

Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Yahshua replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Mt 22:36-40)

In Rom 13:9, Paul wrote, *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* So what does that mean? Who is your *neighbor*? He said to love your neighbor as yourself. What does that mean?

...The commandments are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the Law. (Rom 13:9-10)

Love is fulfilling the Law, so do not fail to love your neighbor. Do not *NOT* love your neighbor. We learned about the word “neighbor” a long time ago, back in the Vine House. When single brothers would come in, they would sleep in bunk beds, so the brother in the next bunk was their neighbor. *Neighbor* means “the one nearest you” — like “near-bor” — one who is *nigh*. Whether you prefer to say N-E-A-R-bor or N-I-G-H-bor or N-A-Y-bor, it all means the same thing: “the one who is close.”

So you can’t NOT love your nearest one, and then go to another farther away from you and say you love with God’s love. You have to love your brother who lives in the bunk above (or below) you first. You can’t just ignore him, pass by that standard, and go right on over to someone else you find it easier to love. You have to “*love your neighbor as yourself*” — the nearest one to you. That’s what it means.

That is just how you should be in your household. We all live in households, so therefore you don’t just bypass or ignore a brother in your own household and go to another household and love them. If you see the need in your own household — your brother or sister has a *need* — then you meet that need. You don’t wait for someone else

to come from another household to meet that need of the brother or sister within your own household when it is in your power to do it. That is your “nigh-bor,” your neighbor, the nearest one to you. That is “*loving your neighbor as yourself*” — loving the one closest to you *first*. Love does not make a preference, nor would one filled with God’s love say, “I’m not going to love my brother, the one next to me, or the ones in my household today. I’m going to go and love someone I love more and ignore that nearer one.” To ignore a brother is one of the highest forms of hatred; it is actually the same thing as murder (1 Jn 4:20; 3:17; 2:9).

When you do that, someone else has got to make up for your HATE (1 Jn 4:20). For us, for the Holy, *hate* simply means *not loving*. Hate is not loving the one nearest to you. That is where your opportunity is, with the one nearest to you.

It’s very difficult to love someone you don’t see. You might write him a letter while you ignore your brother whom you *can* see, or you might just write your kinfolk somewhere because you love them more than you love your spiritual brother who needs your help or encouragement. Of course, that would be hate. To love your neighbor is to love your brother or sister nearest to you, when they have a need in your household. You don’t say, “Oh, I can’t do that... I’m going here,” or, “I can’t do that because I’m busy doing this,” and put up a barrier in your life. Of course, love is to lay down your *life* for your brother or sister — the one nearest you, especially. Love finds a way.

ha-êmeq — We were reading from Matthew 19:18 last night. When the rich young ruler asked, “What must I do to have eternal life?” our Master listed the laws he should keep. He quoted part of the Ten Commandments, *and then* “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” which isn’t one of the Ten. I noticed that our Master put that one in there, right at the end. So the man responded, “I’ve done all those things.” But did he really “*love his neighbor as himself*”?

If you are in a secular neighborhood, everyone who lives around you is considered your neighbor. You may try to ignore the nearest neighbors to you because they are the ones who directly affect your life. That’s why we must have His love filling our hearts —

in order to live together in peace, because that's where all the arguments are, with the ones near. The one who lives far away doesn't irritate you as much as the one who lives right next door, or in the bunk above you, or the bunk below you. You know all of the quirks and irritating ways of those near to you.

And that's how we know that we've passed out of death and into life — because we are able to love one another. That's how we know we *believe*. We know this by the Spirit, who confirms it in our heart (1 Jn 3:14; 4:13). We keep the commandments by the Spirit. If you are not filled with the Holy Spirit, you certainly are not going to love your nearest brother or sister; you will bypass that one for someone who is easier for you to love, but the Word says that this is *hating* your brother.

Tares or Foolish Virgins?

A tare (weed) that grows in the garden is one who can't love. All he can do is absorb the nutrients and take away from the garden. Instead of giving to the garden, they take away. A tare is one who is not going to love his nearest neighbor. He can't. A tare just takes the good nourishment from the soil away.

Foolish virgins are almost like tares; they are similar. A foolish virgin is a carnal disciple, one who lives by the flesh. The foolish virgin is a *believer*, but he's still *carnal*, fleshly. A natural person is the *tare* (1 Cor 2:14) while the foolish virgin is the carnal person (1 Cor 3:1-3). The foolish virgins are unspiritual — not living by the Spirit.

So then, a tare is a natural man, but the carnal one is a believer who acts like a tare. You can hardly tell the difference. You can't go around pulling the foolish virgins up, saying, "Hey, you're a tare. Get out of here." You have to leave them all in the garden and you have to water them, nourish them, give them food and everything else, until it's obvious they are tares. Then they'll be pulled up at the end of the age and thrown into the fire (Mt 13:47-50).

So a tare and a foolish virgin are similar. That's why our Master said, "*Let both grow together until the harvest*" (Mt 13:27-30). A tare can take up all your precious time, continually talking, and just absorbing all the nutrients that need to go to the wheat in the Body. The tares take up all your time (Jn 10:10). That's why long counseling sessions aren't necessary in the Kingdom. Tares don't contribute to the corporate growth of the Body, and even foolish virgins don't. They work, they do certain jobs, but it doesn't do anything. When they are judged, they are going to be judged on their *work*, what they *did*, whether good or bad. The work that we do has to be *in the Spirit*. Our works cannot just be in the flesh or it doesn't count for anything.

So we all live in clusters. That is who we love first — the "neighbor" in the cluster with us, especially the one next to you. You can't be irritated with the one next to you and then go on over and love someone else.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the Body, whether good or evil. (2 Cor 5:10)

Each one will be rewarded for what he has done in the Body, whether it be in the flesh or in the Spirit. The test of this is in how we love.

Zimrah shel Sameach — "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all." (Jms 2:8-10)

So if you don't love your neighbor, you're guilty of them all. And he goes on to say in Jms 2:14-16, "What does it profit, my brothers, if a man says he has faith, but he does not have works? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?"

So if you have more than you need, and you see a brother who wears the same size pants, or the same size shirt as you have, and he keeps on wearing the same shirt every day, then you might want to consider giving a shirt to him.

Ishah Ruth — I was thankful for what we heard, because I saw the same thing that Zimrah shared, like Rom 12:9 says, “*Let love be without hypocrisy.*” It’s hypocritical love when we overlook our brothers and sisters right next to us while we love our brothers far away. Our Father sees it and He knows what is working in us. That really spoke to me, and all I want is to love all of you who are close to me, so that you know I love you all.

It’s true that things come up, and we have to work them out. And so if we’re not honest with ourselves and with our Father, then we will overlook each other and try to love someone else whom we choose. But I know our Father doesn’t give us grace to “love” like that. I don’t want to be filled with hypocritical love.

Ahavah Shua — I see that our Father needs the weeds in the Body until the very end. He allows them to stay there. I don’t have to go around trying to “weed out” things from people’s lives. He takes care of this in the right time. More, I need to worry about all the needs, because the needs are many. This is what is going to cause people to feel loved and respond better and better. This makes me really thankful for the heart of our Father, that He is really patient, and I can be like that also. Love cares for the needs of the people; and then they feel loved, and may be ashamed at the way they have been, and want to change.

A lot of times, we’re just waiting for others to love us instead of loving them. Then we even think, “No one loves us,” which is the opposite of love. Some people are hard to love; some people are easy to love. So who are we supposed to love more? We have to make ourselves easy to love, but when people are hard to love, we need to love them more than people who are easy to love. Are we easy to love, or hard to love?

I told someone, “I know that I’ve passed out of death and into life, because I love you.” She said, “Yônêq, am I so hard to love that you have to pass out of death?” I said, “Well, yes! But that’s how we know we’ve passed out of death and into life, because we love.”

Nevertheless, we have to love both those who are hard to love and those who are easy to love. We have to love, especially, those in our own household. When you see the need, you have to *meet the need*. We shouldn’t be those who respond, “Oh, I’ve got more important things to do. I’m sorry; I can’t help you with that.”