



Part 2: Loving Beyond our Limits

Luke 10:25-37

We are called to love beyond our limits, because of our God who loved without limits.

WE ALL BELONG TO A FAMILY THAT SHOULD BE MARKED BY ACTIVE LOVE

The two greatest commandments that guide our faith, that should mark this family we're a part of, the body of Christ, were just read for us: love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. These two all-encompassing commands have been the hardest for humanity to keep.

LOVE IS COMPLEX – Verses 25-29

What loving a neighbor looks like is not often a simple or straightforward answer.

What does loving our neighbor look like when we are financially tight and can barely make ends meet? What about loving your sibling, or spouse, when you're not having a great day and they're not making it any better? How and who do we love when we drive down Broadway or Colfax and see so many people experiencing homelessness that we wouldn't know where to start?

LOVE SEES – Verses 30-33

The Levite and priest saw a difficult situation, and possibly a dangerous one. They likely saw someone who would take up their time, inconvenience them, or put them in socially awkward situations. They filtered things through the lens of obligation, not love.

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The Samaritan saw the man not as a problem or inconvenience, but as a human being who was worth putting himself on the line for, worth his resources, and worth his time.

LOVE RESPONDS – *Verses 34-35*

The priest was viewing the situation from within the limits of his own comfort and time. The Levite was functioning within the limits of his culture — he couldn't do what the priest wouldn't do. And no one would have blamed the Samaritan if he had done the same. **But the Samaritan chose to love beyond his limits.**

LOVING BEYOND OUR LIMITS – *Verses 36-37*

There can be voices that hold us back in the way of simply “going and doing likewise.” Maybe you're familiar with some of the things that I've experienced before, when I've seen an opportunity to love.

- I'm too busy.
- I'm tired.
- I've already done a lot.
- I need to protect my time.
- There's someone more qualified than I am.
- I wouldn't know where to start.
- I don't have enough _____ to spare.
- Maybe next time...

When these voices come up, as I know they will for me, and expect they might for you as well, I pray that the initial reaction won't be shame or guilt, but it won't be comfort with them either. Instead, I would hope that we each begin to recognize when those phrases come up in our minds -- those voices that set our limits for us, that tell us who, and how, and when, we can love our neighbors, when we can be a good neighbor. In that recognition, what if we invited God to lead us in response to the situation we see and the voice that we hear?

LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US

Jesus was the Good Samaritan who saved us each when we were spiritually dead, hopeless, helpless, and in need of God's mercy and compassion. We love beyond our limits, because God loved us without limits.

May we be a family that would become more and more known for living out love in action, for living with compassion and mercy, for being neighbors. May we be known as a people who love beyond our limits, because of our God who loved without limits.