

**Thought for the day – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

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**Loving when its hard – Part 1**

I have been thinking and writing about love recently, focusing on the greatest commandment.

***<sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” <sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”***

*- Matthew 22:36-40*

I have written about how we are called to love our neighbour, who in Christ, becomes everyone and anyone we come across.

But what happens when its hard to love.

When we feel tired. And when we come across people we don't like. I will write about that another time, but let's just clock that as a real thing. We won't like everyone we come across and they won't all like us and loving them can be really hard sometimes.

The hidden commandment in the greatest commandment, is to love our selves. When we feel tired, we need to rest. No one can act in love towards others 24/7. Even Jesus did not. In Mark 1:35, he stopped doing acts of love (healing etc) and went off to be by himself and prayed. That was what He needed to do at that time, even though as the disciples exclaimed when they found him “Everyone is looking for you!” He was doing so much good, there was so much need, but there was a natural time when He knew he needed to stop.

If Jesus needed to stop, so we must! May we be kind to our selves, and recognize those times we need to stop and be for a while. And put up strong boundaries to guard those times, because the pressure will often come to break them, often by people who mean well, like the vicar! I find it helpful to put those times in the diary and mark it as a commitment that can only be broken in an emergency.

Being honest with God, when we feel tired, just telling Him that we are tired, and knowing that we can rest with him, and He rests with us. Doing something nice for your self. Whatever it is that recharges your batteries, is part of fulfilling the Greatest Commandment - just may we remember to quietly, gently and in our own words, include God in that.