



LESSON 11

November 15, 2020

Loving Others

When a small African American church moved into a storefront in a predominantly white suburban neighborhood, a handful of white neighbors gathered in front of the church, spewing out hate and carrying signs with hateful rhetoric. The young black pastor and his family were inside the building cleaning. They came out and stood at the entrance of the building but did not engage or respond to the white protesters, so the situation did not escalate. When news reporters came on the scene and began airing live, posts flooded social media about the incident.

Another group of white people, numbering about 500, began gathering across the street and held a rally. These white supporters were from Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, and Jewish congregations, parishes, and synagogues. Using a megaphone, the Catholic priest said, “Our Father wants us to love others, and our love must visibly, freely, and clearly flow from our hearts to others. As Christians, we should first love each other. If not, how can we convince an unbelieving world that we love them and how can we convince an unbelieving world to follow Christ?”

The rabbi pleaded with the white protestors to embrace the divine command to love one another. Quoting Nelson Mandela, he said, “People must learn to hate; and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love.” Instead of hatred, he encouraged the protestors to show love through their deeds for one another.

The Episcopal priest concluded by saying to the protestors that if they do not have love in their heart for others, then God may not be residing in their heart.

The black pastor and his family, still standing outside the building, watched as the protestors lowered their signs and apologized. The black church has since joined with congregations in the area, and together they are working to meet the needs of others as well one another.

Discussion Questions:

1. In what ways does your life show evidence of a life of love?
2. Share ways we can grow in our faith and in our love for others.
3. Discuss how showing love to others can be a beacon of light that can lead others to Jesus.