



40.DAY 2023

40.DAYS 40.VOICES 40.PRAYERS

DAY 11 | JULY 11

The Greatest Commandment is this

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BIBLE READING

MATTHEW 22:37-39 | Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Which is the greatest commandment? In Matthew 22:37, Jesus said: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets.”

Love God, love people.

If we love God, we must love people.

Reaching the next generation requires love. Reaching our youth requires a love that is expressed, a love that is demonstrated.

If we love God, we love people in a language that they receive. Loving people also means not just in a way that I understand love but in a way that they receive love. It’s not more rules, not more correction or tough love, but instead affirmation, encouragement, inspiration, a sense of belonging and empowerment.

A few months ago, I met a guy at the hawker centre and we started a conversation because he had a really cool bag and he had a tattoo on his arm of a manta ray. I had a conversation with him and I found out that he had not been to church for a long time.

I said that I was a pastor of a church and I would love to welcome him to church. I gave him my number and, over the next few days, we started texting and whatsapping. Out of the blue, he sends me a message and says: “I would like to get water baptised. How do I go about doing it?”

I said to him: “If you are serious about getting water baptised, come to church this Sunday. Right after service, we will get you water baptised.”

Guess what happened? Sunday, he shows up! He gives his life to Christ and, after service, we bring him to the swimming pool and we get him water baptised. Today, he is loving God, connected to family and he is even serving in the house of God.

When we love people in a way that they receive love, it isn’t just given but it is also received.

Get this: Love God and then love people in order to love the next generation.

We need love that comes from God. The more we fall in love with God, the more He fills us with a love for people.

Have you ever felt like you struggled to love the next generation? There was a time in my life, as a young dad, I felt like I struggled to show love for my beautiful daughters. And I’m talking about love and hugs and kisses.

I went to God and I asked Him: “Lord, what is up with me? Why don’t I have this love for my children?” God showed me and reminded me

how much He loves me as a son, and how proud of me He is that I am a father today.

Today, I come before my children. I hug them, I kiss them, I pray with them before I go to bed. The love that I show my children today was not from the people around me. It came from the God that dwells inside me.

When you love God with unrestrained love, He will fill you with unrestrained love for people.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind and all your soul and He will give you love for people, as yourself. Love God, love people.

Let us pray: *Father God, we thank You for Your love. We thank You that You are a God of love, that Your commandment is that we love You and love Your people.*

Father, we pray right now for this beautiful nation and this beautiful city that, God, we would be known as a nation that loves.

Father, as You fill us with Your love, may we see an entire generation of our youth come to know You and come to love You. Father, we honour You, we love You and we bless Your name.

In Jesus' name, we pray, and all God's people say: Amen.



REFLECT

- 1 How well do you currently love the people around you?
- 2 What is God saying to you about your love for Him?
- 3 What is one way God is challenging you to love people with His love?



PRAY

- 1 Pray for a deeper love of God because unless we love God, we cannot love His people. Ask God to reveal and remove any obstacle – a bias, an inclination, a past encounter – that prevents you from being wholly devoted to Him.
- 2 Prayerfully reflect on Matthew 22:37: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” Who are your neighbours? Pray for insights into their concerns, that you might show love to them in meaningful ways.
- 3 Pray over your role in your family – as mother or father, daughter or son, sister or brother, daughter- or son-in-law, mother- or father-in-law, godparent or foster parent. The God of no mistakes has placed you in your family for a reason. Pray for your family members by putting yourself in their shoes. Take a step to be a blessing to them today.