

Let's Review The Plan (Part 4)

Sunday, January 19, 2025

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

In this series so far, we have seen that God's PLAN for our lives is...

That we MUST BE BORN AGAIN, through believing in Jesus and by confessing and repenting of our sins.

That we are CALLED to FOLLOW JESUS by, CHOOSING Him over everything else, allowing Him to CHANGE us inside and out, and COMMITTING to pick up our cross daily and follow Him.

That we need to TRUST GOD'S PLAN & PROVISION, His TIMING, His POWER, and His COMPASSION

Part 4 - LOVE

John 13:34-35

34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

WHY are we to love?

The easy and obvious answer here is simply, "because Jesus said so." But he did more than just say we should do it... He COMMANDED it. God's plan for us is to love others and we must understand that this is not an optional part of His plan. He didn't suggest we love others. He didn't say it would be a good idea if we love others. He did not say that we should do our best to love others. HE SAID... "YOU MUST LOVE ONE ANOTHER"

We need to remember that Jesus gave this command during His last meal and time of teaching with his disciples, just shortly before he knew he would be betrayed and handed over to be crucified. It was in this context that Jesus reminded them of something that he had already taught on many occasions, but something he wanted to impress in an even more passionate way before he would no longer be with them.

Jesus established love as a commandment when answering a question brought to him from one of the teachers of the law.

Mark 12:28-31

28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Matthew 22:40

40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Galatians 5:13-14

13 ..serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

WHAT is it?

Luke 10:25-37

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

27 He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed

by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

- It is **INITIATING** not REACTIONARY
- It is **ACTIVE** not PASSIVE
- It is **UNCONDITIONAL** not CONDITIONAL
- It is **SACRIFICIAL** not SELF-SERVING

WHO are we to love?

- God
- Neighbor
- Others
- One another

But those can be very broad terms and sometimes the generalities of those terms can cause us not to apply the command to the specific people in our life.

- Family
- Our Spouse
- Our Children
- Our Church Family
- Brothers and Sisters in Christ
- Those who are different than us
- Those who annoy us
- Those who are different from us
- Those we work with

- The who don't know Jesus
- The broken and hurting
- The sick and wounded
- Those who don't like us
- Those who oppose us
- Those who hate us
- Those who have hurt us
- Those who betray us

HOW can we love?

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a, 13

13 If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails...

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.