

Between Judgement and Sympathy: Loving Our Neighbour Rightly

A Reflection on Loving Our Neighbour

Reflections Parables and the Teaching of Jesus WhatsApp post, 2 February 2026

Matthew 22:39

Matthew 22:39 stands among the most challenging commandments to practise in daily Christian life. It calls believers to live out two essential spiritual principles: agape love and empathy, love that reflects Christ's selfless sacrifice, and compassion that seeks to understand before judging.

In contrast, the attitudes most frequently displayed are judgementalism and excessive sympathy. Judgement without love wounds, while sympathy without truth weakens moral responsibility. Both fall short of Christ's example.

We often elevate tolerance, grace, and forgiveness in ways that unintentionally hinder the exercise of genuine Biblical love and righteous accountability. When love is separated from truth, transformation is compromised.

Consequently, the Church finds itself unable to confront vital issues such as the neglect of stewardship, the abuse of the pulpit, the absence of authentic spiritual leadership, and the growth of divisions and factions. These challenges are not merely structural, but spiritual, arising from the loss of Christlike character, humility, and discernment.