

Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

Brad McConnaughey // June 14, 2020

Matthew 22:36-39

1. As followers of Jesus we are called to love our neighbors.

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus 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.’” Matthew 22:36-39

2. All people are created in the image of God and therefore have intrinsic value to God and to us.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:27

3. As followers of Jesus, when we speak to, or on behalf of, another person or people group, we are to speak with grace, gentleness and respect.

“Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” Colossians 4:5-6

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who ask you to give a reason of the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15

How are we to love our black neighbors as ourselves?

A. Examine your own heart.

B. Have/Express Empathy for our black neighbors.

C. Enter into their world and truly seek to understand them.

(1) Educate yourself and your children.

(2) Establish relationships with our black neighbors to get to know them and learn about their pain, fears, anger and joys.

D. Pray.

(1) That God would search your heart and give you wisdom on what you are to do about this injustice.

(2) That God would do the same for Alderwood Community Church and its leadership, and THE CHURCH.

(3) That God would protect, heal, and grant equal rights and equal treatment for our black neighbors.

Resources:

Books

Blood Lines: Race, Cross and the Christian by John Piper

Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation by Latasha Morrison

Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life by Barbara J. Fields

Documentary

Eyes on the Prize: Americas Civil Rights Years

Movie

Just Mercy

Sermon questions

1. What is one take-away for you from Pastor Brad's message in light of what is happening in our society today?
2. Pastor Brad focused on **Genesis 1:26-27**. Do you really believe that every person you meet is created in God's image? How does that change the way you treat a person of a different race?
3. Read **Matthew 22:37-40**, **John 13:34-35**, and **1 John 3:16-17**. How do you know when you've loved someone as God commands? Is that realistic?
4. Read **Micah 6:8**. What does it mean to "act justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God"? How you can live out **Micah 6:8** in your relationships?
5. Read **James 2:1-13**. What strikes you about what James says about favoritism?

Have you ever seen a situation where a person's dignity was ignored or denied? How can you help someone while still affirming his or her dignity?

6. God not only commands us to love others, but also gives us the power to love others. Read **Galatians 5:16-24**. Do you want the Holy Spirit to transform you to reflect Jesus as described in vv.**22-25**? How specifically?

7. John says, "Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." (**1 John 3:18**). Think of someone of a different race and ethnicity. What action will you take to love as Christ has loved you?

Read the Bible this year

Pastor Brad encouraged us to read the Bible in 2020. Here's some help getting started. Each day this week read from the Old and New Testament. Or, if you prefer, read just from one testament. Enjoy!

- **Ezra 3-5; John 20**
- **Ezra 6-8; John 21**
- **Ezra 9-10; Acts 1**
- **Nehemiah 1-3**
- **Nehemiah 4-6; Acts 2**
- **Nehemiah 7-9; Acts 3**
- **Nehemiah 10-11; Acts 4**