



## LOVING LIKE GOD

### 2.1 Each member understands what it means to “love your neighbor as yourself.”

For this lesson, we are going to look at [Matthew 22:36-40](#) and [1 John 4:15-21](#). Toward the end of our study we will look at [Matthew 25:31-46](#), as well.

What does it really mean to love your neighbor? Why is this even important? This study is about the “what and why” of loving your neighbor. In our Resources for Next Steps section, the RightNow Media videos take it a step further by talking about the “how” of loving your neighbor.

### God’s Choice and His Command(s)

In Matthew 22, Jesus indicates that the entire law can be summed up in one operative word—love. So...what is the meaning of love in this context?

- Love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. (KMI #1)
- You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (KMI #2, associated with KMI #0)

*... it’s vital to understand what the Scriptures mean by “love” in these verses. Love that fulfills the law is agape love. This love is not based on emotions, but an act of the will. It is self-sacrificing, deliberate, active love. To love someone with God’s love is to promote that person’s best interests—to actively work not to harm but to bring good to that person. This love is directed not only toward fellow believers but to all people, even our enemies. Regardless of our emotional response to another person, agape love will act for his or her good, regardless of the cost. That is the kind of love Scripture speaks of when it says to love your neighbor as yourself. ([Got Questions.org](#))*

This kind of love is a choice, the same kind of love choice God makes with us and empowers us to make with Him.

**Q. For a moment, consider that God has chosen to love you. What comes to your mind as you process this amazing truth?**

Once again, let's go back to Matthew 22, and open [1 John 4:7-21](#).

**Q. In Matthew 22, Jesus arranges two commands in a particular order. "Loving God" is mentioned first and "loving your neighbor" is mentioned second. Read 1 John 4:7-21. Why do you think He arranged them the way He did?**

For us to truly love our neighbor, we must first receive the love that God offers us. God offers that love through sending His son as a propitiation for our sin. This allows us to be able to love others because God abides in us and we in Him through Christ. Without this we can't love as God would have us love.

**Q. Why do you think Jesus said that loving your neighbor, the command mentioned second, is "like" the first command of loving God? Read [Matthew 25:31-46](#) for help.**

## SUMMARY

In Matthew 22 Jesus gives us two commands: The first is to **love God with all of ourselves**; the second is to **love others as we love ourselves**.

We are called to love God above everything else in our lives because that is His proper place as our Lord. He has given us the capacity to love Him, by loving us first ([1 John 4:19](#)).

In [1 John 4:11](#) we read that since God loves us the way He does, we ought to, and can, love each other; this is the second command in Matthew 22.

In Matthew 25 we learned that loving others, even the “least of these” **IS** loving Christ. We show God’s heart for the world through our heart for others. Our love for them is the outer working of God’s love within us.

## LEADERSHIP CONNECTION

**We are empowered by God to love and lead like God does, glorifying Him and serving others. As God abides in you, He enables you to love like He does. Without Him and His Spirit, this would be impossible.**

## RESOURCES FOR NEXT STEPS

- KMI Lesson 2.2, 2.3, or 2.4
- RightNow Media @WorkStudy  
**12 Neighbors**  
<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/375381>
- RightNow Media @WorkStudy  
**Love in Chaos**  
<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/794340>