

## Daily Devotional, November 1, 2021 Love, No Matter What

***“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord. “Leviticus 19:18 (NIV)***

The command to “love your neighbor as yourself” has actually been recorded for a very long time. It first appears in the Bible in the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of Leviticus. Since the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, the book of Leviticus calls on the Israelites to honor, respect, and love their “re’a.” The Hebrew word “re’a,” or neighbor, is used to refer to just about everyone! It’s used to refer to foreigners, fellow Israelites, and physical neighbor too.

In the New Testament, this great commandment is repeated multiple times. First, in the Gospels and next, in Paul’s letter to the Romans. It is clear to see that our Jewish brothers and sisters understood this commandment to be extremely important. That is why it appears so early and so often. Jesus, Himself affirmed this commandment in Mark’s gospel when he combines the beginning and ending of Leviticus 19. Jesus says, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:29-31 (NIV)

As Christians, Christ told us thirteen times to love one another! Thirteen! He clearly wanted us to love one another just as He loves us. From the very beginning, God has been clear, we are to love our neighbors, no exception.

***Prayer: Lord, you have said that to truly love you then I must also love my neighbor, which can be difficult when we disagree. Yet in overcoming those difficulties it is possible to see the miracle that you love someone like me. Teach us to love, Lord, as you have loved us that this world might be a better neighborhood in which to live and share. In the name of Christ, Your son, Amen.***