



## CHAPTER 12

### Walking in Love

#### THE TWO COMMANDMENTS

1. You **MUST** love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, soul, mind and strength.
  2. Love your NEIGHBOUR as YOURSELF.
- *What else does Jesus teach about walking in love?*  
→ *Why is the first one the 'greatest commandment?'*

#### Jesus taught the LOVE WALK in four categories

##### 1. Loving GOD

→ *How does one demonstrate love for God? What does that love relationship look like? How do you grow in that?*

→ *Can you lose your first love and see that love grow cold? Why does that happen and how do you guard against it?*

##### 2. Loving YOURSELF

- \* Note there is a difference between loving YOURSELF and being a lover of SELF.

→ *What does it mean to be a 'lover of self?' Why is that dangerous? Does that result in loving one's neighbour?*

- \* How then do you 'love yourself?' It comes down to TREATING yourself AS you'd reasonably TREAT your neighbour.

→ *What exactly does that mean? How might we overbalance in either direction? How does 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 apply here?*

##### 3. Loving your NEIGHBOUR

- \* In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus EXTENDED that NET considerably WIDER.

##### 4. Loving your ENEMIES

→ *Why was this one such a surprise to people? Why is it so difficult to fathom? Do you do it naturally? How does one do it supernaturally?*

You can't pull off number 4 without numbers 1-3.

→ *Why not?*

It's a struggle to pull off number 3 without number 2.

→ *Why would you struggle to love your neighbour if you don't 'love yourself?' (Clue: 'Hurting people, hurt people')*

Actually, it all comes back to number 1: Your love for OTHERS will be directly PROPORTIONAL to your love for GOD.

- \* The strength of your love relationship with God is your ROOT, ANCHOR, WELL.
- \* With that RELATIONSHIP strong, LOVE secure, ALIGNED right, you have the FOUNDATION to walk in love EVERYWHERE, EVERY TIME, WITH EVERYONE.

→ *"You'll only be able to exercise the Jesus kind of love, if all your expressions of love are deeply rooted in the Father's love. Unless you have truly tasted His love, understood the extent of His forgiveness and received His grace, you'll struggle to exercise relational love, forgiveness and grace." Discuss. (See Ephesians 3:17-19)*

#### Why is loving God first so critical?

- \* Is it because God is an EGOMANIAC? No, JESUS disproved that.
  - \* It is only when we really understand the DEPTH and POWER of God's love ... Only when we have it deeply dug into our HEARTS, LIFESTYLE, DECISIONS ... Only when we allow it to TRANSFORM our hearts, HEAL our wounds & RENEW our minds, that we are going to be able to truly live in the VICTORY & FREEDOM Jesus purchased for us.
  - \* We tend to FOCUS OUR ENERGIES in all sorts of places, when really we should be focussing on our LOVE RELATIONSHIP with God.
- *Why is our worship so important to God? Why is our worship so important to us? Are the two connected?*  
→ *How do we feed that relationship? How do we invest in it? What do you do? What more could you do?*

Not only do we tend to talk ABOUT our mountains when Jesus taught us to speak TO that mountain, but we also try to move it by THROWING ALL SORTS OF THINGS at it → We get ANGRY, CRITICISE it, COMPLAIN about it, even CURSE it ... None of which MOVES IT AN INCH.

→ *Do you tend to talk about it, speak to it or throw all sorts of things at it? What sort of things do people tend to throw at their problems and why? Why do those things fail to move most mountains?*

- \* Jesus came to model a very different way: Rather than HURLING ABUSE at it, He taught us that love is the most POWERFUL CHANGE AGENT in the universe.
  - \* That the way to move your MOUNTAIN, change your WORLD, heal the HURTS and ultimately SAVE the lost is through LAVISH LOVE.
  - \* The way to change our ENEMIES is to LOVE them.
  - \* To fix our BROKEN relationships is to FORGIVE them.
  - \* To influence our FLAWED LEADERS is to HONOUR them.
  - \* To diffuse HATE & ANGER is through LOVE & MERCY.
  - \* The way to counter PERSECUTION is to PRAY for them.
- *Explain why each of these are both counter-cultural and counter-intuitive. How did Jesus demonstrate each of them? What did He say to teach each of them?*

In PRIVATE, you talk TO your mountain.

In PUBLIC, you LOVE, SERVE & BLESS that mountain.

→ *Why does Jesus commend the widow in v41-44? How does her story relate to / serve as a commentary for the preceding commandment to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind & strength?*