

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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NEIGHBOR

"It is easier to love humanity as a whole than to love one's neighbor." – Eric Hoffer

"Your own safety is at stake when your neighbor's wall is ablaze." – Horace

"It is folly to punish your neighbor by fire when you live next door." – Publilius Syrus

"Flatter not thyself in thy faith in God if thou hast not charity for thy neighbor." – Francis Quarles

"The impersonal hand of government can never replace the helping hand of a neighbor." – Hubert H. Humphrey

"But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 22:34-40).

The idea of loving your neighbor is perhaps one of the most difficult concepts for Christians to develop. One would tend to think it would be a natural inclination, but for some, they seem to fight it. People are alright, provided of course, they keep their distance and want nothing from us.

When Jesus gave the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), he shamed his listeners as the good neighbor in that story was a Samaritan, one not liked or wanted by the Jewish people. Too many are selective in the neighbors they choose. The real truth behind this, is the love and well wishes for one's fellow man.

The apostle John even shamed and humbled the church when he wrote, "By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:16-17).

Isn't it ironic that people call for a love of God, but cannot find it in their hearts to love their neighbors?

And then comes the cap on this thought, when Jesus even included those whom we call our enemies. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt. 5:43-44). Are they not our neighbors too?