

Loving Our Neighbors

Scripture Reading — Genesis 26:1-11

“What is this you have done to us?”

Genesis 26:10 —

Abimelek had been told that Rebekah was Isaac’s sister. But Isaac’s tenderness with her said otherwise.

A pattern of deception practiced by Abraham was being embraced by the next generation (see Genesis 12:10-20; 20:1-2). Isaac’s lying about Rebekah to save his own life could have “brought guilt” on his neighbors. So Abimelek scolded him.

Getting into trouble with neighbors became something of a family tradition. Years later, Isaac’s grandchildren Simeon and Levi took out revenge on a whole town because their sister Dinah had been raped by a local boy; they killed every man in the city (Genesis 34).

Because Isaac loved himself more than his neighbors, he risked the well-being of the whole neighborhood. Trouble was avoided only because Abimelek happened to stumble onto the truth. The man chosen by God to bless the neighborhood was admonished by one in need of that blessing. God’s servants can be so embarrassing!

By our hospitality we can entertain angels without realizing it, as did Abraham and Lot. But by our folly and sin we can also cause others to sin, without their knowing it. Both are traditions in God’s family.

Loving our neighbors, whether they are Christian or not, includes refraining from any behavior that may be a stumbling block to their growing in faith.

Prayer

O Lord, be gracious and help me to see myself as others see me, that I may not be a stumbling block to them. Help me to love both you and others. For Jesus’s sake, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Genesis](#)

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Printed on July 16, 2019

