

Love Your Neighbor

Scripture Reading — Mark 12:28-34

“Love the Lord your God’ ... [and] ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Mark 12:30-31 —

A boy of 15 or 16 years approached me in Lithuania and offered to carry my bag in exchange for money.

I asked with some suspicion, “What do you need money for?” Often teenage beggars used money for their addictions. He pointed to his stomach and said he was very hungry.

I wasn’t convinced. I told him I wouldn’t give him any cash, but I invited him to the nearest grocery store. To my surprise, he agreed.

At the store the boy chose a loaf of cheap bread and a value- size bottle of drinkable yogurt. As soon as I paid for the items, the boy began eating the bread greedily right at the checkout. At that moment I felt guilty for doubting in my heart his pleas for help.

In both the Old and New Testaments we are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves. On several occasions Jesus himself says that is a part of fulfilling God’s law. Again and again he shows us how to love others.

Certainly there are people who might try to take advantage of us. But that doesn’t excuse us from helping those who are in real need. Let’s not allow our suspicions and cynical attitudes to stop us from showing God’s love to our neighbors and from fulfilling God’s commandment to us.

Prayer

Lord, we know that without loving our neighbor we cannot love you. Give us a sacrificial spirit and wisdom so that we can do both. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Spiritual Food](#)

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