

## ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE 140

### Lesson 14: [“Who Is My Neighbour?”](#)

**Class Member Reading:** Matthew 18; Luke 10

Matthew 18

**18**At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” **Jesus regularly subverted attempts to gain status.** <sup>2</sup>He called a child, whom he put among them, <sup>3</sup>and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you **change and become like children**, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven (In what ways do we need to become like children? Pretty much all of us can list both positive and negative childlike traits. I think the most important is being humble and teachable, willing to learn and change) . <sup>4</sup>Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>5</sup>Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. <sup>6</sup>“If any of you put a stumbling block (This Greek word is where we get the English “scandalize”) before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. In what ways to we harm others, causing them to stumble or worse?

<sup>7</sup>Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes (Good application here I think.. there are problems all around, but we can resolve to be part of the solution rather than the problem)! <sup>8</sup>“If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. <sup>9</sup>And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire (Very disturbing imagery, but the interpretation seems relatively clear—we have to be willing to give up parts of ourselves that are preventing us from achieving our potential). <sup>10</sup>“Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven. <sup>12</sup>What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? <sup>13</sup>And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. <sup>14</sup>**So it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.** God does not want a single one of us to be lost (universalism and progression between the kingdoms is an interesting hall/home topic)

<sup>15</sup>“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, **you have regained that one.** <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. Important advice for interpersonal

conflict resolution, especially the first step of taking someone one-on-one. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For **where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.**” A widely applicable principle—as humans we crave connection, and it is easy for God’s love and help to be among us when we are together.

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. (What is forgiveness? Forgiveness is letting go [the exact definition of the Greek, actually]. I believe it is primarily for us, for our well being. We need to forgive, but also keep ourselves safe and well) <sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ (From the ESV Study Bible: The first amount would be equivalent to \$6 billion, while the latter would be about \$12,000. Thus the first servant’s debt was 500k times the debt he would not forgive) <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.” (Poignant and powerful parable. Our flaws and sins should move us to humility and forgiveness toward others)

Luke 10

**10**After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. <sup>2</sup>He said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. <sup>3</sup>Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. (a provocative image that suggests a rejection of the usual power

structures and dynamics, a rejection of violence even at the cost of being harmed; think of the Sermon on the Mount, turn the other cheek etc)

One of my favorite extra-canonical passages, darkly amusing in its frankness:

2Clem 5:2-5: For the Lord saith, *Ye shall be as lambs in the midst of wolves. But Peter answered and said unto Him, What then, if the wolves should tear the lambs?*

Jesus said unto Peter, *Let not the lambs fear the wolves after they are dead; and ye also, fear ye not them that kill you and are not able to do anything to you; but fear Him that after ye are dead hath power over soul and body, to cast them into the Gehenna of fire.* And ye know, brethren, that the sojourn of this flesh in this world is mean and for a short time, but the promise of Christ is great and marvelous, even the rest of the kingdom that shall be and of life eternal.

<sup>4</sup>Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. <sup>5</sup>Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house!’ <sup>6</sup>And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. <sup>7</sup>Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. <sup>8</sup>Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; <sup>9</sup>cure the sick who are there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ <sup>10</sup>But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, <sup>11</sup>‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. (One of my friends published a brilliant interpretation of this passage—it is to be understood in the context of hospitality norms; the “witness against them” is that they failed to show adequate hospitality). Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.’ <sup>12</sup>I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town. <sup>13</sup>‘Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>14</sup>But at the judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. <sup>15</sup>And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades. <sup>16</sup>‘Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.’ I love and am challenged by those scriptures that equate our treatment of our fellow human beings and our treatment of God.

<sup>17</sup>The seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!” <sup>18</sup>He said to them, “I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. (Cautionary tale) <sup>19</sup>See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. <sup>20</sup>Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” <sup>21</sup>At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.

<sup>22</sup>All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” <sup>23</sup>Then turning to the disciples, Jesus said to them privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! <sup>24</sup>For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”

<sup>25</sup>Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup>He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” (Exemplary teaching method) <sup>27</sup>He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” (Seems to be drawing from Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18) <sup>28</sup>And he said to him, “**You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.**” <sup>29</sup>But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” <sup>30</sup>Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup>Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup>So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup>But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. <sup>34</sup>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup>The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ <sup>36</sup>Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” <sup>37</sup>He said, “The one who **showed him mercy.**” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.” This parable, one of the most powerful in all scripture, has two layers: the initial reading, and then the reading informed by knowledge of Judaism. See Ezekiel 44:25-26

<sup>38</sup>Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. <sup>39</sup>She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he was saying. <sup>40</sup>But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.” <sup>41</sup>But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; <sup>42</sup>there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.”

**Additional Reading:** [Mark 9:33–50](#); [Mosiah 3:17–21](#); [4:16–19, 26](#).

[Mark 9:33–50](#)

<sup>33</sup>Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” <sup>34</sup>But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. <sup>35</sup>He sat down, called the twelve, and said

to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”<sup>36</sup> Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them,<sup>37</sup> “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

<sup>38</sup> John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.”<sup>39</sup> But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.”<sup>40</sup> Whoever is not against us is for us.<sup>41</sup> For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

<sup>42</sup> “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea.”<sup>43</sup> If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire.

<sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell.<sup>47</sup> And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell,<sup>48</sup> where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

<sup>49</sup> “For everyone will be salted with fire.”<sup>50</sup> Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

### [Mosiah 3:17–21](#)

17 And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.

18 For behold he judgeth, and his judgment is just; and the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy; but **men drink damnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and become as little children**, and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.

19 For the natural man is an enemy (I find the idea of us being *\*strangers\** to God more helpful than that of us being *\*enemies\** to God.. even so, we are also enemies, because our interests are at cross purposes to theirs, some aspects of our nature at least. We are a complicated mixture of selfish and loving) to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he **yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit**, and putteth off the natural man and **becometh a saint** through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, **submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit** to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth

submit to his father. [Helpful list of traits that serves to clarify Jesus' words on becoming like a child.](#)

20 And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come when the knowledge of a Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

21 And behold, when that time cometh, none shall be found blameless before God, except it be little children, only through repentance and faith on the name of the Lord God Omnipotent.

[4:16–19, 26.](#)

16 And also, ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish.

17 Perhaps thou shalt say: The man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore I will stay my hand, and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance that he may not suffer, for his punishments are just—

18 But I say unto you, O man, whosoever doeth this the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom of God.

19 For behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind? [Be challenge by the scriptures indeed. So powerful and demanding.](#)

...

26 And now, for the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you—that is, for the sake of retaining a remission of your sins from day to day, that ye may walk guiltless before God—I **would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.**

**Scripture Chain:** [Luke 10:25–37](#); [Leviticus 19:18](#); [Matthew 22:35–40](#); [John 13:34–35](#); [Mosiah 2:17](#); [D&C 38:24–25](#)

[Luke 10:25–37](#)

25 ¶And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

[Leviticus 19:18](#)

18 ¶Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt **love thy neighbour as thyself**: I am the Lord.

[Matthew 22:35–40](#)

35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt **love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt **love thy neighbour as thyself.**

40 **On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.** The “law and the prophets” refers to the main sections of Jewish Scripture (Tanakh). Jesus is saying that all scripture can be summed up by these two commandments.

[John 13:34–35](#)

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye **love one another; as I have loved you**, that ye also love one another. These seems higher and stronger as loving each other as we love ourselves... this is loving each other as God loves us. Both of these verses use the Greek verb “agapeo”, which means to love with a devotion greater than that which you have for self.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

[Mosiah 2:17](#)

17 And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God. Elegantly unifies the two great commandments.

[D&C 38:24–25](#)

24 And let every man **esteem his brother as himself**, and practice virtue and holiness before me.

25 And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself.