

The Priority of Loving Others
Selected Scriptures

Introduction

Before I get into the subject of my sermon today, I want to quickly remind you of some of the truths that I have stressed since the start of this series of topical sermons for they lay the proper foundation.

First truth, God is the Creator of all things, is self-existent and infinite in all respects. He is one God existing in three distinct co-equal persons who are each fully God - the Trinity.

Second truth, you are a very limited finite creature made by God. You are only capable of understanding Him to the degree that He has revealed Himself and within your limited capacity to comprehend Him. If you think you understand God or apply your own attributes to Him, then you have a god of your imagination and not the Creator.

Third truth, based on these two truths it must be clearly understood that the purpose of your existence is determined by your Creator, and all things, including you, have been made by Him for His own glory. Humans will glorify God beyond the rest of creation by virtue of being made in His image and therefore a reflection of Him both as persons with the ability to think, feel and make decisions, and in certain attributes we share with God though to a much lesser and finite degree.

Fourth truth, man's reflection of God's image is corrupted by his own sinfulness, yet God will still glorify Himself in man. That will be to a greater extent in Christians who reflect His image more clearly as they mature spiritually and are conformed to the image of Christ. They will also glorify God as vessels of mercy upon whom God will display certain attributes. God will also glorify Himself in the unrepentant who will be vessels of His wrath upon whom He will display other particular attributes or aspects of them.

Fifth truth, though we do not understand the intersection of God's sovereignty and man's volition, we do know that God's stated moral desire and His command is that man repent and believe the gospel - the good news that man is redeemed and sin can be forgiven through faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sixth truth, as already stated, the purpose of man's existence is to glorify God, our Creator. The first priority in doing that is what Jesus taught in Matthew 22:37-38 to be the great and foremost commandment, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*" He went on to teach in verse 39, "*And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*"⁴⁰ *On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.*"

The priority of loving God was the subject of last week's sermon. This week I want to expand on that a little and then examine the subject of the priority of loving your neighbor.

Loving God - Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Exodus 20:3-8

The great commandment that Jesus quoted is from the Shema in Deuteronomy 6:4-5 which first declares, *Hear, O Israel; The LORD our God, the LORD is One.* It then declares man's responsibility to God. "*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*" Moses went on to instruct the people that this command was to be on their hearts and they were to be diligent to teach it to their children in every situation. They would receive God's blessing if they did so, but they would receive God's curses if they did not. That would be the hope and the warning to every generation that would follow. Loving God is the first priority.

As I pointed out last week, to love God in this manner involves every aspect of your being: your will, your emotion, your mind and your physical strength. Everything that makes you, you, is to be set on loving God as the first priority. I also pointed out that God's law gives the guidance needed in order to

love God properly. That is why David expresses such love for the Word of God in Psalm 119. The Scriptures are the handbook on knowing and loving God.

Since the Ten Commandment are summary statements of the many specific laws based upon them, I briefly examined the first four which are all directly related to loving God. If you truly love God, then the Lord God and He alone will be your God, and He will also be the only one that you will worship and serve. You will not worship or serve any thing else as a substitute for Him including idols, graven images, false ideas about the true God or any of the many vain purposes for life that humans pursue - fame, fortune, power, position or pleasure. If you truly love God you will treat His name and everything associated with Him with reverence and avoid all blasphemy. A genuine love for God will also be displayed in the desire to worship Him individually and corporately, so while Christians are not required to keep "the Sabbath," we will meet on a regular basis with other believers to worship God and for mutual encouragement.

There are also many promises God makes to those that do keep Him as the first priority. Last week I pointed out Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6:33 that the solution to worry is to seek first God's kingdom and righteousness and then the things needed for life such as food, drink and clothing, will be added to you. God will provide. Similar promises of provision are made in other Scriptures. For example, Psalm 34:9-10, ⁹ *O fear the LORD, you His saints; For to those who fear Him there is no want.* ¹⁰ *The young lions do lack and suffer hunger; But they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing.* Psalm 84:11-12, ¹¹ *For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.* ¹² *O LORD of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You!*

Other blessings for placing the priority on God are made in other Scriptures. I want to briefly point out a few of these before moving on to the priority of loving others.

Solomon gave wise advice to His son in Proverbs 3:5-10. This passages lists specific ways to place the priority on loving God with corresponding promises. ⁵ *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.* ⁶ *In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.* ⁷ *Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.* ⁸ *It will be healing to your body And refreshment to your bones.* ⁹ *Honor the LORD from your wealth And from the first of all your produce;* ¹⁰ *So your barns will be filled with plenty And your vats will overflow with new wine."*

Priority of loving God is seen in these specific commands: Trust in the Lord, acknowledge Him in everything, fear the Lord, Honor the Lord first with your wealth. Specific promises include a straight path for life, healing to your body, and abundant supply of what you need for life. Notice as well the humility needed to follow these commands: do not lean on your own understanding and do not be wise in your own eyes. Humility is critical to being able to make loving God the first priority. In fact, it is critical for having a relationship with God.

Consider the humility needed to follow these next two passages. Jeremiah 29:12-13 promises, ¹² *"Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.* ¹³ *You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."* Isaiah 55:6-7 makes a related promise, ⁶ *"Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.* ⁷ *Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon."* A component of salvation is getting your priorities in proper order to seek God, but that will not happen unless you are humble enough to recognize your own wicked condition and then seek the Lord for a solution that is beyond your own ability. The humble can seek the Lord for the needed direction because according to James 1:5, *"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."*

Those who humbly seek God can also have confidence in prayer too according to the promise of 1 John 5:14-15, ¹⁴ *"This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to*

His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ *And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.”*

The first priority is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. The specifics of how to do that are revealed in the commands that God has given to us. Loving God and keeping His commands are tied together throughout the Scriptures, and Jesus stated it directly in John 14:15, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* He expanded on this a few verses later saying in verse 21, *“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”*

Loving Others as Yourself - Matthew 23:29, Leviticus 19:18

The second priority according to Jesus is Matthew 23:29 quoting from Leviticus 19:18 is to *“love your neighbor as yourself.”* Since this verse has been badly distorted by the Biblically ignorant, those who are grammatically challenged, and by false teachers who twist Scripture in the effort to make it say what they want, I will state it directly. There are no verses or even allusions in the Scriptures that people need to learn to love themselves. Why? Because that is the natural condition of all mankind. This verse assumes that truth and challenges you to love others in the same way. The same argument is used in Ephesians 5 in the command for husbands to love their wives for *“he who loves his wife loves himself.”* That is also why Jesus’ new commandment to love others as He has loved us (John 13:34) is an even higher standard. The self-esteem movement is simply psychological justification for pride. You do not need to love yourself before you can love others. You already love yourself and the second greatest commanded is for you to love others at least that much.

What does it look like to love others in this manner? Some of this is fairly simple because it means to consider and treat others with the same care and concern as you have for yourself. This command is also embodied in Jesus’ instruction in Matthew 7:12, often referred to as the golden rule, to treat others in the same way you want them to treat you. If you will take the time to think through that precept as you encounter the various situations of life, you should be able to apply it and do what God wants. However, since people are innately selfish and tend to react instead of carefully think through what they should do, God has given specific commands to help us carry out this priority.

We start again with the Ten Commandments for the general guidelines from which the specifics arise. The last six of them deal with human relationships.

The Ten Commandments - Exodus 20:12-17

I think it is easy to see that all of the first four of the Ten Commandments will be obeyed if you truly love God. In the same way, it is easy to see that the rest of the Ten Commandments will be obeyed if you love your neighbor as yourself. Let’s take a quick look at each of those.

5)¹² *“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.”* This is the first of the commandments concerning the treatment of other people, and appropriately it is the first relationship in order and in importance which are parents. God is our Creator and therefore is to be shown reverence even in the use of His name. In a similar way, parents are to be honored because they are the means by which God has made you. Those who obey God’s command to love others will start with their parents.

The term “honor” in this context refers to showing respect, attention, and in children, also obedience as Paul points out in Ephesians 6:1-3 also remarking that this is the first command with a promise. That is contrary to much of current society in which disrespect to parents is common and promoted by the entertainment industry and aspects of government and educational institutions. The wise pay attention to parents and are blessed (Proverbs 1:8-9; 23:22-25) while fools do not and are cursed (Proverbs 15:5; 20:20; 30:17).

While adults are not obligated to obey their parents, they are commanded to still show them respect and pay attention to them. I have certainly been blessed by the advice I have received from my parents after I left their home and established my own. It is a joy for me to honor them. Many of you do not have parents that are honorable in their character, but the command still applies to you simply because they are your parents. Show respect to them even if they are not respectful and try to be aware of any real need they have and help as you can without completely removing the consequences of their decisions and actions through which God may be teaching them. Remember that the love commanded here is ἀγαπάω / agapaō which is a love that is primarily an act of the will and mind in a determined care for the welfare of someone else. It is a love which displays itself in the fulfillment of duty even when fond feelings of affection are not present, though that is a great loss if affection is not present.

6) The next command is ¹³ *“You shall not murder.”* Murder is the willful killing of a human in violation of the laws of God. It does not include accidental death, acts of just war or lawful execution for violation of God’s laws. Murder is not only in direct opposition to love, it is a violation of a prerogative that belongs only to God since life is in His hands, and it is a direct attack on God’s image which is why in Genesis 9:6 that God requires capital punishment for those who commit physical murder.

Keep in mind that 1 John 3:15 and Jesus in Matthew 5:21-28 equate hatred of others with murder making the person liable to God’s eternal judgment for it. God knows your mind, will and emotions for which He will judge you even if you do not carry out the physical actions. That is why we need forgiveness for our sins of thought as well as our sins of action.

7) The next command is ¹⁴ *“You shall not commit adultery.”* It is common in our perverse society to try to justify adultery as some form of love, but it is always an action of selfish desire - lust - which began internally long before any action took place. Remember that Jesus equated the two in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:27-28). To look at someone with lust is to commit mental adultery.

True love does not commit adultery and it also does not commit fornication. True love wants what is best for other people and that includes building up and supporting the existing or future marriage of those involved. Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 7:4 that the body of a husband or wife belongs to the spouse. Adultery violates both of them now and fornication violates both the current object of lust and that person’s future spouse.

8) The next command is ¹⁵ *“You shall not steal.”* Theft is taking something that does not belong to you without the owner’s permission. It is an act of selfishness and a violation of the dominion mandate from which is derived God’s laws concerning ownership of property. It is the action that takes place in response to the coveting that is prohibited in the Tenth Commandment. True love does not take from other people. It does the opposite in sacrificially giving of itself for the other person’s best good.

9) The ninth commandment is ¹⁶ *“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”* Lying itself is sin (Leviticus 18:22), but this is a malicious form of it that seeks to harm a neighbor. That is obviously an action that is the opposite of the command to love your neighbor. The particular motive and lie given will only add to the weight of sin incurred.

Lying has become quite normal in our nation. I saw an advertisement once for a television show called *The Liars Club*. It turned out to be a game show, but it would have been an accurate title for many of the news and political programs that are aired. Humans may not think twice about playing fast and loose with the truth if they get close to it at all, but it is still a serious issue before God. Revelation 21:8 includes liars along with the cowardly, the unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, sorcerers and immoral persons as those whose *“part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”* Liars do not love God or their neighbors.

10) The last of the Ten Commandments is ¹⁷ *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”* To covet is to desire something that you do not own that would be considered pleasant to yourself, and it can rise to the level of lust as the intensity of the desire increases. This is the only commandment that addresses an issue of sin that is only internal. Coveting is an issue of mind, will and emotions. Any action taken toward the object coveted will result in an additional sin.

Stealing and adultery are the most obvious actions from the desires mentioned in this verse - coveting your neighbor’s wife or something else that belongs to him. However, the selfishness of covetousness is often the driving force for a host of other sins such as envy, jealousy, greed, malice, disputes, strife, deceit, bearing false witness and even murder. All of these sins are contrary to honoring your mother and father for they bring shame upon them. They also prove the person does not love God for those that love God will keep His commandments (John 14:21-24; 1 John 5:2-3). James 1:14-15 explains that it is this underlying issue of coveting - lust - that entices a person to be tempted which when yielded to gives birth to sin, and sin has a tendency to keep giving rise to more sin.

A Greater Love

The Ten Commandments of Exodus 20 can serve as a guide in how to keep the priorities of loving God and others, but they are a very minimal guide. Eight of the ten are stated in the negative as prohibitions, things you should not do: - no other god before Him, no idols to worship or serve, no blasphemy, no murder, no adultery, no stealing, no false witness, no coveting. Only keeping the Sabbath holy and honoring your parents are stated as prescriptions of positive things you should do. A prohibition is a much lower standard than a prescription. Christians are called to a much higher standard. That is one reason Jesus stated the great commandments of loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and loving your neighbor as yourself as positive prescriptions. Loving God with the totality of your being is a much higher standard than just avoiding the most obvious offenses against Him. Loving your neighbor as yourself is a much higher standard than just avoiding causing obvious harm to others.

Many of the specific laws in the Old Testament are stated as prescriptions of positive things you should do such as the shema and teaching your children (Deuteronomy 6:4-9), loving your neighbor (Leviticus 19:18), and doing good which includes carrying out justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with God (Micah 6:8). However, the New Testament gives much more expression of God’s positive prescriptions in the many verses detailing how we are to treat “one another.” Of the 31 specific “one another” commands, 26 of them are positive prescriptions and only 5 are prohibitions. Some are general truths while others are linked together with specific applications of a more general truth. Some are self explanatory while others are understood in a context that clarifies the specific meaning. Some have special application to other Christians and some to other people in general. All of them give guidelines to Christians on the priorities we are to have in our relationships with other people.

The foremost of the “*one another*” commands is to “*love one another*” which is specifically given in 14 different verses, but the standard for this love is much higher than “*love your neighbor as yourself.*” Jesus said Christians are to love one another just as He has loved us (John 13:34-35; 15:12; 1 John 3:23). In fact, Jesus said it would be by this love for one another that all men would know that you are His disciples (John 13:35).

Christians are to love all people in a sacrificial manner in following Jesus’ example and that includes even their enemies as Jesus commanded in Matthew 5:44. However, there is to be an even greater love for fellow believers. Paul expresses this idea in Galatians 6:10, “*So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*” Other believers are to have a higher priority.

This same idea is also seen in the command in Romans 12:10 to “*be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.*” The word for devoted (φιλόστοργος / philostorgos) refers to the affection that exists for close family members, which is proper for Christians because we are brothers and sisters in God’s family. That is a deeper and more intimate love than exists for those outside the family. This is emphasized by the second command in the verse to “*give preference to one another in honor.*” That refers to showing respect to other believers above what is normal, to an exceeding degree. That in turn matches Paul’s command in Philippians 2:3-4, “*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*” Paul goes on to explain that this is done by following Jesus’ example of humility, and that matches the command in 1 Peter 5:5 for us to “*clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble*”

This love and humility toward one another allows for the generation of a unity among Christians by which we “*accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God*” (Romans 15:7), and develop “*the same mind toward one another*” (Romans 12:16; 15:5). This humility also allows us to “*be subject to one another in the fear of Christ*” (Ephesians 5:21) and develop “*the same care for one another*” so that there is “*no division in the body*” (1 Corinthians 12:25).

Christians are forgiven sinners who are in the process of becoming conformed to the image of Christ, so we will still have our idiosyncrasies and will sin. Yet the unity generated by love and humility enable us to be gentle and patient while “*showing forbearance to one another in love*” (Ephesians 4:2) and “*forgive each other . . .*” “*just as the Lord forgave you*” (Colossians 3:13). We are able to “*bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ*” (Galatians 6:2).

Believers go beyond that to “*encourage one another*” (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13) to “*build up one another*” (Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11) and “*stimulate one another to love and good deeds*” (Hebrews 10:24). Some of this is done by “*speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs*” (Ephesians 5:19) by which we also *teach and admonish one another* (Colossians 3:16). We become capable of carrying out such admonishment as we mature and are filled with goodness and knowledge (Romans 15:14).

Christians are to “*be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you*” (Ephesians 4:32). We are a contrast to the world which seeks for revenge. Instead, we *seek after that which is good for one another and for all men* (1 Thessalonians 5:15). We seek to *serve one another* (Galatians 5:13) which includes showing hospitality to one another without complaint (1 Peter 4:9). Christians are also a contrast to the world because we have enough humility to “*confess [our] sins to one another, and pray for one another*” (James 5:16). All of these things allow us to live in peace with one another (1 Thessalonians 5:13).

Because of what Jesus Christ has done in our lives, Christians are changed from being proud, arrogant and selfish into people who are humble and love one another which results in unity and harmony. We set aside the old self with its practices of lying, boasting, envying, complaining, speaking against and condemning one another as is common in the world (Colossians 3:9; Galatians 5:26; James 5:9; James 4:11; Romans 14:13).

Conclusions

As Christians we are to live by a higher standard marked by our love for God, for fellow believers, and for the unsaved. The priorities of our lives are set by God instead of self and for that reason they are opposite those of the unsaved. For us, it is to be marked by JOY - Jesus, Others, You, and not SAD - Self, Alternatives, Deity.

We learn to love God’s commands because they give us the specific direction we need to make sure we are keeping His priorities and not fall back into the sinful selfishness of the world’s priorities.

God is first and foremost in all things. The purpose of life itself is His glory. That is why we seek His kingdom and righteousness first in all of our decisions. He assures us of His care and provision for us as we do.

Our next priority is to treat others in way that will honor God. At minimum, that is to treat others in the way that you would like to be treated, but as Christians, we want to treat others the way that Jesus wants them to be treated recognizing that this must be especially true in our relationships with other believers. That is why dissension, grumbling, conflict, factions and schisms are so serious in any church. It reveals the immaturity in that fellowship and brings shame on the name of Christ. It may even expose the tares - those who are false as necessary church discipline is carried out to restore the proper God ordained order in calling believers to repent and be restored, and in protecting the church from those who are false.

My closing challenge to you is to be diligent to get the priorities of your own life into proper order if they are not so already, and then to remain vigilant to make sure they stay in the proper order. The world, the devil and remnant selfish desires are always at work to skew them away from God's commands. That is part of the reason it is so important to be actively involved in the body of Christ in a local church so that other believers can keep you encouraged and accountable even as you do the same for them.

Sermon Notes - February 16, 2020
The Priority of Loving Others - Selected Scriptures

Introduction

- 1) God is Triune and Creator of all things, self-existent and _____ in all respects
- 2) Man is a finite creature with _____ understanding & can know God only by what God has revealed
- 3) The purpose of anything is determined by its _____, and God created man for His own glory
- 4) God made man in His _____, & though that is corrupted by man's sin, God will still glorify Himself
- 5) God's stated moral desire and His command is that man _____ and believe the gospel
- 6) The first priority in glorifying God is to _____ Him with all your heart, soul, mind & strength (Mt. 22:27)

Loving God - Deuteronomy 6:4-5

The great & foremost commandment is from the _____ - Deuteronomy 6:4-5

To love God in this manner involves _____ aspect of your being: will, emotion, mind & physical strength

God makes promises to those who love Him including _____ - Matt. 6:33; Psalm 34:9-10; 84:11-12

Proverbs 3:5-10 - God _____ those who put a priority on trusting, acknowledging, fearing & honoring Him

_____ is a key characteristic needed to seek the Lord and receive His promises - Jer. 29:12-13; Isa. 55:6-7

The humble can have _____ in seeking the Lord for wisdom (James 1:5) and in prayer (1 John 5:14-15)

The first priority is to love God with His _____ giving direction on how to do that (John 14:15, 21-23)

Loving Others as Yourself - Matthew 23:29, Leviticus 19:18

No Scripture even alludes that people need to love themselves because self-love is _____

The self-esteem movement is simply psychological justification for _____

The "golden rule" (Matt. 7:12) embodies loving others as yourself - treat them how you want to be _____

The Ten Commandments - Exodus 20:12-17

5) Exodus 20:12 - *Honor your father and mother.* This is the first _____ relationship in order & importance

"Honor" here refers to showing _____, attention, and in children, also obedience (Ephesians 6:1-3)

Adults do not have to obey their parents, but they are to show them respect & pay _____ to them

6) Exodus 20:13 - *"You shall not murder."* The willful killing of a human in violation of the laws of _____

Murder is the direct opposite of love, a violation of God's prerogative & an attack on His _____ (Gen. 9:6)

7) Exod. 20:14 - *"You shall not commit adultery."* An action of _____ desire (lust) which begins internally

True love seeks the best for others and so does not commit adultery or _____

8) Exodus 20:15 - *"You shall not steal."* Taking something without the owner's _____

It is an act of _____ and therefore the opposite of love which seeks to sacrificially give

9) Exodus 20:16 - *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."* Malicious _____

Lying is normal for humans, but still a serious issue before God who will punish _____ (Rev. 21:7)

10) Exodus 20:17 - *"You shall not covet . . ."* to desire something you do not own to a fault - _____

Coveting is an issue of the mind, _____ & emotions with any action taken resulting in additional sins

The _____ of coveting is driving force for a multitude of sins: theft, adultery, envy, greed, malice, etc.

James 1:14-15 - coveting (lust) _____ a person to temptation which yielded to gives birth to sin

A Greater Love

The Ten Commandments are a _____ guide for a prohibition is a lower standard than a prescription

The “one another” commands set a _____ standard for Christians with 26 of 31 being positive prescriptions

Christians are to love one another with the higher standard of _____ example (John 13:24-35; 15:12)

Christians are to love all people, even enemies (Matt. 5:44), but have an even _____ love for other believers

Disciples of Jesus are to be _____ to and give preference to one another (Romans 12:10; Phil. 2:3-4)

Christian love and _____ bring about unity (Romans 12:16; 15:5,7; Eph. 5:21; 1 Cor. 12:25)

Christians are forgiven sinners who forbear (Eph. 4:2), _____ (Col. 3:13) & bear each others sins (Gal. 6:2)

Believers _____, build up & stimulate each other to love & good deeds (1 Thess 5:11; Heb. 3:13; 10:24)

Believers also teach & _____ one another (Col. 3:16) as they mature (Rom. 15:14)

Christians are to be _____, tender-hearted & forgiving to one another (Eph. 4:32) seeking good (1 Thess 5:15)

We serve one another (Gal 5:13), are hospitable (1 Pt 4:9), confess sins & _____ for one another (Jm 5:16)

Because of Christ, believers are changed from proud & selfish to being humble & _____ resulting in unity

Conclusions

Christians are to be marked by a _____ of JOY - Jesus, Others, You

We love God’s commands because they _____ us to the specifics of how to properly love Him & others

Be diligent to put your priorities in proper order & be _____ to keep them there - church life helps!

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help. **Young Children**

- draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch.

Older Children - 1) Count how many times “love” is mentioned. 2) Talk with your parents about how to love other people as the second priority in your life.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. Summarize the central truths in the sermons from 1/5/2020 - 2/9/2020. Explain the love for God described in Mark 12:30. How can the Ten Commandments help loving God? List some promises God makes to those that love Him. What are the blessings in Proverbs 3:5-10 based upon? Why is humility necessary to seek the Lord? What does God promise to those that seek Him? Why is the psychological self-esteem movement contrary to Scripture? What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself? Explain each commandment in Exodus 20:12-17 and its relationship to loving other people. How is the 10th commandment different from the others? What is the relationship of covetousness with sins of action? Why are the Ten Commandments only a minimal guide to righteousness? Why is a prohibition a lower standard than a positive prescription (what you should do)? List some Old Testament laws that are stated as positive prescriptions. How is Jesus’ command in John 13:34-35 a higher standard than Leviticus 19:18? Describe the love Christians are to have for non-Christians and other Christians? Why is there a difference? Find or generate a list of the 31 different “one another” commands in the New Testament. Which commands can be grouped into similar categories. In what ways are some of them connected to each other? List some of the basic Christian character qualities necessary to carry out these commands. How are you doing at keeping God’s priorities in loving Him? In loving others? In keeping the “one another” commands? What needs to change? What is your plan to make those changes? How can other believers help you?