

“A Second Likewise Is This”

I. Introduction

- A. After He gave “the first and great commandment,” Jesus went on to give a second commandment on which “the law the prophets” depend. Consider some things Scripture teaches related to the Lord’s command to love our neighbors as ourselves. **Matthew 22:36-40**

II. The Command’s Significance

- A. Loving our neighbors as ourselves is referred to as the saying that all other commands are “summed up in.” **Romans 13:8-10**
- B. Love for others is described as the fulfillment of the law, and “the royal law.” **Galatians 5:13-14; James 2:8**
- C. “Above all things,” we are to put on love, which is “the greatest.” **Colossians 3:14; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 Corinthians 13:13**

III. What Agape Love Is

- A. The significance of loving our neighbors as ourselves is seen when we develop the view of love that Scripture presents. The love typically referenced in the NT is *agape* or *agapao* love (*Strong G25 & G26*). This love is deeper than an emotional attachment. It is a deliberate choice to value someone highly and thereby give something in response. It’s about seeking others’ highest good. Hence, loving our neighbors is really at the root of treating others the way God wants us to treat them. **1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Matthew 7:12; Romans 13:9**

IV. Rooted in God’s Love

- A. Like love for God, love for others is rooted in the love God’s shown toward mankind. When we consider how wonderful God’s been to us in spite of sin we’ve committed, and when we think about the value God places on *every* soul, it should motivate us to love others. **1 John 4:10-12; 1 Timothy 2:6**

V. Love for Others: Non-Prejudicial

- A. God’s love provides a means for *everyone* to have a chance to be saved, regardless of one’s social status, ethnicity, background, wealth, etc. Like God exemplifies, our love must be impartial and unprejudiced. **James 2:8-9**
- B. Genuine love for others even extends to those who mistreat us. Love for others does not harbor bitterness or resentment. **Matthew 5:43-44; Luke 23:34**

VI. Love for Others: Sincere

- A. Our love also must be *sincere*. We must not simply pretend to love, but prove it by truly pursuing what is needful for others. **Romans 12:9**
- B. Genuine love for others is more than mere words. Love must be manifested in actions. **1 John 3:16-18**
- C. Sincere love at times leads to saying or doing something for someone that he or she needs but doesn’t want. Jesus exemplified this in His interaction with the “rich young ruler.” Rather than telling the ruler what He wanted to hear, Jesus told him what he *needed* to hear. Jesus genuinely cared for the man’s soul. **Mark 10:21-22**

VII. Love for Others: Selflessness

- A. At its core, love for others is about choosing to pursue what is right by others, rather than thinking only of self. **1 Corinthians 10:23-24; Philippians 2:4**

VIII. Love Perfectly Exemplified

- A. The perfect example of such selflessness is Jesus. At the heart of being Jesus’ true followers is putting the Father’s will above our own, as He did, and putting what others need from us above what would be most desirable or pleasant from a selfish perspective, as Jesus also did. **Philippians 2:5-8; John 13:34-35**