

Sermon Notes: Learning to Love Oneself

Introduction

We often find it easier to believe that God loves “others” than to believe God loves *us* personally. Yet Jesus teaches that loving God, loving our neighbour, and loving ourselves are inseparable. To love others well, we must receive God’s love for ourselves.

The Great Commandments

Jesus replied, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.”

— **Mark 12:29–31 (NLT)**

“So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

— **John 13:34–35 (NLT)**

Loving God and loving others flow from the same source — God’s love. If we are commanded to love our neighbour *as ourselves*, then healthy self-love is assumed and essential.

Being Filled with The Love of God

Before we can love others or ourselves well, we must first be filled with God’s love. We cannot pour from an empty cup.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power... to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

— **Ephesians 3:16–19 (NIV)**

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

— **Romans 5:3–5 (NIV)**

We were created in love and meant to live from a full supply of God’s love.

Accepting That We Are Loved

Many people accept that God loves humanity but struggle to accept that God loves them personally. Scripture wipes away every doubt.

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation—will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

— **Romans 8:38–39 (NLT)**

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

— **1 John 3:1 (NLT)**

Accepting God's love is not arrogance — it honours God's truth and opens the door to healing, identity, and emotional wholeness.

Seeing Ourselves as Lovable

True humility is agreeing with God's truth about who we are. We are God's handiwork, intentionally created and deeply valued.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

— **Psalms 139:13–14 (NLT)**

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.

— **John 15:13 (NLT)**

You are lovable not because of what you do, but because of who created you and what Christ paid for you. Your worth is established, not earned.

Overcoming barriers to loving yourself

Shame from the past

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

— **Romans 8:1 (NLT)**

Your past may explain you, but it does not define you. Shame was removed at the cross.

Comparison with others

Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. For we are each responsible for our own conduct.

— **Galatians 6:4–5 (NLT)**

Comparison kills joy and identity. You are called to be *you*, not someone else.

Fear of pride

Loving yourself is not self-worship — it is recognizing God's craftsmanship in you. Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less.

Letting God's Love Overflow to Others

We love because he first loved us.

— **1 John 4:19 (NIV)**

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud... It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

— **1 Corinthians 13:4–7 (NIV)**

"Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'"

— **John 7:38 (NLT)**

When we live in God's love, it naturally spills over into kindness, compassion, patience, and service toward others.

Living Daily in the Reality of God's Love

Stay in the Word

The world tells us who we're not. The Word tells us who we are.

Practice Gratitude

Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me.

— **Psalms 103:2 (NLT)**

Forgive Yourself

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

— **1 John 1:9 (NLT)**



Surround Yourself with Life-Giving Community

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another...

— **Hebrews 10:24–25 (NLT)**

Conclusion — Clothe Yourself in Love

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tender-hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience... Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony... And always be thankful.

— **Colossians 3:12–15 (NLT)**

Call to Action

As you dress each day, clothe yourself also in God's love, put on the armour of God, look into the mirror and say, "**I love you.**" Then go in peace.

