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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Love for Neighbors Luke 10:25-37

Lesson Background and Introduction

Today's text calls us once again to practice inclusive love. In the passage just prior to our text (10:1-24), Jesus sent out 72 of his followers in pairs to proclaim, through word and deed, that "the kingdom of God has come near to you" (10:9). Both Jesus and his 72 emissaries rejoiced at God's power working through them (10:17-21). Immediately preceding our lesson passage, Jesus spoke with his 72 followers at the conclusion of their fruitful mission (Luke 10:17-20). By asking the question "Who is my neighbor?" the law expert in our lesson text was looking for a loophole - a loophole of being able to choose whom he was responsible to care about and care for. Surely God didn't intend for him to love all people. Surely some people did not merit his time and resources. Like the law expert, we can be guilty of looking for a loophole. When we hear the Bible's teaching about loving our neighbors as ourselves, we can grasp the meaning in principle that we are to love and serve people everywhere in need. But it's tempting to embrace that as a theoretical concept in a way that leads to no tangible action. Or we can be tempted to care for those neighbors who look like us, speak like us, or share our social status, and we fail to care for those who are different. How could Jesus possibly mean that every single person is someone we should strive to love? Jesus' parable leaves no room for self-justification. If we are looking for a way out of loving that person who is too difficult, or in too much trouble, or frankly probably wouldn't help us if the tables were turned, then we betray our hearts that do not love as God loves. Instead of looking for loopholes, let us search for opportunities to use what God has given us to bless all our neighbors.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

A Different Way - Jesus' Sermon on the Mount set forth a new standard of living, especially in the area of relationships and our interaction with those we consider our adversaries or enemies. The religious leaders incorrectly taught to hate your enemies (Matt. 5:43). Jesus commanded the opposite: Love those who are against you. Why? Because that is how God responds to people—all day every day, no matter what. He loves those who love Him and those who do not. His followers should do the same.

Bless and Pray; Pray and Bless - Jesus prayed on the Cross for His murderers to be forgiven. Stephen, while being stoned to death, uttered the same request. Praying for one's enemies is asking God's favor or blessing upon the person, not harm.

Do Not Seek Revenge - Jesus was hated by many, yet He insisted not to retaliate, but be gentle, humble, and generous. He told His audience to refuse to stoop down to their opponent's level. Instead, they were to treat them kindly, the way they themselves would want to be treated. Jesus didn't say to let someone physically harm you and not defend yourself, nor was He saying to not protect your family. Rather, He was speaking about acting spiritually mature rather than as a petty, vengeful person.

Love Your Enemies - It is easy to love friends and family who are kind and affectionate. However, the heart is truly tested when you are called to love those who gossip, insult, offend, and spew hatred. Jesus endured those who called him a glutton, a drunk, a blasphemer, a madman, a liar, and so many other negative names. He responded to His accusers with the truth but also with sacrificial love. This is the kind of behavior God wants from His children. We do not imitate the ways of the world, but instead allow the Holy Spirit to transform us and love through us. The Holy Spirit needs to be depended on for His strength, wisdom, and guidance to carry out Jesus' command.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

We show our love for God when we love one another

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Father, thank You for the love You shower on us day by day. Teach us, in turn, to care for others. Open our eyes to see their need and respond as You want us to

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

(Gal 5:14 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", July 29, 2016)

Series: Love For One Another

UNIT: Inclusive Love

NEXT WEEK

Love Never Fails
(1 Cor 13:1-13)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

A Good Neighbor by Loving God (Luke 10:25-28)

What is loving God

Loving God is fearing, serving and obeying Him (Deut 10:12-13)

Loving God is the first and greatest command (Matt 22:37-40)

Loving God is more important than offerings (Mark 12:33)

Loving God by keeping His commandments (1 John 5:1-2)

Loving God by being known by Him (1 Cor. 8:3)

With all our heart

Loving God with our heart because He purposed our heart to do so (Deut 30:6)

Loving God with our heart is rejoicing in His salvation (Ps 13:5)

Loving God with our heart is trusting in God and praising Him for that (Ps 28:7)

Loving God with our heart is being steadfast in our faith (Ps 57:7)

With all our soul

Loving God with our soul is worshipping God in spirit and truth (John 4:24)

We can love God with our soul by blessing His Holy Name (Ps 103:1)

We can love God with our soul because our soul belongs to God (Ezek 18:4)

We can love God as we love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt 19:19)

We can love God by loving with actions and in truth (1 John 3:18)

With all our strength

We can love God with our strength because He is our strength (Ps 18:1-3)

We can love God with our strength through endurance and patience (Col 1:10-12)

We can love God with our strength through providing physical needs (James 2:15-16)

We can love God with our strength through providing food for the hungry (Prov 25:21)

With all our mind

Loving God with our mind by praying and singing to God with our mind (1 Cor 14:15)

Loving God with our mind by setting our mind on what the Holy Spirit desires (Rom 8:5-6)

Loving God with our mind because God has renewed our mind (Rom 12:2)

Loving God with our mind by owing nothing except love (Rom 13:8)

Loving God with our mind through been taught by God (1 Thess 4:9)

A Good Neighbor by Loving Others (Luke 10:29-37)

Don't ignore others troubles

Instead of ignoring, God wants us to help carry other's burdens (Gal 6:2)

Instead of ignoring, God wants us to help the oppressed and share with the poor (Isa 58:6-7)

Instead of ignoring, God wants us to bear with the failings of the weak (Rom 15:1)

Instead of ignoring, God wants us to encourage and help those who need it (1Thes 5:14)

Have compassion for others

God has compassion on us so we can have compassion on others (2 Cor 1:3-4)

As God's chosen people, we should have compassion (Col 3:12)

We are commanded to be kind and compassionate (Eph 4:32)

Showing compassion confirms we have wisdom from God (James 3:17)

As a member of the body of Jesus, we should be sympathetic and compassionate (1 Pet 3:8)

Compassion is one of the building blocks of maturity in the faith (2 Pet 1:5-8)

Address the physical needs of others

We are commanded to attend to the physical needs of those who need it (James 2:15-16)

We are to provide the physical needs of others (Prov 25:21)

We must love in physical action not just words (I John 3:18)

Love compels us to do no harm to others (Rom 13:10)

Love is meeting the needs of others (Luke 6:35)

Address the financial needs of others

Address the financial needs by being generous with our resources (2 Cor 9:11)

Address the financial needs by giving versus always desiring to receive (Acts 20:35)

Address the financial needs by supplying the needs of others out of our plenty (2 Cor 8:14)

Address the financial needs by supporting the needs of others (Phil 4:16)

Address the spiritual needs of others

Always try to assist in the restoral of others (Gal 6:1)

Pray for the spiritual health of others (I John 5:16)

Always try to help those who are not sure of their spiritual destination (Jude 1:22-23)

Assist in the spiritual growth of others (Luke 22:32)