

December 13th, What Does It Mean To Love Yourself?
Part 3 in the series, 'Essential Services'

What were some things from last Sunday's message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

Do you think 'loving yourself' is something our society puts a focus on? If yes, in what ways?

READ Ephesians 4:32

32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted (some translations: compassionate), forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

What were the three implications of what it means to love yourself, given in last Sunday's message?

A: Kindness, compassion/tenderheartedness, forgiveness

READ Matthew 22:34-40

34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" 37 Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Why do you think Jesus said "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." in verse 40?

Thinking back to last Sunday's message, what does it mean to be kind to yourself?

- Don't buy into the lies I and others tell about you
- Don't succumb to the burden of perfectionism

READ Matthew 11:28-30

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Jesus said this in the context of the Pharisees, who were putting crushing burdens on people to be perfect and keep the Law. What is Jesus offering in contrast?

A: He offers the yoke of grace, which means you don't have to be perfect in your own strength.

Thinking back to last Sunday's message, what does it mean to be compassionate/tenderhearted with yourself?

- Recognize that though I am a sinner and am flawed, I am deeply loved.
- Ask yourself: how many expectations have I placed on myself?

Do you agree with the statement **“If someone is hard on themselves, they will be hard on others”**? If possible, give some real life examples as to why/why not.

READ James 2:12-13

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, **13** because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Thinking back to last Sunday’s message, what does it mean to forgive yourself?

- Not holding yourself hostage emotionally and spiritually, by my mistakes/with judgment, because God gives us the gift of confession.

In last Sunday’s message, Pastor Len said, **“I find that simple scribbling of two or three lines in repentance is just a wonderful gift to my life from God.”** Do you often think of repentance as a gift?

Do you find it easier to show mercy to yourself or mercy to others?

How does showing kindness, compassion and forgiveness to ourselves affect how we treat others?

How are loving God, loving your neighbor and loving yourself intertwined?