

Text: Mt 22.39

Last time we were talking about our obligation to love God with everything we have. Today I want to turn to the Second Commandment, to love our neighbour and offer some brief meditations on numerous passages that flesh out the concept of loving others and why we do it.

I. Motivation: Christian love is a response to God’s love (Col 3.12-15, 1 Pt 1.8, 1 Jn 4.11)

A. We are chosen, we should imitate

Colossians 3.12-15 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. ¹⁴ Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

B. We are believers, so we love

1 Peter 1.8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

C. God loved us, we should love one another

1 John 4.11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

II. Cooperation: Christian love is an obligation *and* the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5.13)

Galatians 5.13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only *do* not *turn* your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Galatians 5.22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

III. Imitation: Christian love emulates the Master

A. Humble and gentle (Eph 4.1-2)

Ephesians 4.1-2 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,

B. Eschews retaliation (1 Pt 3.8-9)

1 Peter 3.8-9 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

C. Self-restraint (Rm 14.13-15)

Romans 14.13-15 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this-- not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way. ¹⁴ I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. ¹⁵ For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.

D. From the heart (1 Cor 13)

1 Corinthians 13.4-8 Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, ⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, ⁶ does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are tongues*, they will cease; if *there is knowledge*, it will be done away.