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## Loving Others

By Bryan Trotter on May 26, 2021

### TODAY'S READING: Mark 12

Loving your neighbor as yourself has always been timely and appropriate but it feels even more so right now. It seems the things that divide us far outnumber the things that unify us. I do not have to agree with my neighbor, but I am commanded to love them. So, what does it look like to love our neighbor?

God has described in His word what it means to love someone so we do not have to speculate how to love others. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a reads, *"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."* We often hear this passage read at weddings, but this passage is not intended just for marriage. This is intended to be the way we love all people, including our spouses, children, family and neighbors. We exhibit love to our neighbors when we are patient and kind. You can apply each attribute from 1 Corinthians 13 to describe how we are intended to love others.

God has first demonstrated His love for us through Jesus and He continually demonstrates the 1 Corinthians 13 attributes of love to us. Let that sink in. God is not waiting for you to get it right. He is patient with you. God is not irritated at you. He is kind to you. We love others because God first loves us. 1 John 4:19-21 says, *"We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister."*

If you are struggling to love others who look, act, and believe differently from you, it might be time to reflect on how you are experiencing God's love. If you truly want to love your neighbor, start with receiving God's love and returning that love to Him. Allow him to heal the hurts of the past so that His love can flow through you. It is like trying to fill someone's cup from a pitcher that is empty. You cannot give away what you do not have. Allow God's love to fill you so that you can truly love those around you. Today, spend some time in prayer reflecting on God's love for you and how you are exhibiting His love to those around you, especially those who are very different from you.

**TOMORROW'S READING: Mark 13**

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