

WOK Conference 2024  
Back to the Future  
Loving Your Neighbor  
Session 3

Today we are going to discuss the topic that I have been thinking about for a while now, “Loving our Neighbor as ourselves”. On the surface this may seem like a very simple thing to do, something that we all probably do well already. However, with a subject this important it is good for us to look at what the Lord says regarding it and then by faith make sure our lives are adjusted accordingly. Otherwise, if we are not consistently adjusting our lives against the scriptures, then there is no way for us to be living a life faithfully obedient to the Word of Truth.

What better opportunity do we have to speak about Loving our Neighbor as ourselves then this weekend when we are all gathered here together. Our brothers and sisters from all over the country and the world – take a moment and look to your left and your right and see the Neighbor Whom the Lord has given us to love as ourselves.

Let’s start with a simple question that Jesus was asked in Matthew 22:36 *“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”*

Jesus answers this question by not only naming the first and great commandment but tying two commandments together, showing us how important and interconnected one is with the other.

*Matthew 22:37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 "This is the first and great commandment. 39 "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

As I read this, I wondered can I love the Lord my God with all my heart, with all my soul and with all my mind **when** I am not loving my neighbor as myself? That’s a tough question to ask ourselves, even tougher when we ask it against a biblical understanding of love. The scriptures teach that our love for the Lord and our

faithful obedience to His Word, is demonstrated and expressed in the way we love our neighbor. This love that we have for our neighbor is shown in how we think about or talk about him, how we judge, how we forgive and lastly how we serve him. That is challenging, isn't it?!

*1 John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates (detests) his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*

It is my prayer that as we study what this looks like to "love our neighbor as ourselves", we will be better equipped to be honest with ourselves in how we are doing in this area. If we are already doing this well, then hopefully we will be encouraged to continue and maybe even to do better. However, if this is an area in our lives that the Lord needs to offer some child training in, if He needs to correct and mature us, then it is my hope that we would receive the correction humbly, knowing that this is an important facet of us walking worthy of our high calling.

*Ephesians 4:1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

I personally needed some child training regarding this, and I assume that might be the case with some of us here today.

Let's reread our Matthew passage, *Matthew 22:37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 "This is the first and great commandment. 39 "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

As we embark on this study, we need to answer two very important questions; Who is my neighbor and how am I to love him? To start answering these questions we will need to define a few terms from our Matthew verses, so that the

foundation we build upon is correctly laid. **Firstly**, let's define *commandment*. This Greek word, "entole" (en-tol-ay) is an order or charge that is given by reason of one's office. And this is the same word used in Mark 10:19 relating it back to the ten commandments given to Moses by God the Father. Even though this commandment; *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind....And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,'"* was given by the Lord, the One in THE place of authority, it is up to the ones hearing it to decide what they will do. This decision to obey His command and do what is right in His eyes or to disobey and do what is right in their own eyes, is always a matter of walking by the Spirit or by the flesh.

**Secondly**, we need to define "neighbor" and though this Greek word is helpful it does not impart the full scope of who is our neighbor. For that we need to make sure we are understanding the word within the context of this Matthew passage and the bible in general. The definition of this word simply means a "friend or any person where two are concerned." Now by looking just at the word, we might make the mistake of thinking that "everyone" or "mankind" is our neighbor. However, we need to see this properly within the biblical context. Jesus specifically deals with three categories of mankind in the bible: Jews, Christians, and Gentiles. Within the context of Christ's ministry, it was specifically to the Jewish nation alone.

*Matthew 15:24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*

For that reason, as we read "neighbor" within these verses it needs to be understood in a Jewish context, as a fellow Jew. In fact, the Hebrew word for neighbor found in the Old Testament can also be translated brother or intimate friend, further supporting the specific Jewish context.

Another foundational question we need to be clear on is how do *"these two commandments* (loving the Lord and loving your neighbor) *hang all the Law and the Prophets."*? The answer to this is quite simple. The **Law** gave specific direction on how the Jewish people were to interact and relate to God as well as their

fellow Jewish man (their neighbor). The law was created around relationships, for the purpose of being found faithful to enter the Promise Land.

*Deuteronomy 6:1 "Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, 2 "that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. ... 5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.*

*Romans 13:9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

*Matthew 7:12 "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

It was the **Prophets** who kept reminding Israel to turn back to the Lord, to His commandments, to do what was right in His eyes. The prophets also made it very clear what would be happen if they didn't.

*2 Kings 17:13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets."*

Lastly, our final observation that needs to be made before moving on from Matthew 22, is the foreshadowing of the Church coming into existence. Matthew 21 ends with the parable of the vinedressers and the Lord saying to the chief priests and Pharisees, *Matthew 21:43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.* Then moving right into Matthew 22 the Lord starts with the Parable of the Wedding Feast

where the *“kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son...”*

Most of us are not from Jewish descendants; however, because of our standing *in Christ* we are now grafted into the seed of Abraham. *Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

As a result of our relational standing *“in Christ”* we will see then that this same commandment of loving the Lord our God and loving our neighbor as ourselves, is given to the New Man in Christ. This has the same relational context between our Lord and our neighbor on our journey to our promised land – the Heavenly Kingdom. One might say you could go *“Back to the Future”* to see this relationship between an individual Jew, God the Father, his neighbor and the promised land and our current relationship we have, with God the Son, our neighbor, and our *future* outcome during the millennial kingdom.

For us Christians then, biblically loving or hating one another has an age lasting outcome, one that will be either positive or negative at the judgement seat of Christ. This is why James calls this the Royal Law. It is a Law given by the King of Kings for which the ones who live in obedience to it will receive regality on that Day.

*James 2:8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*

To answer our first question from the beginning of our lesson today – Who is our Neighbor...we must see our neighbor within the biblical context of that being a fellow believer. One who is seeking the will of the Lord for his life, striving toward the Heavenly Kingdom, being brought forth from above, living faithfully obedient to the Word of Truth, thus walking by the Spirit man. *Matthew 12:48 But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My*

brothers?" 49 And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 50 "For whoever does **the will of My Father in heaven** is My brother and sister and mother."

2 Peter 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 **Therefore**, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for **if you do** these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The second question of "how am I to love my neighbor" will be where we spend the remaining time we have together today. Our love for one another cannot be determined by our own desires, understanding or experiences. Like everything else, our love must be **understood** and **expressed** through what the scriptures teach. With everything regarding our spiritual journey to the land of our inheritance, this must be an act of faith, through our spirit man to what the scriptures say. We will see the Lord addressing this very thing in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Why would us not loving cause us to become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal? Why would having the gift of prophecy, understanding all mysteries and all knowledge and having all faith without love cause us to be nothing? Why does giving our body to be burned profit nothing without love? It is because knowledge of the scriptures and faith alone isn't enough; we must place our understanding

and faith in what the scriptures say, alongside our works. It is only through our Spirit man that we can take the appropriate action in accordance with the scriptures to bear fruit. This simply boils down to, we must believe what God has said in His scriptures and we must by faith, act upon it.

*James 2:14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?.....17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.....**26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.***

Our understanding of the scriptures and then our faith in what we have understood, does not profit us (in the age to come) unless it is expressed in how we act (our works). Our faith must be expressed in our actions. This is why loving one another is so important. It is this action (loving our neighbor) that shows our love for the Lord. Let's go to 1 John and see if we can shed some more light on how our love for one another is tied to our love of the Lord.

*1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born (brought forth) of God and (Intimately) knows God. 8 He who does not love does not (Intimately) know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has seen God at any time. **If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.** 13 **By this (loving one another)** we know that we abide in Him, and He in us,*

because He has given us of His Spirit *(it can only be done through the spirit man)*. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and **he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him**. 17 Love has been **perfected** among us in this: that we may have **boldness in the day of judgment**; *(boldness in our outcome at the judgement seat)* because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us. 20 If someone says, **"I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar** *(because he is saying one thing and acting in the opposite manner)*; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God **must** love his brother also.

We can see here the clear connection between us abiding in the Lord and us loving one another. The outcome of Love having been perfected (only through the spirit man, the processes of metamorphosis - leaving the childish/immature to become the adult/mature spiritually) we can then have boldness in the day of judgement. How encouraging is this?

As we have just seen, the reason why all of what we read in 1 Corinthians 13 so far profits nothing is because it would have been done apart from faith and works working together. Let's keep reading in 1 Corinthians and see why love can only be a work done in the Spirit. Loving someone can NEVER be done by the man of the flesh, as we have studied these past months regarding a good tree producing after its kind and a bad tree producing after its kind.

*1 Corinthians 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails.*



I think this may be one of the most challenging few verses in the bible that gets tested every single day. This bar is set extremely high and how often do we fall short of this? Let's think through some basic situations on how this might play out within our body here today. Let's say someone's personality in our church body annoys me, has that ever happened to you? What is my response? *"Love suffers long and is kind"*. Am I, by faith, **doing** this?

Someone in our church body is struggling with a sin that I don't struggle with. What is my response? *"Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up"*. Am I, by faith, **doing** this?

Someone in our church body was offensive to me **or** I perceived a comment, a look, a text message was directed toward me in a negative or offensive way. What is my response? Do I think poorly about them? Do I say something sharp or cutting back to them, or to someone else about them? *"Love does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil"*. Am I, by faith, **doing** this?

I can love those who are difficult or who are different than I am from a distance, correct? Maybe, we say to ourselves, "I will just tolerate them but will not be close to them or reach out and spend time together." Unfortunately, these thoughts have gone through my mind over the years and as I mature and understand the scriptures more it has become clear that this line of thinking is selfish, childish, and completely from the old man.

*Luke 6:32 "But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 "And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.*

*Colossians 3:23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.*

Wonder if we are the ones with the difficult personality that seems to offend people? We may think, this is how God made me and the people around me need

to deal with it? Or as a result of our “difficult personality”, we may be extremely discouraged and wishing it was different.

In Colossians, the Lord deals with any of these situations very clearly and simply. *Colossians 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ... 12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

Can we begin to see why this must be something that can only be done through the spirit man and thus the one who loves in this way is abiding in Christ? Love *“does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, love never fails...”* We will spend our entire lifetime striving to love one another in this way. We need to remember that this is a process, and as we continue to mature spiritually, we will keep improving. Unfortunately, we will realize that we will never love 100% biblically correct every time, our old man gets in the way all too often.

However, this is why this is so important to make sure we are aware of the importance of doing this correctly, and the temptations that are associated with it. As we grow in our understanding of the Lord through His Word and our love for Him grows, then as a direct result, our love for one another will continue to grow and become more biblically correct. I hope we are beginning to see that our relationship with the Lord is interconnected with our relationship with one another.

If we are not loving one another well, if we are taking offense, willingly giving offense, thinking poorly of, or acting poorly toward our brother or sister, then that should cause great alarm in our spirit. Something needs to change in our life, and it is up to us individually to make the decision to follow the commands of the One in authority over us.

The victory that we will receive through this decision is only accomplished by our submission to the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit as we work through the Word of God. We can change, we must change! We cannot say, I will start loving him when he stops acting the way he does, that is worldly, fleshly and from our old man. We need to forgive our neighbor of any wrong that has been done to us or that we perceive has been done and then turn to our High Priest to seek forgiveness for ourselves in the part that we have played in it.

*Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

It is our responsibility to forgive as we have been forgiven. As we confess our sins to the Lord, He is faithful and just to forgive us. We need to turn to our Father who readily offers the child training that we all so desperately need and hopefully so willing and ready to receive.

*1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

*Hebrews 12:5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are*

*illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

The incredible thing about this process is that wherever we find ourselves today, we can be encouraged. If we are already loving our neighbor well, be encouraged. Well done! If we are not doing this well, be encouraged because the Lord only child trains those whom He loves, and this is the moment where we can receive the love and benefit of His Fatherly correction.

As we have seen this must be a deliberate act to love one another the way the Lord has commanded us too, because it most likely will not be our first and natural response at times. We cannot allow our emotions or feelings to direct when and how we are to love. It must be based on the unchangeable truth of God's Word.

We need to look at hating our brother as us **not** loving him the way we are commanded to. If we are not forgiving, are showing partiality, or simply ignoring or looking past our brother, then we are sinning. If we are not showing the same level of love and affection toward everyone within our body, then we are **despising** our neighbor; not loving them but instead "hating" them.

*Proverbs 11:12 He who is devoid of wisdom despises (hold in contempt or hold as insignificant) his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.*

*1 John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates (detests) his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*

*James 2:1 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. 2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, 3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to*

him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," 4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? 7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? **8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors...** 12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

As we end today let's remember that our relationship with each other is an outworking of our relationship with the Lord. We cannot abide in the Lord without properly loving one another. The Lord values these two interconnected relationships very seriously. *Matthew 22:37 ... "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 "This is the first and great commandment. 39 "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

Our love for the Lord is directly tied to our obedience to His Word, therefore, if He is commanding us to love our neighbor as ourselves (which He is) and we are not obeying Him, then we can see the direct relationship to us also not loving the Lord either. This relational connection between our love for the Lord and our love for one another is inseparable.

*John 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." ... 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.*

As we wrap up part 1 of “Loving our Neighbor as ourselves”, we have seen that our neighbor is our fellow believer, those who are seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness.

We have seen that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves and that can ONLY be done through the spirit man. When we take offense, willingly give offense, show partiality, think poorly of, or act poorly toward our brother or sister we are not loving them and as a result then we are not loving the Lord.

This is a choice that each of us faces daily. Will we be obedient to God’s Word and do what is right in His eyes, or will we choose what is right in our own eyes?

*1 Corinthians 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.*

I hope that each of us will take some time before the Lord and examine how our love for Him is played out in our thoughts and actions toward one another. If there are things in our life that we need to forgive and or seek forgiveness for, that we would. The stakes are too high to get this wrong or to be hard-hearted.

We have only scratched the surface on what the scriptures teach us about loving our neighbor. If the Lord is willing, we will continue to explore this next Sunday. We will strive to make the connections in how our love is played out with us being like-minded in the scriptures, with us forgiving and encouraging each other through His Word, the importance of gathering together often and how dangerous and destructive it is when we judge each other.

*Romans 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and*

weep with those who weep. **16 Be of the same mind toward one another.** Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

*Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. 2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness. 3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good. 4 A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit. 5 A fool despises his father's instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent.*

*Romans 13:11 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

Let's Pray...