



## GOOD NEIGHBORS—PART 1

# WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

### LOVE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT

Imagine if the church's goal was to take individuals and help them become the most loving version of themselves instead of the most moral.

When we focus on the latter, it doesn't seem like people experience either—but with the former, they get both.

-Jayson Bradley

### MARK 12:28-31

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?"

<sup>29</sup> "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> Love the Lord your God with all

your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' <sup>31</sup> The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

**Following Jesus is primarily about growing in our ability to LOVE.**

### ACKNOWLEDGE OUR LINES

#### LUKE 10:25-35

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>26</sup> "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

<sup>27</sup> He answered, "'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, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

<sup>28</sup> "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

<sup>29</sup> But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

#### How do we define neighbor?

- **Proximity—people nearby**
- **Similarity—people like me**
- **Affinity—people I click with**
- **Solidarity—people on my team**

**Whether or not this question: "Who is my neighbor?" is on our lips—let's recognize that it is in our hearts AND be open to Jesus' response.**

### GO AND DO LIKEWISE

#### LUKE 10:30-37

<sup>30</sup> In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

<sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

<sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

#### Where do we see ourselves in the story?

- **Are we the beaten and bloodied traveler who needs rescuing? Jesus is the Good Samaritan who sees us, shows compassion, and binds up our wounds at great cost to Himself.**
- **We all, at times, have been the Priest or the Levite who passes by on the other side.**
- **Jesus commands us to become like the Good Samaritan—choosing to be the neighbor and developing lives of love and compassion.**