

WORD for MEN

#27



Theme: Hello Neighbor! The Golden Rule

Scripture: Matthew 22:36:39 (NIV) Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" Jesus replied, *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.*

A Thought:

Since I retired a few years ago I have had the opportunity of getting to know my neighbors better. How so you ask? It was all due to my four legged family member....my buddy Rusty. For many years the pint size white as snow Pomeranian and I walked up and down the neighborhood (he has since passed away). Today I jump on my Schwinn and everybody knows the "old guy" on the bike. What a way to meet neighbors "face to face" without the customary obligatory wave. You know what I am talking about....the smile, the wave, a lip sync "hello" and a quick entrance into the family digs. The Word comes complete with admonitions on what our behavior should be with our neighbor. The Lord does not leave doubt or confusion in the second part of the Great Commandment...Mark 12:31 (ESV) *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."* Whoa! Slap dunk! No room for argument. It's crystal-clear... Love Your Neighbor! He has taught us well. Likewise, others think so. In their book, "American Grace-How Religion Divides and Unites Us" Robert D. Putnam and David E. Campbell commented....*"religiously observant Americans are more generous with time and treasure than demographically similar secular Americans....It is true even for most random acts of kindness."* They state that we (religiously observant Americans) are more civic and in some respects simply "nicer." Well, that's good to hear. We should continue to follow the assigned edict as stated in Mark 12:31

Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

Talk to yourself:

- Do you know your neighbors? When was the last time you had a “real” conversation with them?
- Have you had the opportunity to do something kind for the neighbor? Result
- Have you invited neighbors to your church? Church activity? Do you gossip about your neighbor? Gossip with them?
- Is God speaking to you about your relations with a certain neighbor?

Scriptures to read:

- Leviticus 19:18; Psalm 24:1; Romans 13:8-10; Matthew 5:13; Matthew 7:12;
- Mark 12:31; Matthew 19:16-19; Matthew 22:36-40; Luke 6:27; Luke 10:25-37;
- 1 John 4:16; Important that you read John 13:34-35...the 11th Commandment.

Quote: Mother Teresa (brainyquote.com) *”I want you to be concerned about your next door neighbor. Do you know your next door neighbor? Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.”*

G.K Chesterton, essayist, author (Proverbial.net) *”We make our friends; we make our enemies; but God makes our next door neighbor.”*

Bottom Line:

I realized that a simple greeting “Hello” in many instances was not only uplifting for the person receiving the salutation but also for me. Yep, just be nicer. I’m repeating myself but listen one more time to what Jesus said in responding to a question posed by a young rich man. *“Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?”* (Matthew 19:16a -19). Note that the young man asked for “one good deed” not for a slew of good deeds. But one! Our Lord replied simply *“Why do you ask me about what is good? Only God is good. But if you want to have life forever; obey the command....”* *“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* It’s tough to maintain the attitude of love all the time but we are admonished to do so. Men, be careful in your zest as a believer we cannot and should not preach a sermon every time we meet or greet a friend or neighbor. St. Francis of Assisi says it best.... *”Preach the Gospel at all times - and when necessary use words.”*

NOW.....THAT’S THE BOTTOM LINE.

Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

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