



“Love Thy Neighbour as Thyself”

*Reaching out to others in love and compassion
is essential to the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

From the Life of George Albert Smith

George Albert Smith was well known for his capacity to love others. President J. Reuben Clark Jr., one of his counselors in the First Presidency, said of him: “His real name was Love. . . . He gave his love to everyone he met. He gave his love to all whom he did not meet.”¹

President Smith’s love for others grew from his sincere conviction that we are all brothers and sisters, children of the same Heavenly Father. Near the end of his life, he said to the Saints:

“I do not have an enemy that I know of, and there is no one in the world that I have any enmity towards. All men and all women are my Father’s children, and I have sought during my life to observe the wise direction of the Redeemer of mankind—to love my neighbor as myself. . . . You will never know how much I love you. I have not words to express it. And I want to feel that way toward every son and every daughter of my Heavenly Father.”²

President Smith demonstrated his love for others through countless acts of compassion. One observer noted: “It is characteristic of President Smith to go out of his way on errands of personal comfort and blessing to many who are sick, who are down-hearted, and who have cause to be grateful for his cheerful encouragement. It is not uncommon to see him, before and after office hours, walking hospital halls, visiting room after room, blessing, encouraging, and cheering with his unexpected appearances in those places where his comforting and reassuring presence is so gratefully



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welcome. . . . It is characteristic of him to go wherever he feels that he can give help and encouragement.”³

President Thomas S. Monson shared a specific example of President Smith going out of his way to show love for someone in need:

“On a cold winter morning, the street cleaning crew [in Salt Lake City] was removing large chunks of ice from the street gutters. The regular crew was assisted by temporary laborers who desperately needed the work. One such wore only a lightweight sweater and was suffering from the cold. A slender man with a well-groomed beard stopped by the crew and asked the worker, ‘You need more than that sweater on a morning like this. Where is your coat?’ The man replied that he had no coat to wear. The visitor then removed his own overcoat, handed it to the man and said, ‘This coat is yours. It is heavy wool and will keep you warm. I just work across the street.’ The street was South Temple. The good Samaritan who walked into the Church Administration Building to his daily work and without his coat was President George Albert Smith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His selfless act of generosity revealed his tender heart. Surely he was his brother’s keeper.”⁴
[See suggestion 1 on page 18.]

Teachings of George Albert Smith

All people are our brothers and sisters, children of our Heavenly Father.

We look upon all men as our brothers, all women as our sisters; we look upon the face of every human being that is in the world as a child of our Father, and believe that as each is in the image of the Father, so also each possesses a spark of divinity that if developed will prepare us to return to His presence. . . .

That is our understanding of the purpose of our existence in the world, and explains our interest in our fellowmen. Many have supposed that we were exclusive in our lives, and some have thought that we were clannish. The fact is, we look upon every child that is born into the world, as a son or daughter of God, as our brother or our sister, and we feel that our happiness will not be complete

in the kingdom of heaven unless we enjoy the companionship of our families and those of our friends and associates with whom we have become acquainted and in whose interest we give so much of our time on earth.⁵

As I think of my regard and my affection for my Father's family, the human family, I remember something my earthly father said, and I think probably I inherited that in part from him. He said, "I have never seen a child of God so deep in the gutter that I have not had the impulse to stoop down and lift him up and put him on his feet and start him again." I would like to say I have never seen one of my Father's children in my life that I have not realized he was my brother and that God loves every one of his children.⁶

What a happy world it would be if men everywhere recognized their fellowmen as brothers and sisters, and then followed that up by loving their neighbors as themselves.⁷ [See suggestion 2 on page 18.]

**The gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us
to love all of God's children.**

The gospel teaches us to have charity for all and to love our fellows. The Savior said:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, this is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." [Matthew 22:37–40.]

Brethren and sisters, if the gospel of Jesus Christ, as delivered to you, has not planted that feeling of love in your hearts for your fellow men, then I want to say that you have not enjoyed the full fruition of that wonderful gift that came to earth when this Church was organized.⁸ [See suggestion 3 on page 19.]

Our ministry is one of love. Our service is one which enriches our lives. . . . If we are living as God intends that we should live,



“Let us evidence by our conduct . . . that we do keep that great commandment . . . , ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.’”

if we are ministering as he desires that we should minister, every day of our lives is enriched by the influence of his Spirit, our love of our fellowmen increases and our souls are enlarged until we feel that we could take into our arms all of God’s children, with a desire to bless them and bring them to an understanding of the truth.⁹

As members of the Church of Christ, we should keep His commandments and love one another. Then our love should pass beyond the border lines of the Church with which we are identified, and reach out after the children of men.¹⁰

Let us evidence by our conduct, by our gentleness, by our love, by our faith, that we do keep that great commandment that the Savior said was like unto the first great commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”¹¹

We exercise charity by reaching out to those who need help and encouragement.

The measurement of the result of what love and charity may bring into the world is impossible. Opportunity is offered in every branch and ward and mission field to go about radiating sunshine, developing happiness and lifting up those who are discouraged, and bringing joy and comfort to those who are in distress.¹²

The Lord says this:

“See that ye love one another; cease to be covetous; learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires. . . .

“And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace.” [D&C 88:123, 125.] . . .

. . . Are you following his advice with reference to charity? I want to say that at this particular period of our lives we need to exercise charity, not only in imparting of our substance to those who are in need, but we need to have charity for the weaknesses and failures and mistakes of our Father’s children.¹³

If we find a man or a woman who has not succeeded in life, one who is weakening in his faith, let us not turn our backs upon him; let us make it a point to visit him, and go to him in kindness and love, and encourage him to turn from the error of his way. The opportunity to do individual work among us as a people is present everywhere; and there are few men and few women in this Church who could not, if they would, reach out a little farther from the circle with which they are identified, and say a kind word, or teach the truth to some of our Father’s children. . . . This is our Father’s work. It is the most important thing that we will be identified with in this life.¹⁴

I have only good will in my heart for mankind. I haven’t any animosity in my heart toward any living human being. I know some that I wish would behave themselves a little better than they do, but that is their loss, not mine. If I can get my arm around them and help them back on the highway of happiness by teaching them the gospel of Jesus Christ, my happiness will be increased thereby. . . .



“Go about radiating sunshine, developing happiness and lifting up those who are discouraged, and bringing joy and comfort to those who are in distress.”

You cannot drive people to do things which are right, but you can love them into doing them, if your example is of such a character that they can see you mean what you say.¹⁵ [See suggestion 4 on page 19.]

True happiness comes from loving and serving others.

Do not forget no matter how much you may give in money, no matter how you may desire the things of this world to make yourselves happy, your happiness will be in proportion to your charity and to your kindness and to your love of those with whom you associate here on earth. Our Heavenly Father has said in very plain terms that he who says he loves God and does not love his brother is not truthful [see 1 John 4:20].¹⁶

It isn't only what we receive that makes us happy; it is what we give, and the more we give of that which is uplifting and enriching

to our Father's children, the more we have to give. It grows like a great fountain of life and bubbles up to eternal happiness.¹⁷

When our life here is ended and we return home, we will find credited to us there every good act we have performed, every kindness we have done, every effort we have put forth to benefit our fellows. . . .

. . . Let us evidence our appreciation of what the Lord has given us by serving Him, and we are serving Him when we do good to His children. Freely we have received, now freely give [see Matthew 10:8]. With hearts warmed with love and kindness for our fellow men, let us press steadily on until the final summons shall come, and we shall meet our record. Then, if we have improved our talents, if we have been honest, true, chaste, benevolent, and charitable, and have sought to uplift every soul with whom we have associated, if we have lived up to the light we have received, and disseminated that light whenever opportunity has presented, how happy we will be and how our hearts will swell with gratitude when we receive from the Maker of heaven and earth that welcome plaudit: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." [Matthew 25:21.]¹⁸ [See suggestion 5 on page 19.]

Suggestions for Study and Teaching

Consider these ideas as you study the chapter or as you prepare to teach. For additional help, see pages v–vii.

1. Consider ways you can demonstrate love President Smith as did (see pages 11–13). For example, how can we demonstrate love in fulfilling our home and visiting teaching assignments?
2. As you study the first section of teachings (pages 13–14), think about how applying these teachings might improve your relationship with your neighbors, co-workers, family members, and others.

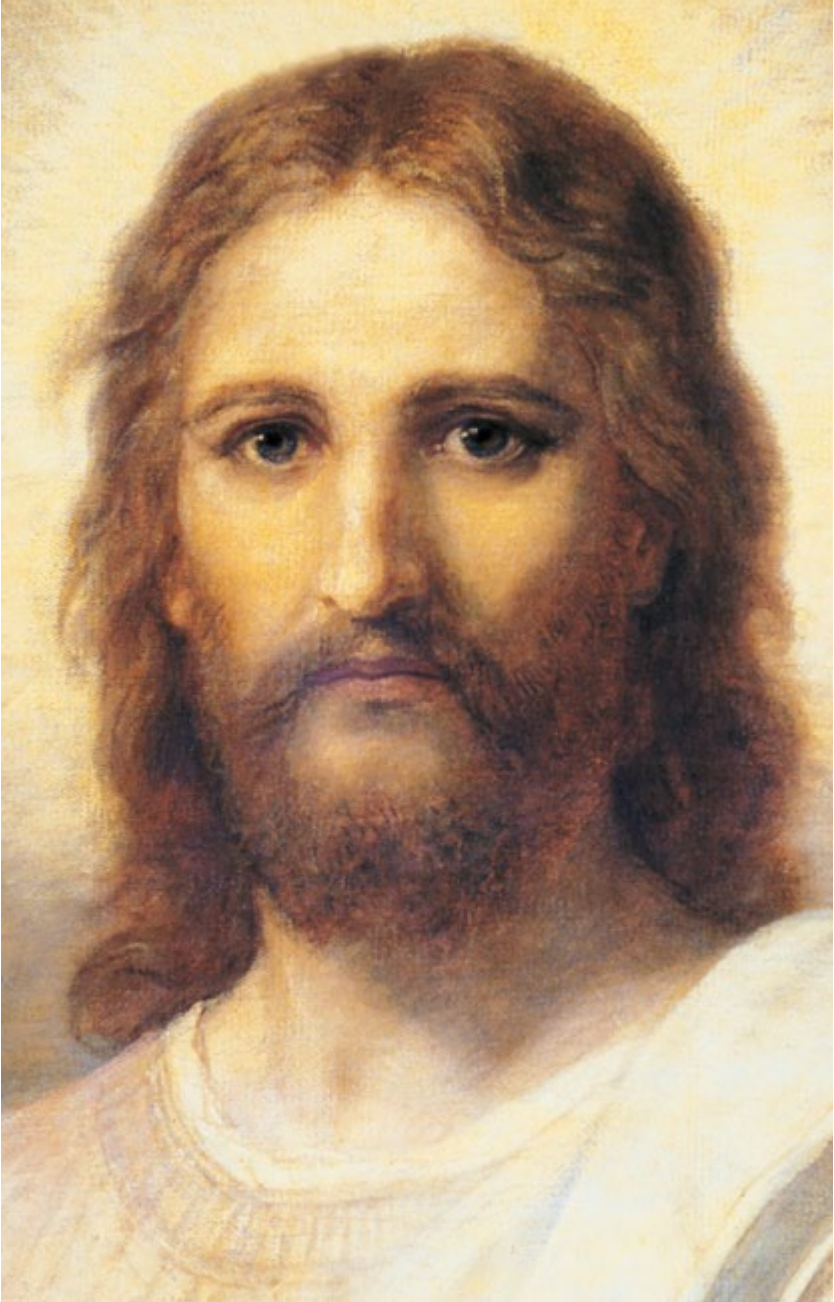
3. Read the last full paragraph on page 14. What are some teachings or stories in the scriptures that inspire you to love and serve others?
4. Study the section that begins on page 16, particularly the last two paragraphs. Think of someone who may be outside “the circle with which [you] are identified.” What is something specific you can do to reach out to such a person?
5. Ponder President Smith’s teachings on pages 17–18. What experiences have you had that have taught you that true happiness comes from making others happy?

Related Scriptures: Matthew 5:43–44; 25:34–40; Luke 10:25–37; John 13:34–35; 1 John 4:7–8; 1 Nephi 11:16–25; Moroni 7:44–48

Teaching help: “Quite a bit of teaching that is done in the Church is done so rigidly, it’s lecture. We don’t respond to lectures too well in classrooms. We do in sacrament meeting and at conferences, but teaching can be two-way so that you can ask questions. You can sponsor questions easily in a class” (Boyd K. Packer, “Principles of Teaching and Learning,” *Ensign*, June 2007, 87).

Notes

1. J. Reuben Clark Jr., “No Man Had Greater Love for Humanity Than He,” *Deseret News*, Apr. 11, 1951, Church section, 10, 12.
2. “After Eighty Years,” *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1950, 263.
3. Richard L. Evans, “Anniversary,” *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1946, 224.
4. In Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 62; or *Ensign*, May 1990, 47.
5. “Mormon View of Life’s Mission,” *Deseret Evening News*, June 27, 1908, Church section, 2.
6. “Pres. Smith’s Leadership Address,” *Deseret News*, Feb. 16, 1946, 6.
7. In Conference Report, Oct. 1946, 149.
8. In Conference Report, Apr. 1922, 52.
9. In Conference Report, Oct. 1929, 24.
10. In Conference Report, Apr. 1905, 62.
11. In Conference Report, Apr. 1949, 10.
12. “To the Relief Society,” *Relief Society Magazine*, Dec. 1932, 704.
13. “Saints Blessed,” *Deseret News*, Nov. 12, 1932, Church section, 5, 8.
14. In Conference Report, Apr. 1914, 12–13.
15. In Conference Report, Apr. 1946, 184–85.
16. “To the Relief Society,” 709.
17. *Sharing the Gospel with Others*, sel. Preston Nibley (1948), 214; address given Nov. 4, 1945, in Washington, D.C.
18. “Mormon View of Life’s Mission,” 2.



"I know that my Redeemer lives and gladly yield my humble efforts to establish His teachings."