

We're ready to pick up our investigation of the biblical principles that we are to heed and apply. This is part of guarding and keeping the words of the Lord Jesus with respect to the one another's, with respect to our neighbors, and respect to those who are at more of a distance. We have been reviewing the study we started last time about those who are outside, and again, there is some overlap here.

We're not always able to easily categorize somebody. Well, are they my neighbor or are they outside? Are they both? Are they neither? But we saw those passages in Deuteronomy about how important it is, regardless of where someone might initially reside. There might be someone in our intimate circle.

Remember the psalm that applies to the Lord Jesus with His disciples: "My intimate friend has lifted up his heel against me," and "the one that I broke bread with has become my enemy." And people can move in and out of these circles by their choices. But the principle, Old Testament and New, is to separate from evil. And we saw all of these passages in Deuteronomy: Deuteronomy 13:5, "You must purge the evil from among you"; Deuteronomy 17:7, "Purge the evil from among you"; 17:12, "Purge the evil from Israel"; 21:21, "Purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear and be afraid." It is not just removing the cancer, removing the metastasizing, corrupting influence, but the example. People say, have arguments back and forth about capital punishment, and is it a deterrent? God says capital punishment is a deterrent, and that's good enough for me. He said you are to, you know, execute those that shed man's blood, and this will serve as a deterrent. "All Israel will hear and be afraid."

He doesn't say the nations will hear and be afraid. He says Israel, and this is the people of God, will be chastened by what happens to those within the fellowship of believers who are rejected and separated from because of their evil. That evil has to be purged out of the immediate contact. 22:21, those who are promiscuous in her father's house: "You must purge the evil from among you." This is sexual immorality.

So what is the intermediate area, the neighbor area? Leviticus 19:18: "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against any of your people"—your people—"but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord." Leviticus 19:18. What is the expression of neighbor love in this context? Somebody has wronged us.

Intentionally or unintentionally isn't in view, but there is something that is revenge-worthy or grudge-worthy, and God says when it is in your people, when it happens between you all, and you are of the nation of Israel, you are the people of God, you bear a common covenant relationship to the God of Abraham, do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against any of your people. Love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

In Exodus 23, verses 4 and 5: "If you meet your enemy's ox or his ass going astray, you will surely bring it back to him again." Now you would say, well, he's an enemy. Wouldn't he be a wolf? Would he be an outsider? If you're running across his livestock on your property or on the road that you travel, he's a neighbor. He's an Israelite, but he's an enemy. Maybe he bears a grudge. Maybe he wants to seek revenge. He has ought against you. You've not been able to reconcile it.

Nevertheless, if you see his livestock where it shouldn't be and there is potential for loss or danger, you capture that animal and take it back to your enemy regardless. This is neighbor love. The enemy is a neighbor.

Deuteronomy 22, verse 1: "If you see your brother's ox or sheep straying, you must not ignore it. Be sure to return it to your brother." This is your neighbor. This is your people, and we do not return evil for evil. We meet evil with good. It doesn't say set a fine table and create a feast. It doesn't say go overboard and, you know, be awash in generosity. But as you would have others do unto you, so do. Even if I have an issue with somebody, if my dog is in the road, I would appreciate it if they would catch the dog and bring it back before it gets hit.

And what does this do? That time spent—think about our concept of time stewardship. Here is a conflict and a bad relationship between individuals who are neighbors, but you do a kindness that you would want done for you. And does that widen the breach or does it narrow it? It's going to create the potential to narrow it. It kind of depends on the response of the person, but you are certainly not aggravating it and making it worse. You are creating an avenue of approach and reconciliation by doing something good, even though that person has done you ill. Right?

So what is the stewardship of time there? Is that a good thing to do? Is it a good investment of time to be neighborly to someone even if there is an issue? Think Good Samaritan. Jews traditionally don't like Samaritans,

but here is a matter of need, and I'm going to set aside his potential bigotry, his potential hatred, and I'm going to help him anyway. How do you think that you felt about Samaritans ever after, if you could extend that parabolic story? Well, I've got a whole new—I thought they were all worthless and godless, but that was a pretty godly thing to do. I think I may have judged this group wrongly. Maybe I ought to look at individuals instead of judging things by association and by wide group.

So whether it is your enemy or your brother's ox or sheep or his donkey, you must not ignore it. Not only does God say capture it and restore it, you're not allowed to ignore that situation. This is an opportunity that has been placed in your path.

Proverbs 25:21: "If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink." In the day in which this wisdom was written down, who—what kind of enemy would you be able to feed and give a drink to? Not somebody across a distant border. Not somebody on the other side of the planet. Not somebody that you heard about on TV. This is someone you know. This is someone that is close enough that you can hand them water. You can prepare for them a meal, even though there have been difficulties, disagreements, harshness. They are and consider themselves to be your enemy. You do good to those who hate you. You love your enemy, and this is neighbor love.

This is not intimate one another love. I'll preview what's coming up. This is neighbor love. When Jesus says in the Beatitudes and in the Sermon on the Mount that follows after, "Love your enemy. Do good to those who hate you," this is not a stretch. This is in the Law of Moses. Do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you. You are interested in their well-being, even though they mean you harm. You don't embrace them. You don't enfold them. You don't bring them into your house. You don't try to love them into the kingdom. But you look out for their well-being and their benefit when there is an occasion to so do.

So this is loving your neighbor. Now, Scripture is replete with references to loving our neighbor. But what is the first one that comes to your mind? If I said, what does Jesus have to say about loving your neighbor? What does He say about that principle? What does it do? It fulfills the law, right? Love the Lord your God. Love your neighbor. The law and the prophets are summed up in these.

And how old is this commandment to love your neighbor? We've just seen it in Deuteronomy: love your neighbor, even if he's an enemy. So this is in Matthew 19:19: "Honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself." Again, in Matthew 22:39, the first and great commandment: "Love the Lord your God." The second is like to it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The parallel to that is Mark 12:31. Parallel to both of those is Luke 10:27. If something is said three times in Scripture, it tends to be relatively important.

Paul quotes it in Romans chapter 13, verse 9. Romans 13, fascinating passage. We need to look at it in some detail. But for now, 13:9, Paul says, "For this: You shall not commit adultery. You shall not murder. You shall not steal. You shall not covet." And if there is any other commandment, any other Old Testament Mosaic Law commandment, it is summed up in this saying: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Romans 13:9. Neighbor love fulfills the law. Right? Loving God and loving your neighbor fulfills the law.

Is that our mission as Christians? By the law comes the knowledge of sin. By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. So simply loving God and loving our neighbor, is that all we are supposed to do as believers? That's an Old Testament concept. It's certainly wonderful. We should endeavor to do that. But that isn't the end of our responsibility or our opportunity.

Paul repeats this in Galatians 5:14: "The whole law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Do you see why context is important? Just as a quick aside, I'm going to quote Galatians 5:14. If you want to fulfill the law, Paul says the whole law is fulfilled in one word, one concept: neighbor love. Is that really true? The whole law? What about the first and greatest commandment? He doesn't mention that one here. He says the whole law is fulfilled in loving your neighbor. The whole law. And here I thought I had to love God. All I have to do is love my neighbor. We need some context for that, don't we? And that's why we try not to proof-text. You can go astray. Is it true that the whole law is fulfilled in the second commandment that's like unto the first? No, and that's not what Paul is saying, if you read the whole thing.

James—you want to talk about a multitude of witnesses—James chapter 2, verse 8: "If you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scriptures, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well." If you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. We already saw Romans 13:9. All commandments are summed up in the saying, "Love your neighbor as

yourself.” You can look at 13:8 as well. “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another, for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.” That’s a very interesting verse, Romans 13:8, because you have one another, which we use to describe the inner circle, and you have neighbor, which embraces more people. “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another, for he who loves his neighbor”—his neighbor. That is what we owe to some people. The one another’s we owe. We have a debt, an obligation, to love one another. He who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

So is neighbor love and one another love the same? Paul seems to be saying that here. Turn to Romans 13 right quick. Context is everything. You say, just when I thought I was getting this figured out—one another, neighbor, and those who are outside—now here’s Paul talking about the two of them in one breath.

“Therefore you must be subject,” verse 5, “not because of wrath, but also conscience’ sake. Because of this,” verse 6, “you pay taxes. They are God’s ministers, attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due.” Not everyone is due everything. You’ve got to figure out what is due. What do I owe?

Remember Romans 13:8: “Owe no one anything except to love one another.” That is a constant. I can never consider that debt to be paid. I can never love one another enough that I no longer have that debt. I can pay my taxes, and for a year I don’t owe my income tax. I can pay a sales tax on a purchase, and they’re not going to come after me for more tax on that, on what I bought. I don’t owe them anything. I paid it. The obligation is satisfied. I took out a loan. I paid my payments on time. I’ve paid it off. And they’ve taken the lien off of my mortgage or off of my car title or whatever it might be. I don’t owe them anything.

Paul says don’t owe anyone anything except there is a constant obligation to the one another’s to love. So render to all their due: taxes to whom taxes, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. Owe no one anything except to love one another. My constant, ongoing, never fully fulfilled debt is to one another. For he who loves one another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, don’t commit adultery, don’t steal, and so on, are summed up: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor. This is Romans 13:10.

Neighbor love, at a minimum, does no harm. Does no harm. I don’t punish them. I don’t seek vengeance. I don’t bear a grudge. I don’t endeavor to inflict a penalty. I don’t try to browbeat. I don’t aim some sort of black cloud lightning in someone’s direction and try to make them feel bad and try to do a holier-than-thou to get them to act more in accordance with what I think they ought to do. I do no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

The law is fulfilled in Christ, and that’s our starting point. At a minimum, we start with fulfillment of the law in Christ, loving the Lord our God and loving our neighbor as ourself. But what do we have that goes beyond this? This is the old commandment that we’ve had since Sinai: love your neighbor. Was there anything prior to Mount Sinai? Was Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob told to love their neighbors? Did Joseph get a word from God: love your neighbor? Anybody before the flood, were they told to love their neighbor? That commandment comes on Sinai, right? Comes with the law, and it pertains all the way down. And Jesus said, “I have not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it.” I am come. I have entered into human flesh and become incarnate. We are human flesh, and we are in some ways the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we should also not destroy the law but fulfill it with love for God and love for our neighbor.

But we have a new commandment. A new commandment. What is that new commandment? John 13:34: “A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another.” We hear a lot about the one another’s, and I’ve heard various counts, anywhere from 40 to 60-odd instances. Here’s the thing. If you go to John 13:34 in its context, it begins with the glory of God. In verse 31, when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him.” This is the goal. Jesus is glorified, and in Him, God is glorified.

Remember Ephesians 4: the head of Christ is God. The head of the man is Christ. The head of the woman is the man. All the way up and down the chain, whether it is children obeying their parents in the Lord, whether it is wives submitting to their husbands, whether it is husbands loving their wives, whether it is the families in the fellowship loving and serving Christ with an eye to faith and laying hold of righteousness by that faith, it is all about the glory of God. If God is glorified in Him, verse 32, God will also glorify Him in Himself and glorify Him immediately.

“Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek me. And as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you.” I’m going to go somewhere where you cannot come. In the

earlier context, they said, “What, is He going to kill Himself that we can't follow?” And He said, “I am from heaven. You are from the earth.” But verse 34: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you, that you should love one another.”

Think about this. What is the standard for neighbor love? How much should you love a neighbor? As yourself. Isn't that interesting? In all of the Deuteronomical exhortations for neighbor love, love your neighbor as yourself. What is the golden rule? Do unto others as you would have others do for you. Love your neighbor as yourself. Treat him the way you would like to be treated. Consider him the way you would like to be considered. Right? And the standard is me. Love your neighbor as yourself. Extending him the benefit that you would like to experience. Right?

Why is this a new commandment? Love one another to a higher standard. Why didn't Jesus say, “Love one another as you would love yourself”? No, love each other as I have loved you. Wow. This ups the bar substantially. And guess what? You cannot love everyone the way Christ has loved us. Remember what John says toward the end of his Gospel, that Jesus loved them, and He loved them to the end. Loved whom? All of Israel, the Pharisees, the Gentiles, the Syrophoenician woman, the people across the Jordan, the Gergesenes, the Gerasenes, the Gadarenes. Who is it that Jesus loved? The disciples. And this is a model. It is an example. “As I have loved you, you should love one another.”

Now you remember that count of one another's that we mentioned so often. There are this many one another's. Roughly one third of them, over 20 of the one another commands, are only one command. If you've got a piece of paper and want to write these down, I have ordered these. You have “love one another” three times just in these two verses, 34 and 35. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another.

So who are the one another's according to Jesus? My disciples. The one who loves father or mother more than Me, the one who loves a family member more than Me, is not worthy to be My disciple. The one who puts his hand to the plow and turns back is not worthy to be My disciple. There's a whole study that we've done in the past: what is it to be a disciple? This is the narrow road, straight gate, sin-confessing, Bible-studying, fervently praying group of growing believers, right? This is not just any old buddy, not even someone who claims to be a brother. Is someone who claims to be a brother but is greedy or sexually immoral or doing other things, are they a disciple? Remember in John 7, when Jesus says, “Eat My flesh, drink My blood,” everybody gets shocked and many turn back from following Him. Are they disciples? No.

So love one another is the others, the each others here, are disciples: fellow followers, fellow devotees, fellow disciples in the sense of loyalty and sticking with it. Peter said, “We have left all to follow You.” That's why they are disciples. Their values, their goals, and their priorities, they are defined by following Christ. That is intrinsic to their identity.

There's a lot of talk today about identity and identity politics and what group do I identify with and am I this or am I that or am I something else? We have one identity, and that is in Christ. If we have any other identity, if we put nation or ethnicity or proclivity or “I'm a Steelers fan” or “I'm a Cowboys fan,” there's people that just group together on all different kinds of pretexts. Nothing wrong with sharing an enthusiasm or a hobby, but if that defines us when someone thinks of us, or somebody walks past our headstone in the graveyard and this is the little iconic symbol that is on the stone—oh, it's a chessboard, it's a petunia because they're great at gardening, or whatever else—that's why Paul said, “I determined to know nothing among you but Christ and Him crucified.” That's what defines me, and that's what defines my message. That's all I want to talk about. Right? Everything else flows out from that and connects through that. The unity of faith.

So, one another's. So if you can write fast, I'm going to give you the one another's. Love one another, John 13:34. Number one. Number two, love one another, John 13:34. Number three, love one another, John 13:35. Number four, love one another, John 15:12. Love one another, John 15:17. Love one another, Romans 13:8. Love each other, 1 Thessalonians 4:9. Love one another, 1 John 3:11. Love one another, 1 John 3:23. Love one another, 1 John 4:7. Love one another, 1 John 4:11. Love one another, 1 John 4:12. Love one another, 2 John 1:5. Love one another deeply from the heart, 1 Peter 3:8. Love each other deeply, 1 Peter 4:8. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love, devoted to one another in brotherly love, Romans 12:10. Make your love increase and overflow for each other, increase and overflow, 1 Thessalonians 3:12.

Four times we have greet one another with a holy kiss, and Peter calls this a kiss of love. This is Romans 16:16, 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12. And Peter says in 1 Peter 5:14, “Greet one another with a kiss of love.” So the holy

kiss: Romans 16:16 and 16:20, holy kiss in 2 Corinthians 13:12, kiss of love, 1 Peter 5:14. So how many is that? Two, four, six, eight, ten, fourteen, sixteen, eighteen, twenty, twenty. There's two dozen times that we are told to love one another.

And so if there's 50 or 60 of these, a vast proportion is summed up in the same way that the law and the prophets are summed up with "love your neighbor as yourself" in terms of horizontal treatment. For the believer, we have a higher standard: love one another as Christ loved us.

What else are these one another's? Now, the reason we're going over these, pay attention now, this is not just a list. It's not just for completeness' sake. How do I know what to do about people in the middle? They are not wolves. They're not hostile. They're not out to end me. But I also want to know who is it that doesn't qualify for one another love? Well, who can I remember? It doesn't say love others. It says love one another. So these commands, what defines the inner circle of growing believers, true disciples of Christ in the church age? What defines them is the mutuality, the reflexivity. This goes both directions.

So if you want to know if someone is a one another or not, are these things reciprocal? Reciprocal. We'll use an example. Remember the neighbor love that says don't go for revenge, don't bear a grudge, don't hold animosity or enmity against someone when you're going to do the love your neighbor as yourself, right? Is that reciprocal? Is that guy, if he found your ox in the ditch, would he pull it out and bring it back to you? If he found your donkey wandering astray or found a sheep that was out, maybe, maybe not. The standard is do what you would want done to you, regardless of whether that guy's going to do it or not.

What is different about the one another? First of all, Jesus says this is a new command, and John repeats that in his epistles. This is a new commandment, but it's a new commandment we've had from the beginning of this new age: love one another as Christ has loved us. But it's one another. So you can quickly tell who is in this inner circle and is worthy of the attentions and fulfillment of the other one another commands by whether or not these things are reciprocal. If you're doing all of the loving, if you're doing all of these other things that we're about to see and the other person is not responding in kind, by definition they are not one another, because these things have to go both ways, and it is dangerous to not have them contained within that reciprocal relationship. If you send them one direction and they're not being returned, bad things are going to happen.

We are not to—you know, it's one thing to loan someone in your immediate family that you know well and they've hit a hard patch and you say, look, here's some money to get you through this tight spot, and you would want them to do that for you. You know that they're going to do their very best. They will not rest until they have paid that back once they're on their feet, and you don't care if you get it back or not. They care. They protect your generosity by their integrity, and they will not rest until they have expressed the same love toward you in repaying that that you have given.

This is kind of a crude example, but you see what I mean? You can be taken advantage of, you can be fleeced, you can be harmed if you try to do some of these things in a non-one-another environment. We are protected by our love for each other, first and foremost. That's why two dozen of these commands are love one another. Love a person who loves you, and both of you are doing that loving as Christ loves. We love because He first loved us, and in the inner circle, that love is reciprocated, and that is the environment of protection. You're protected by that person's love. You're not made vulnerable in a dangerous way.

What else? What does it mean to love someone as Christ loved us? The golden rule says do unto others as you would have others do unto you, and so there's sort of an equal plane. I would love you to return my lost animal. I'm going to return yours. What is the standard for us? Philippians 2:3: "In humility consider others," not as yourself, "better than yourself." In humility consider others better than yourself. See this higher standard? It's an advance over neighbor love. This love, the new commandment, the reciprocal one another love, considers others in humility better than ourselves. Philippians 2:3. Romans 12:10: "Honor one another above yourselves." Honor one another above yourselves, not equal to yourselves, not tit for tat, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth. Your interests outweigh my own.

Remember the example of the Lord Jesus, who didn't consider equality a thing to be grasped, emptied Himself, took on the form of a servant, came in likeness of men, and He put our interests ahead of His own. So we've had Philippians 2:3, Romans 12:10, Galatians 5:13: "Serve one another in love." Be a servant to one another in love, in the environment of love, in this safe space of reciprocal Christian love. Be a servant. Isn't that the same as considering someone above yourself? If you're the servant and they are the one to be served, the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. Jesus put our interests ahead of His

own. That's the standard for this love, but it has to be done in love, in the environment of love. Reciprocal love defines the group of one another's. Serve one another in love. Galatians 5:13.

Mark 9:50, Jesus says, "Be at peace with each other." Be at peace. You want peace. The other person isn't satisfied with peace. There's got to be a problem. There's got to be an argument. There's got to be an issue. There's got to be a conflict of some kind. All of us have known people, and if you spend very much time with them, pretty soon something's going to go wrong. There is an offense that was unintended, but it's taken. I'm trying to explain. I'm having to defend myself. In the realm of the one another love, there's peace. Nobody is calling other people to account. Nobody's making somebody else pack up a suitcase for a guilt trip. We're at peace. Be at peace with one another.

Romans 12:16, from Paul: "Live in harmony with one another." It's harmonious. It's not tense. It's not uncertain. It's not stress-inducing. We should be building each other up, not tearing each other down. We should be helping each other forward, not tripping each other up. We should be bearing each other's burdens, not adding to the load. It's in the circle of one another's. If somebody is not in that mutually beneficial, mutually respectful, inner-circle love, they are not a one another. And if you try to do these things, you're going to get hurt because the environment of protection is missing.

So, in humility, consider others better than yourselves, Philippians 2:3. Honor one another above yourselves, Romans 12:10. Serve one another in love, Galatians 5:13. Be at peace with one another, Mark 9:50. Live in harmony with one another, Romans 12:16. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others. Whatever gift he has received. These gifts are for the building up of the body. Service to others. 1 Peter 4:10: serve others with whatever gift you've received. And these gifts vary and differ. Whatever gift you have, serve others with it.

1 Peter 5:5: clothe yourselves with humility toward one another. Same thing Paul says in Philippians 2:3: be clothed with humility when dealing with one another. There are some people that if you clothe yourself with humility and bend down to wash a foot, they're going to kick you in the face. They will hurt you. They will take advantage of you. They will knock you over and take your stuff and walk away, and then come back with a superficial apology, but they're out for themselves. If they are not also clothed with humility, if they are not looking out for you just as you look out for them, it is not a one another situation by definition.

1 Peter 5:5, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:21, we submit to one another because we all have reverence for Christ. If someone doesn't reverence Christ, you can't do this. You can't submit to someone who isn't submissive to Christ. They will hurt you. They will damage you. They will deflect you. They will prevent you from fulfilling your God-given function to represent Jesus Christ in this life. You will be distracted, deflected, corrupted, defiled, led astray, deceived, and taken out of the conflict. You're useless, hopeless, helpless. Can't serve. Can't bear fruit. Can't prepare for service and function in this life or the next because you have allowed someone to put you in a yoke of bondage instead of taking the yoke of the Lord Jesus, whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light.

So, what can we do, and how do we know that people are in the one another circle? This is my final collection. We'll go through this rather quickly. We teach one another, Colossians 3:16. We instruct one another, Romans 15:14. Teach, Colossians 3:16. Instruct one another.

Guess what? Not only does someone instruct, someone needs to be capable of being instructed. And that doesn't matter if they're a pastor or a teacher or an elder or an overseer. Anyone who is instructing also needs to be instructable, to be teachable. If you find somebody who purports to be a pastor and teacher and they are not approachable, they are not teachable, they've got it all figured out and they won't listen to anything but their own take, get out of that situation. In humility, we teach others and we can be taught by others. And we ought to all be learning and benefiting from the gifts that are in every individual in the group.

And to fail to think, well, I am the sprinkler and the water comes forth from me and waters the lawn and that's the end of it, is a grievous error. And many churches have shriveled, become unhealthy, split, dissolved because the pastor got the wrong idea that he's God's gift to truth and communication and is no longer teachable. Instruct one another. Teach one another.

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, Ephesians 5:19. Admonish one another, except for the pastor or except for the teacher. It doesn't say that. It says admonish one another, Colossians 3:16. We have so many—these next ones, this is six exhortations to encouragement. We have 23 or 24 love one another's.

We've got at least six. Encourage each other. This is 1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11. Build each other up, 5:11. Encourage one another daily, Hebrews 3:13. Spur one another on to love and good deeds, Hebrews 10:24. Encourage one another, Hebrews 10:25. Encourage and build each other up. 1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11. Build each other up again in 5:11. Hebrews 3:13, 10:24, and 10:25. Hopefully you're able to get all of those.

Again, how do you know if somebody is one another? Are they reflecting back to you the same items in this list that you are endeavoring to express toward them? If not, you've got to step back to neighbor love. Do no harm. Bear no grudge. Seek no revenge. Do to them as you would have them do to you in the neighbor sense. Leave a path open. If a seeking note should develop, a seeking heart, you want to be the one they most quickly think of to approach. Right? We're not becoming ogres. We're not the Jewish father whose child converts to Christianity: "You are dead to me," and speak of them as though they're dead and buried and so on. That is not Scripture.

But there are degrees of intimacy. There are levels of the expression of love. And if we violate those, we are not serving Christ and we're not glorifying the Father. These are the criteria.

We have a few more of these one another's to go through. We're about two thirds of the way through the list. We'll pick those up again this coming Sunday. But it becomes so clear when we identify in our periphery with whom we can engage in these reciprocal acts of love, those to whom we can express neighbor love, and those of whom we need to be careful and stay far away from because they are destructive wolves who will try to get into the flock and eat the sheep.

Well, we'll see this on Sunday. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for the clarity with which You communicate to us. You've not left us orphans. You've sent us the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth and help us to understand what we should do. Our actions and behaviors in love, in whatever category, are from You and designed to glorify You. We pray that You'll help us to find that path, using as our primary example Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. We pray these things in His name. Amen.