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A M E T H O D I S T C H U R C H

## Homegroup material

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**LOVE** WHERE YOU ARE

**LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR**

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## I. Introductory Discussion Questions

1. What stood out for you most about the “Love your neighbour” sermon?
2. Read Matthew 7 vs 7-12. What do you think Jesus meant when He said that doing unto others what we want them to do for us “is the Law and the Prophets”?

### **Matthew 7vs 7-12:**

“Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you. For each one who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, if his son asks a loaf, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks a fish, will he give him a snake? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father in Heaven give good things to those who ask Him? Therefore all things, whatever you desire that men should do to you, do even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

3. What do you think it really means to love your neighbour?

## II. The importance of this command

1. Why do you think it is so important to God that we love others? Read the following Scriptures and discuss the insights they give you:

- **John 13 vs 34-35:**

“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. As I have loved you, you should also love one another. By this all shall know that you are My disciples, if you have love toward one another.”

- **John 15 vs 9:**

“As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you; continue in My love.”

- **1 John 4 vs 16-21:**

“And we have known and believed the love that God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. In this is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, that as He is, so also we are in this world. There is no fear in

love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment. He who fears has not been perfected in love. We love Him because He first loved us. If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother or sister whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And we have this commandment from Him, that he who loves God should love his brother and sister also.”

2. Jesus said that the distinguishing mark of His disciples would be their love for one another (John 13:35). If you honestly examine your life right now, do you think that others can see that you are a follower of Christ by the way you love?
3. Jesus does not ask us to love others with a comfortable kind of love, but in the same way that He has loved us, in other words, with a sacrificial love. How do you think we can practically learn to love like that?
4. It is impossible to love others if we don't stay connected to God Who is the source of love. How can we ensure that we remain constantly connected to Him?
5. Our faith is both vertical and horizontal, i.e. it must include a relationship with God and love for Him, as well as action in the world around us and a dimension of reaching out to others. Which of these areas is the greater challenge for you at present – relating to God or relating to others with love?

### **iii. The imperative of this command**

1. The true test of our faith is not how we love the lovely and loveable, but how we love the unlovely and the unlovable. God asks us to love outside of our comfort zones. Is there a person or situation in your life at present that requires you to love outside of your comfort zones? If you are willing, share this with the group.
2. Inherent in the command to love others is the need to first love ourselves. We are told to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. Why do you think this is so?

- **Matthew 22 vs 39:**

“...And the second is like it, You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

- **Mark 12 vs 31:**

“And the second is like this: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.”

- **Luke 10 vs 27:**

"And answering, he said, You shall 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 your neighbour as yourself."

- **Romans 13 vs 9:**

"For: "Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not bear false witness; do not lust;" and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

- **Galatians 5 vs 14:**

"For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

- **James 2 vs 8:**

"If you fulfil the royal Law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself," you do well."

3. What are the things in our lives that prevent us from valuing and loving ourselves, and therefore from valuing and loving others?

#### **IV. The implications of this command**

1. Read the parable of the Good Samaritan below. What does it reveal to you about what Jesus meant when He said we need to love our neighbours? (Keep in mind that the Jews hated and looked down on the Samaritans)

- **Luke 10 vs 25-37:**

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted Him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said to him, What is written in the Law? How do you read it? And answering, he said, You shall 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 your neighbour as yourself. And He said to him, You have answered right; do this and you shall live. But he, willing to justify himself, said to Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And answering, Jesus said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among robbers, who stripped him of his clothing and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by coincidence a

certain priest came down that way and seeing him, he passed by on the opposite side. And in the same way a Levite, also being at the place, coming and seeing him, he passed on the opposite side. But a certain traveling Samaritan came upon him, and seeing him, he was filled with pity. And coming near, he bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, and set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And going on the next day, he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, Take care of him. And whatever more you spend, when I come again I will repay you. Then which of these three, do you think, was neighbour to him who fell among the robbers? And he said, The one doing the deed of mercy to him. And Jesus said to him, Go and do likewise.”

4. Why do you think the lawyer in this account wanted to “justify himself” in asking who his neighbours were? How do we try to justify ourselves in terms of who we choose to love?
5. How can you “go and do likewise”? What is one way in which you can practically love your neighbours right now?

## **V. Call to action**

1. What will we do with what we have discovered in this session?
2. How will we hold each other accountable to this?