

OUR MISSION
LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE, SERVING THE WORLD

Bethel Christian Fellowship
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"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"³⁷ 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.'**"⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:36-40 (NIV)

BCF Mission Statement
LOVING GOD, LOVING PEOPLE, SERVING THE WORLD

The "*ing*" is intentional because it is something that is constantly happening resulting in a process of cause and effect. Loving God will cause you to Love people, and loving people will cause you to serve the world on an ongoing basis.

Recap: The Greatest Commandment: Loving God with All You Are. (week 1)

This command is impossible to obey in the natural/sinful state of man. But when you invite Jesus into your life, He places the Holy Spirit in your heart to empower you to!

Obedience is the sign of loving God. Jesus said; "*If you love me, keep my commands.*" John 14:15 (NIV)

"Since, then, you have been raised (alive spiritually) with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." Colossians 3:1-4 (NIV)

"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸ But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator." Colossians 3:5-10 (NIV)

IMPORTANT TRUTH:

You cannot love someone you don't know, so knowing, and loving God should be your first priority in life. Knowing God intimately will cause you to love God.

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT: LOVING PEOPLE (week 2)

*"And the second is like it: '**Love your neighbor as yourself.**'"* (vs. 39)

LOVING GOD WILL INFLUENCE THE WAY YOU LOVE OTHERS

Loving your neighbor would include sharing with the poor and the alien; compassion and absolute honesty and justice in your relationships with others; impartiality despite your differences.

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) focus on these two issues: Loving God, Loving People.

Jesus is quoting from Leviticus 19:9-18. "*When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. ¹⁰ It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the Lord your God. ¹¹ "Do not steal. "Do not deceive or cheat one another. ¹² "Do not bring shame on the name of your God by using it to swear falsely. I am the Lord. ¹³ "Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. "Do not make your hired workers wait until the next day to receive their pay. ¹⁴ "Do not insult the deaf or cause the blind to stumble. You must fear your*

God; I am the Lord. 15 "Do not twist justice in legal matters by favoring the poor or being partial to the rich and powerful. Always judge people fairly. 16 "Do not spread slanderous gossip among your people. "Do not stand idly by when your neighbor's life is threatened. I am the Lord. 17 "Do not nurse hatred in your heart for any of your relatives. Confront people directly so you will not be held guilty for their sin. 18 "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord."

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Colossians 3:12-14 (NIV)

To be a faithful witness to Christ, you must embrace the supreme Christian ethic: **LOVE**.

Your cultural allegiances must take a backseat to your commitment to the cross and the church (John 13:35). Our neighbors will not recognize us as Christians if our love hinges on personal and social ambition. When you are loving God the way He wants to be loved by you will cause you to love everyone the same friend or foe, friend or stranger.

IMPORTANT TRUTH:

The Great Commission is hindered when the Great Commandment is disregarded.