**Jesus on Loving Others**

**Interpretation and Application**

**INTERPRETATION**

Main Text and Ideas

“*Love the Lord your God*…*Love your neighbor as yourself*” (Matt. 22:39b; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27b)

* Jesus is responding to the **test** of religious leaders
  + What is the greatest commandment
  + What must I do to inherit eternal life
  + What is the most important commandment
* Tested to **entrap** Jesus
  + An “unanswerable” question. There were so many Laws!
  + “*All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments*” (Matt. 22:40)
  + “*You are not far from the kingdom of God*” (Mark 12:34b)
  + “*Do this and you will live*” (Luke 10:28b)
* Jesus **silences** the religious leaders
  + “*And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions*” (Mark 12:34b)
  + Loving God and loving one’s neighbor
    - Satisfies the whole Law
    - Leads to Kingdom living
    - Gives eternal life

Supporting Texts and Ideas

“*Love your enemies*” (Matt.5:44; Luke 6:35a)

* Jesus is **reinterpreting** the Law – Sermon on the Mount
  + “*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them*” (Matt. 5:17)
  + The Law states… “*You have heard that it was said*,”
    - “*Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them as long as you live*” (Deut. 23:6)
    - “*Anyone who takes the life of a human being is to be put to death. 18 Anyone who takes the life of someone’s animal must make restitution—life for life. 19 Anyone who injures their neighbor is to be injured in the same manner: 20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. The one who has inflicted the injury must suffer the same injury*” (Lev. 24:17-20)
  + Jesus **cancels** the “Law of Retribution”
    - “*But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*” (Matt. 5:44)

“*The one who had mercy on him*” (Luke 10:29b)

* Jesus confronts an expert in the law and is tested (see Luke 10 above)

“*Who is my neighbor*?”

* + Jesus teaches in a parable (story with a point)
    - The so called righteous Priest and Levite did not help because they were **afraid** to be defiled and/or hurt
    - Samaritan – a natural enemy of Jews helped in spite of fear and consequences
    - **Mercy** was shown not religiosity (sacrifice for the sake of religion)
    - “*I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners*” (Matt. 9:13)

“*Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me*” (Matt.25:40)

* Jesus speaks in parables about His return (Matt. Chapter 25)
  + Chapter 25 follows Jesus’ words of Chapter 24 on the end times
  + “*Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.*” (Matt. 24:42)
* Jesus speaks about the great separation (Judgement)
  + “*All Nations*” – none will escape the judgement of Jesus
  + Sheep – Those who do the will of God by caring for others, including “*I was a stranger and you invited me in*”
  + Goats – Those who do not do the will of God by caring for others
* Jesus will be the final Judge to eternal life or eternal punishment
  + “*Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life*” (Matt. 25:46)

**APPLICATION**

Commands to follow

Universal Truths to believe

Warnings to heed

Fears to forget

Promises to count on

Outcomes to be aware of

Behaviors to change

Thinking to correct

Sins to repent

Actions to take