



BIBLE READING NOTES

love your neighbour as yourself

PREPARE

Last week we saw how a scribe asked Jesus what ‘the most important’ law is, and Jesus answers ‘Love the Lord you God with all you heart, soul, mind and strength, and the second is love your neighbour as yourself’. This week Ben focused on the second part of Jesus’ answer, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’. Indeed, these two commandments need to be seen as a whole because it is impossible to do one without the other.

Quietly ask the Holy Spirit to open up your heart to see afresh things today in this well-known Biblical verse.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Meditate on what the Bible teaches about loving our neighbour from these verses.

Spend 5 minutes reading and pondering what these verses say to you.

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For 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 neighbour as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. *Romans 13:8-10*

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. *John 13:34-35*

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. *1 John 5:3*

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. *John 5:13*





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EXPLORE

It is interesting that Jesus does not just command us to ‘Love your neighbour’, but adds the caveat ‘as yourself’. Loving your neighbour as yourself requires you to be kind to yourself. We need to practice *self-care*. In this season of unknowns, we all are facing different levels of trauma—from loss of loved ones and jobs, to missing special moments with the people who matter to us. Creating room for your physical, emotional, and spiritual health is vital to cultivating love for others. Make some space for quiet reflection and scripture reading. Seek out foods that nourish your body. Go on a walk in the local parks. Make a phone call or a zoom call to folks you just want to connect with.

Sometimes we might need to reach out to others. Do you find it easy to do this? In what ways do you find it difficult to receive help from others? Why do you think this might be?

RESPOND

Love your neighbour - Love the vulnerable

Can you think of someone nearby who is particularly vulnerable to COVID-19? Offer to do a supermarket shop on their behalf, schedule a virtual hangout on Zoom, or pick a time to help care for their garden, if need be. Remember even as we navigate our way to a new normal that those who live with higher risk for COVID-19 will likely need to practice precautions for longer. Imagine the fears they may feel and practice empathy. Love your neighbour.

Love your neighbour - Love your local community

Every aspect of community life has been touched by COVID-19: local businesses are struggling, homeless populations have been made all the more vulnerable, some families no longer have access to stable food sources for their children. There are lots of ways to maintain physical distancing while, for example, still buying local and donating to nearby food banks and shelters. Can you think of any other ways that you could love your local community?

Love your neighbour – Love the world

As overall cases of COVID-19 may be diminishing in Britain, it is still spreading at an alarming rate in other parts of the world. There are also countries where the





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population and health care workers face a double battle, eg in Yeman, - Covid 19 in a conflict zone. Let us recognise that we have a responsibility to keep globally aware so that we can support those in these areas through prayer, giving financially or perhaps even 'sent' to work out there by Jesus.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you that you loved us first and you showed us the greatest example of love by laying down your life for us on the Cross. Thank you that it is because of the Cross that we can come to you now. Refresh us with your love and hope so that we can go out and know what it means to love our neighbour as ourselves as you would have us do. In the name of Jesus, Amen

