

Discussion Questions for
“Neighbor Here, Neighbor There: What’s Most Important?”
Matthew 22:34-40, Pastor Tom Olson, Weekend of November 10, 2018

Ice Breaker: What is the hardest ‘test’ you ever had to take? Why was it hard?

1. Why was the question (v.36) by the Pharisees a difficult question to answer? Why was it considered a “test?”
2. When Jesus says to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,” what does He mean?
3. What does “love your neighbor as yourself” mean?
 - a. Jesus is quoting Leviticus 19:18 here. Who is our neighbor according to this passage? (Read Leviticus 19:9-18, especially.)
 - b. How does the phrase “as yourself” help us grasp what this command means?
4. How does Christ’s own love teach us what it means to love God and neighbor?
5. Is verse 38 the same as the first commandment (Exodus 20:3)? What about verse 39; is it the same as the second commandment (Exodus 20:4)? What does Jesus mean when he says “first” and “second”?
6. What does Jesus mean by “Law and Prophets”? How can “all” the Law and Prophets possibly “depend” (v. 40) on these two commands?
7. How is loving God connected to loving our neighbor? (1 John 4:19, Ephesians 4:32-5:2 might be helpful alongside of what’s here Matthew 22.)
8. What obstacles keep you from loving your neighbor, from sharing Christ with your neighbor? How can these be overcome?
9. How have you seen the Holy Spirit move hearts and touch lives? As you reflect on the work of the Spirit in the past, how might you be inspired to pray for the Spirit’s work in the lives of your literal, geographic neighbors?

Challenge for this week: You received a card at church where you can write down the names of your 8 nearest neighbors. Make it a point to PRAY for these 8 neighbors.

- How can you pray for their souls and salvation?
- What needs to they have?
- If you’ve not even met them yet, pray for opportunities to do so! If you have met them, pray for opportunities to build a stronger friendship!
- Ask God to break down any obstacles in your own heart that would keep you from loving them and sharing Christ with them.

What are some practical steps you can take so that you don’t forget to pray?