

October 14, 2026

Love The People In Front Of You

October Series: Love Your Neighbor

Week Focus: Start Right Here

Scripture – Matthew 22:39 - “And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Devotional Reflection

Throughout this week, we have been reminded that loving God is more than religious activity and that genuine devotion should become visible in the way we treat others. Yesterday, we considered how our love for God should influence our attitudes, words, and responses toward the people around us. Today, Jesus brings that responsibility even closer by commanding us to love our neighbors as ourselves. It is easy to think about loving people in broad terms while overlooking the individuals God has already placed within our daily lives. **LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR DOES NOT ALWAYS BEGIN WITH FINDING SOMEONE NEW; SOMETIMES IT BEGINS WITH SEEING SOMEONE YOU ALREADY KNOW DIFFERENTLY.**

When Jesus commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves, He challenges us to extend genuine concern, dignity, and consideration to others. We naturally recognize our own needs, frustrations, responsibilities, and desires, but we do not always give the same attention to what someone else may be experiencing. The people closest to us can sometimes receive the least patience because familiarity causes us to overlook their needs or take their presence for granted. A spouse, child, coworker, friend, church member, or neighbor may be carrying something difficult that we have failed to recognize because we have become preoccupied with our own concerns. **LOVE BEGINS TO BECOME VISIBLE WHEN WE STOP MAKING OURSELVES THE CENTER OF EVERY INTERACTION AND BEGIN CONSIDERING THE PERSON IN FRONT OF US.**

However, Jesus' command is not an invitation to manufacture love through willpower or to ignore healthy boundaries in our relationships. The love He calls us to demonstrate flows from the transforming grace we have received through Him, and it must remain grounded in truth, wisdom, and genuine concern for another person's good. Scripture reminds us that Christ demonstrated His love for us while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8), revealing a love that was neither earned nor dependent upon our perfect response. Because we have been loved so graciously, we are called to extend compassion beyond convenience, personal preference, and what others may be able to give us in return. **CHRISTLIKE LOVE DOES NOT ASK ONLY, “WHAT DO I NEED FROM THIS PERSON?” BUT ALSO, “HOW CAN I HONOR GOD IN THE WAY I TREAT THIS PERSON?”**

As you move through today, consider how many opportunities to demonstrate love may already be present in your ordinary routine. You may not need another event, assignment, ministry opportunity, or special occasion to begin putting Jesus' command into practice. Perhaps someone needs your undivided attention, a patient response, an encouraging word, a sincere apology, or simply the assurance that they have not been forgotten. These actions may appear small, but when they are motivated by genuine love, they can become meaningful expressions of the transforming work of Christ within us. **YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK FAR FOR SOMEONE TO LOVE; START RIGHT HERE, WITH THE PEOPLE GOD HAS ALREADY PLACED IN FRONT OF YOU.**

FOCUS FOR TODAY

You don't have to look far for someone to love; start right here.

Christlike love becomes visible when we intentionally demonstrate compassion, patience, dignity, and care toward the people already present in our lives.

PRACTICE — LOVE THE PEOPLE IN FRONT OF YOU

- Identify someone nearby. Think of one person you interact with regularly whose needs or feelings you may have overlooked.
 - Give someone your attention. Have a conversation today in which you listen without rushing, interrupting, or preparing your response.
 - Choose patience over irritation. When someone inconveniences you, pause and consider what a loving response would look like.
 - Demonstrate practical care. Offer encouragement, assistance, or a thoughtful gesture without expecting anything in return.
 - Examine your closest relationships. Ask God to reveal whether familiarity has caused you to become less intentional about showing love.
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PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me with a grace I could never earn and for demonstrating that love through Jesus Christ. Thank You for reminding me that loving You and loving others are inseparable parts of a life being transformed by Your Spirit. Forgive me for the times I have been so focused on my own responsibilities, frustrations, and desires that I have overlooked the people You have placed around me. Help me recognize that the people I encounter each day are worthy of dignity, compassion, and genuine concern.

Lord, open my eyes to the needs of those closest to me. Teach me to listen with patience, respond with humility, speak with kindness, and demonstrate love through meaningful action. When I am tempted to become impatient, indifferent, or self-centered, remind me of the love You have so graciously shown me. Give me wisdom to love others in ways that are both compassionate and truthful, and help me recognize opportunities to reflect Your character in ordinary moments. May the people in front of me experience evidence of Your transforming work within me.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

REFLECTION QUESTION

Who has God already placed in your life that you may have been overlooking, and what is one intentional way you can demonstrate Christlike love toward that person today?