

**Word Notes Sunday 12/01/14**  
**Tony Hodge – Love God and Your Neighbour**

**Summary** (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

**Key Texts: Luke 10:25-37**

An expert in the law asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. Note that Jesus doesn't say "it's not about doing" but instead asks the lawyer what he thinks the law says. The lawyer gives an excellent answer, which reflects the heart of God – he has really understood it not just learned it parrot-fashion! However he still wants to justify himself in some way (perhaps he knows deep down he's not loved his neighbour as himself) so he asks "who is my neighbour?" We all know the story that follows in which Jesus illustrates that our neighbour is not just those we like, nor those who are part of our 'tribe' but in fact anyone – even those we reject or despise.

The lawyer doesn't question the first part of his summary: Love God with all you are and have, so we might take that as a given but lets not gloss over that loving God requires our whole being our heart, soul, strength and mind.

- Heart: (Kardia) - the centre of all physical and spiritual life, **the real you.**
- Soul: (Psyche) - the breath of life, the soul as an essence, which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death – **our spirit.**
- Strength: (Ischus) – abilities and power, **all you can do.**
- Mind: (Dianoia) – understanding, intelligence, **all our thought life.**

The parable Jesus told about loving our neighbour must have been quite hard-hitting to his audience. The priest and Levite p- those who minister before God on behalf of the people - both come off badly. Did they fulfil the law as the lawyer had summarised it? Who is my neighbour? The parable shows I should love

- Not just my mates but even those whom the world despises.
- Not as the religious do.
- With active love not passive.

Loving both God and our neighbour is emphasised in Revelations when we read about the letter to the church at Ephesus who while being known for their deeds, hard work, perseverance and intolerance of wicked men (false prophets/apostles) have "lost their first love and fallen from a great height".

**Application** (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

To love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind: is that possible? What do those words mean to you?

Is love a static thing? If not how do we grow in love for God?

What do you think the lawyer was getting at in his question: "who is my neighbour"?

What points is Jesus making using the examples of a priest, a Levite and a Samaritan?

Is anyone undeserving of our love? Is that how we really think and act? Pick up a newspaper or look online for news stories – how many are judgemental? What would we do for those people?

**Witness** (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

Love in action requires us to step out of our churches and our homes and encounter real people with real life problems – who, where, how can the Cell do this?