

Loyalty
Good Morning,

Leviticus 19:18 “Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.”

Matthew 19:19 “Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

Matthew 22:39 “And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

Loyalty and love demand that I treat you as I would wish you to treat me; that is the second greatest commandment.

Being loyal involves many areas of ministry. It resembles the North Star as it guides countless choices and relationships among us. Although few people have any true loyalty, being loyal is not any less important or pleasing to the Lord. I, for one, seek to live a life of loyalty.

Being loyal includes having respect for that which belongs to another.

I may be driving someone else’s car, staying in someone else’s home, or enjoying someone else’s boat or vacation home. Loyalty demands that I care for those things as the owner might, and even more carefully because I was not the one who paid for them.

Being loyal includes having respect for that which has been built by another.

Recently, we preached in public schools in the Philippines. Those schools are not mine; I have not labored for years to build them. I want to lift up and honor the leaders who work there day in and day out. Also, some churches built a relationship with those schools in order for our group to be in those schools; thus, I must respect and protect those churches. Yes, I am the one preaching, but the domain is not mine. I just gain the blessing; all of this ministry belongs to someone else.

When I preach out of town, I am very careful never to say anything that could cause trouble for the preacher. I would not say anything of which he might not approve. If I do not feel comfortable preaching under those circumstances, then I do not accept the invitation. (There are many invitations like that which I will not receive.)

Being loyal includes guarding your relationship to those who are in a relationship with someone else.

Loyalty, in the area of relationships, may be the area most often violated.

The young people who were with me in the Philippines are in a relationship with their parents. I had to make sure that things on the trip were done in a way that would honor and respect the parents who labored to train the young people. I have been the recipient of many blessings due to the labors of many godly parents, and I could never be disloyal to them by allowing anything to be said or done to discredit or harm the relationship these parents have with their children. To mar the respect a child has for his parent, to try to draw a young person away from his parent’s

wishes, or to try to win his heart rather than push him closer to his parent is disloyal. How could a leader improperly touch a young person and consider himself moral or loyal? I guard how closely I sit and stand around young people (although this is difficult to do in the Philippines); I watch where they go and with whom they spend time in order to honor the wishes of the parent.

Some young people are also in a relationship with their college. Again, I must be loyal to the relationship these young people have with others. I cannot do anything or allow anything that would harm their relationships. I cannot come between the young people and those who are investing in a relationship with them. I cannot allow these young people to enter any situation that would break a college rule or discredit their college.

Allow me to illustrate:

I know several pastors who are trying to get college students to leave college and complete their college degrees online. Now, several of my church people are taking college classes online, and I am not against their doing that. I am against anyone who tries to influence someone to act against the counsel and wishes of his pastor or parents. I understand: we are frail and often view situations from our own perspectives. However, some parents have sent their young people to college for a specific reason; those young people also have a pastor who has invested decades of time in their lives and has prayed for them for decades. Parents and pastors like this deserve some respect and loyalty. The person who attempts to get a young person to leave his pastor's and parents' plan is disloyal and crooked.

Another illustration of loyalty:

Some years ago, I visited the home of a convert who also had a friend visiting him. (This friend attended another church.) The friend asked me a doctrinal question, and I suggested he go to his own pastor for the answer. I had not wept over that man; I had not invested years of time in that man and his family; certainly, I had no right to cause doctrinal conflict between this man and his pastor.

I have had people who were members of another church offer money to our church. I asked them to go to their pastor and ask him if he might have need of those funds (rather than giving them to Faith Baptist). While doing that, I have also had pastors in other cities solicit our members for financial support of their ministry. In my opinion, that method is unethical, but their lack of ethics does not release me from my determination to be loyal — even to those who are not loyal to me. For a missionary or national pastor to go to the flock of a church and seek to pull financial support from its members in order to place support in a mission church seems totally wrong to me; but I am not responsible for the actions of others, just my own. I will try diligently to be loyal.

Loyalty involves a great deal more than we often realize. May it be our desire to live loyally in every relationship.

Pastor Goddard