

God's heart for our neighbors

May think of a few different things when you hear the word neighbor, locationally, Mr Rodgers

Neighbor appears in scripture about 120 times, over 90% of that is OT, less than 10% NT

The people we cross paths with

Who is my neighbor

Luk 10:25 And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Luk 10:26 He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?"

Luk 10:27 And he answered, "You shall 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 your neighbor as yourself."

Luk 10:28 And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

Luk 10:29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Luk 10:30 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.

Luk 10:31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:33 But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion.

Luk 10:34 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.

Luk 10:35 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.'

Luk 10:36 Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?"

Luk 10:37 He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

The parable of the Good Samaritan; ie- the Parable of the Good Neighbor.

Context- lawyer not civil lawyer in a court room, but well versed and, in fact, expert in Mosaic law.

He knows the "greatest commandment" and the second is love your neighbor, but he wants to JUSTIFY himself.

Jesus uses a story who's hero is represented by someone who is abhorred by the Jews, to expose the ugliness in the lawyer's own heart.

It's a catch all- all are your neighbor- even the ones you dislike the most. Beautifully convicting.

Priest/ Levite- allow religiosity to stand in the way of Godly compassion and empathy. Fear of being defiled if associating with the lowly. It made them UNCOMFORTABLE.

Being a good neighbor sometimes looks like leaving our comfort zone.

Samaritan- saw the man in the road as he saw himself, another human being, and one who was in need.

He was on a journey, and he allowed for a holy interruption. Loving our neighbors often can look like a holy interruption.

Bob and Donna

Imago dei- made in God's image, image bears- all are imago dei, no matter race, religion, gender, creedence.

Lawyer asking what is the GREATEST commandment.

Mat 22:37 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.

Mat 22:38 This is the great and first commandment.

Mat 22:39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Mat 22:40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

If you want to love God with all that you are and all that you've got, then you love ALL PEOPLE.

This is why Jesus came, its his chief desire- to draw ALL MEN to himself! As it says in John 12:32.

Jesus is not King of my heart and life, if I have not given myself to His Kingdom Cause!

Humanity is sacred to God. When we choose to love our neighbors, it is worship unto God because it blesses the very core of our Creator.

It may be possible for each to think too much of his own potential glory hereafter; it is hardly possible for him to think too often or too deeply about that of his neighbour. The load, or weight, or burden of my neighbour's glory should be laid daily on my back, a load so heavy that only humility can carry it, and the backs of the proud will be broken. It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilization—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit— immortal horrors or everlasting splendours. This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously—no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption. And our charity must be a real and costly love, with deep feeling for the sins in spite of which we love the sinner—no mere tolerance or indulgence which parodies love as flippancy parodies merriment. Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If he is your Christian neighbour he is holy in almost the same way, for in him also Christ vere latitat—the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden.

Act 17:26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,

Act 17:27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,

Act 17:28 for “‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, “‘For we are indeed his offspring.’”

Sometimes loving our neighbors looks like getting in the ditch with them.

That’s part of what being a faithful friend looks like. The friend that sticks closer than a brother.

Maleah

On prayer:

Eze 22:30 I searched for a man among them who would repair the wall and stand in the gap before me on behalf of the land so that I might not destroy it, but I found no one.

Loving our neighbors means contending for them in prayer!

Ministers of reconciliation, keys to the kingdom!

Storm the gates of heaven, have faith for others, and bring them to the feet of Jesus!

The heart being to usher people into the Kingdom of God, the FAMILY of God! Jesus is King, and we are joint heirs and made priests!

Brothers and Sisters

We are anointed for this:

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

Isa 61:2 to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

Isa 61:3 to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.

Action point as we leave: It's not about who's being a good neighbor to me, but who may I be a good neighbor to today.