

# Love Thy Neighbor in Service

## Why Do We Even Try?

**S**in and our separation. Despite the fact I have been a believer in Jesus Christ for approximately 3-4 years I have never really understood my depth of sin. I have heard preachers say they saw themselves in the true light and really did not like what was revealed.



The event happened to me early one morning in downtown Atlanta. I was walking from my office to the ministry office and encountered a man I had seen many times downtown. He had been homeless for some time, and I knew it. He asked for enough money to get a bus ride to and from the VA hospital in Decatur.

While I was suspicious of his motives I gave him the money anyway. I turned to walk away and got right to the corner. He had left our meeting, and was headed directly to the small market that sold all types of beer and wine. In he went,

and I decided to see if he was going to purchase something to drink. I sneaked up on him like I was some type of undercover police making a bust.

By the time I arrived he was standing at the counter with a tallboy beer. While I am sure this has happened to me many times in the past I was particularly angry that day. I simply stood in the doorway so he could clearly see me. He looked up, saw me standing there, and glanced down in shame. I was happy for the way he was feeling as it helped me deal with my anger to some small degree.

**H**e walked right by me as I gave him the coldest stare I could muster (so much for the love of Jesus). He said he was going to take the balance of the money and go out the VA hospital. But by this point anything he said I just considered noise. I walked away from that scene angry and depressed.

It seemed like everything we were trying to do at LTN was just a waste. Everybody was just going to lie, and there was just no use in trying to point people to Jesus and watch Him

change them from the inside out.

### Lies...Lies...Lies

**J**esus says, "he (Satan) is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44 NIV). Satan was in his best mode that day. It was simply not true what my mind was telling me. I have watched many lives changed in powerful ways through faith in Jesus Christ. But we are always in a battle. Someone is always acting like a knucklehead, and when one set of people gets better we simply pick up a new group.

Often the people we are left with are the individuals with the greatest problems. They have a tendency to get well and fall back apart several times. They also are normally the ones with the most incredibly painful backgrounds.

I was still so angry with the alcohol event that I went back into the store. The coolers were full of beer and wine. I have never seen any business person enter this particular store to purchase any alcohol. I realized these people were

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supplying the homeless population, and my anger really rose at that point.

I turned directly to the person at the cash register and asked her if she was Christian. Her answer was yes. I said, "How in the world can you sell this beer to these people you know are homeless?" I am sure I said something else unpleasant in my anger, but in anger things tend to get fuzzy. Her response knocked me over.

She said "As far as the alcohol sales were concerned I would have to take that up with the owner of the store." That was the end of the conversation, and I left angrier than when I entered. How in the world could the woman, claiming to be a Christian, knowingly sell alcohol to homeless alcoholics? Also, what nerve blaming the owner when she stood right at the cash register and took the money for the beer the homeless man had just pulled out of the cooler? Having such a ready supply of alcohol so close is very tough to compete with in our attempts to create any change.

While I was walking the short distance back to my office a sudden depression came over me. I realized I was just like the lady at the cash register. I cannot count the times I have done something, either through a lack of thought or by specific desire which was clearly outside the will of God. In years past I could claim some ignorance as I rarely

read the bible. However, now I read it all the time. It is a requirement for everyone in the program, and I will tell anyone interested in coming to know the Lord they should be reading and praying daily.

I was naked in my ability to claim an excuse for myself. Suddenly, I could see my flaws as clearly as I saw them in the woman at the cash register. A second wave of depression came over me as I realized I was simply in the same situation as every other person I knew. Only when one considers they have a problem do they feel the need for an answer. When a person on the street has a drug or alcohol problem, there is no hope for change until they recognize themselves a problem exists. So it is with all of us in seeking the Lord.

Why bother when life is going

### What can you do?

We need your prayers! It is the most important thing you can do for the ministry.

*"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."*

(James 5:16 NIV)

LTN is committed to spreading the Gospel by Christ's example to "love thy neighbor as thyself." Matthew 22:39. To this end, LTN has designed programs with the purpose of helping clients build a relationship of faith in God, regain their dignity and eventually, regain their self-sufficiency. Contact us to learn more about the services and programs.

*Love Thy Neighbor In Service is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation (IRS#17053159005021). Gifts are tax deductible in accordance with tax law.*

well? I am not going to die. I have plenty of money. My wife and family love me. Who needs any saving and from what? However, seeing the horrible behavior in the woman, her ability to blame someone else and realizing I was just like her in my own thoughts and actions was overwhelming. I could never fix it in my own power.

The depth of what the Lord has done for each one of us through Jesus Christ simply became that more amazing. Can you imagine giving up your only child to suffering for an ungrateful group of people who may or may not respond? Think honestly about your own life, and the sin that lies therein. How do you carry that load before the most holy God when you die and try to explain it?

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**Let's Be Honest**

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Jesus tells us everything will be revealed. "For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open." ( Luke 8:17 NIV) All those thoughts you wish you never had. All those things you were involved in that almost no one knows you did. The idea that I am free from those burdens because I have been completely forgiven by accepting Jesus Christ is just amazing.

Being honest with the view of my own sin in light of an absolutely holy God drives me directly to Jesus and His forgiveness. Be honest with yourself about your own sin and it will hopefully drive you to Jesus and his free forgiveness as well. If you have a desire to really come to know the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in a real and true way there are simple steps to take. Let me know and I would be glad to send you the information.

God bless you,

**John Chapman, Jr.**

***Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.***

**Matthew 22:39**

*New Email*

**[jchapmanjr01@talkamerica.net](mailto:jchapmanjr01@talkamerica.net)**

Please make a note that John now has a new email address. We apologize for any problems this might cause but we look forward to staying in contact with you.