

Bay City Wesleyan Church  
February 24, 2019

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Sunday Morning 02-24-2019

We need a love powerful enough to change us.  
<http://bible.com/events/571627>  
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Mark 12:28-31 NIV

<font color="#999999">28</font></small> One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" <font color="#999999">29</font></small> "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <font color="#999999">30</font></small> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' <font color="#999999">31</font></small> The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."  
<https://bible.com/bible/111/mrk.12.28-31.NIV>

Jesus said, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'  
That raises two significant questions in my mind.

1.FIRST, "What does it mean to love my neighbor as myself?"

Luke 6:35-36 NLT

<font color="#999999">35</font></small> "Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. <font color="#999999">36</font></small> You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.  
<https://bible.com/bible/116/luk.6.35-36.nlt>

John 15:12-13 NLT

<font color="#999999">12</font></small> This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. <font color="#999999">13</font></small> There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.  
<https://bible.com/bible/116/jhn.15.12-13.nlt>

Galatians 5:22-23 NET

<font color="#999999">22</font></small> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <font color="#999999">23</font></small> gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.  
<https://bible.com/bible/107/gal.5.22-23.net>

That brings us to my second question.

2."What actions express our love for our neighbor?"

1 John 4:9-13 NLT

<small><font color="#999999">9</font></small> God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. <small><font color="#999999">10</font></small> This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. <small><font color="#999999">11</font></small> Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. <small><font color="#999999">12</font></small> No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us. <small><font color="#999999">13</font></small> And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/1jn.4.9-13.nlt>

Sermon in a Sentence:

You can measure your love for your neighbor by what you're willing to sacrifice to see them experience Jesus's love.

Please, allow me to tell you one way our congregation will think and act when Jesus's love shapes us.

When Jesus's love rules in our congregation, we will say, "Serve them first."

We won't ask, "What about us?"

You won't say, "Pastor, serve them first."

We won't wonder, "Who will serve them first?"

When Jesus's love compels our congregation to act, we will say, "We will serve them first. We will serve those outside God's family first. We will serve our neighbors in need first. We will follow Jesus in seeking, serving and saving the lost FIRST. Then, and only then, will we serve each other."

Jeremiah 17:9 MSG

<small><font color="#999999">9-10</font></small> "The heart is hopelessly dark and deceitful, a puzzle that no one can figure out. But I, God, search the heart and examine the mind. I get to the heart of the human. I get to the root of things. I treat them as they really are, not as they pretend to be."

<https://bible.com/bible/97/jer.17.9.msg>

Psalms 139:23-24 NIV

<small><font color="#999999">23</font></small> Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <small><font color="#999999">24</font></small> See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

<https://bible.com/bible/111/psa.139.23-24.NIV>

We need to ask the Spirit to turn the light of grace and truth on our lives to expose any unloving ways in us so we can repent. This simply may be the single best time for you to pray for Jesus's love to flow into and through you to those around us.