandment. **The second is like it, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”**
Matthew 22:37-39

Growing up we were always taught “Do no do unto others, what you do not want others to do unto you.” This seemed reasonable enough, but if you know God’s word, you would know that this is entirely wrong. In Luke 6:31, Jesus tells us to *“Do unto others as you have them do to you.”*

How is this applied in life?

Jesus explains this to us through the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10.

In the story, a man is robbed and left for dead on the roadside by wicked men. The first people to pass by were a priest and a Levite. These men were supposed to be men of God, but instead to helping the poor man they opted to turn a blind eye and pass the other way. They did not want to be inconvenienced. They did not want to go out of their way to help the man.

The Samaritan man, on the other hand, made a different choice. He choose to stop and lend a helping hand. This was ironic because during those days the Jews and the Samaritans did not get along. This was an unexpected twist in the story because the Samaritan could have chosen the **expected reaction** and like the two before him, went to pass the other way. But instead he opted to go out of his comfort zone and be inconvenienced. He stopped to check on the man, tended to his wounds, took him to an inn and cared for him. Then he went an extra mile to pay for the inn keeper to continue to care for the man until he returned.

Among the three characters in the story — who became a neighbor to the man on the road?

Dgroup Schedules

Tuesdays

700 pm

1102 E Swanee Lane

West Covina, CA

Thursdays

730 pm

2617 N Parish Place

Burbank, CA

Fridays

700 pm

5124 Ashworth St

Lakewood, CA

Ironically the person who shared Christ's love and mercy was the one who had every reason to turn his back and walk the other way. But this is what God expects of us, He commands us in Matt 5:43-47. He commands us to do the unexpected and reach out to both the lovable and the unlovable. When we are able to do this — we are able to show Christ's love and grace to others. It is then that we experience being set apart, being distinguished and it is through this that people will know that we belong to Jesus.

We have to bear in mind that our Father does not discriminate. He loves us all — He sends rain to pour down on both the righteous and the unrighteous. He sends the same sun to warm both the good and the evil. It is how we respond to the Holy Spirit's prodding and how we surrender in obedience to the word of God that sets us apart from those who do not know the Lord. And so Jesus is telling us — that for us to love our neighbors, we should be able to look beyond ourselves and share God's blessings to both the lovable and the unlovable.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?"

Matthew 5:43-47

**For the mind set on the flesh
is death, but the mind set on
the Spirit is life and peace,**

Romans 8:6

**But I say, walk by the Spirit,
and you will not carry
out the desire of the flesh.**

Galatians 5:16

But if we attempt to do this on our own, we will find that it is an impossible task. It then becomes a necessity for us to surrender control to the Holy Spirit.

In order to share Christ's love, we have to be **filled with the Spirit**. Being filled by the Spirit is a moment by moment, daily event not just a one time occurrence. Every day we have to continually renew our need for the Spirit.

So how do we apply this in our life?

1. In the Family (Ephesians 5:22, 5:25; 6:1)

- * We have to have the responsibility to love, submit and obey
- * To love even if we don't feel respected
- * To submit even if you don't feel loved
- * To obey your parents even when they seem unreasonable

2. In the Church (1Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 4:3; Romans 14:13)

- * We have the responsibility to serve, to be united, to not be judgmental of others
- * To use the gifts that God has given us to be of service to others
- * To become one with the church in the discipleship process
- * To be able to edify the strengths of our brothers/sisters in Christ and to make allowances for their weaknesses

3. In the Workplace (1 Peter 2:18; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:23-24)

- * We have the responsibility to supervisors, subordinates and to foster the correct work ethics
- * We have to check our attitudes towards our boss and our subordinates
- * We have to check our attitude towards work

4. To the World (Romans 13:1; Luke 20:25; Matthew 28:19-20)

- * We have a responsibility to the government and to our mission to make disciples
- * We have a responsibility to pray for our leaders, to respect them
- * We have the responsibility to exercise our rights as citizens which includes voting, paying our taxes and obeying the law

Discussion:

In the Story of the Good Samaritan, we come across several characters:

1. the Lawyer—who was asking Jesus. He knew the law but was trying to find an argument around it to justify his life. Are we like the lawyer, we know what the bible tells us but we opt to justify our life of disobedience.
2. the Priest/ Levite — who knows the law, teaches the law, but opted to pass the other side because he did not want to be inconvenienced and did not want to go out of his comfort zone. We tend to put our needs and interest first beyond the call to show Christ's love for others
3. the Samaritan—who would have been the least likely to help, went out of his way to tend and care for the man and went the extra mile to have him cared for until he recovered. He set aside his plans and priorities when he saw the pain of the man. He was willing to share whatever he had to ease the man's pain.

At different points in our life, we may have identified with one or all of these characters but it is also possible that we may have our favorite character.

1. To which character do I resonate with?
2. Why do I think I resonate with this character?
3. How do I understand Jesus' commandment of "Love your neighbor as yourself".
4. Am I able to apply this in my life?

Works

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

- * after listening and meditating on this message, can I identify the neighbors that God is asking me to go out of my way and tend to?
- * Am I experiencing any difficulties of being a Christ-like neighbor?
- * Are there people in my life that I cannot show Jesus' love and mercy to?
- * What is stopping me from sharing Jesus' love — is it bitterness? Anger? Hurt? Pride? Lack of Interest?

GO AND DO THE SAME

Jesus commanded the lawyer to "Go and do the same". Are we ready to take on the challenge to obey this command — to show Jesus' love for those who we believe are unlovable and undeserving?

Discipleship is our calling but before we can disciple others, we first have to find ourselves in Christ. When we look at our lives and realize how gracious and merciful the Lord has been to us that He sent us His Son. We realize how selfless and unconditional God's love for us is. It is this kind of love that He is asking us to extend to others as we learn to deny ourselves surrender our lives to Him, to abide in His word moment by moment and allow Him to transform us into what He wants us to be. This transformation in us can start a rippling effect that can affect all our relationships — with our family, with the church, in our workplace, in our society and in the world. The challenge is clear: Go and make disciples. God is clearly telling us that now that we have received His grace and love, we are to share this to everyone around us. Let us continue to pray with and for each other as we take up the challenge of having transformed lives, to become distinguished and set apart for God's purpose — which is to make disciples of all nations.