



**Sermon Series: "C" Series**

*Part Three: Changed To Belong*

*Mark 12:31 Love your neighbor as yourself*

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**Introduction:** In March of 2004 I officiated John Stanley's (74) funeral service. My opening statement, "John Stanley couldn't fix anything, he didn't build anything—He had only learned to work the microwave in the last couple years—but John Stanley had a gift. He knew how to build relationships with people. He didn't have acquaintances—he had friends. He knew their family members and he knew what they were going through. If John didn't like you it was because you were an unlikable person and could not be liked. Marguerite Johns wife said, 'You know I think God put John and me together so he could visit and I could work. I'd be working around the house getting dinner ready and John would be out playing with the kids or visiting with the neighbors. *Author Unknown:* To have a good friend is one of the highest delights of life; to be a good friend is one of the noblest and most difficult undertakings.

- #1. Changed to Belong** (*John 13:35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. 1 John 4:47-8 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for God is love).*)
- A. Foursquare Church Creed:** *The Church is more than a building and more than church meetings. Sunday [and midweek] services comprise only a small part of church life. We don't merely attend church; we are the Church. Church is our daily*

*relationship with Jesus and other believers. We have to be a church in the world without walls. We are the Body of Christ twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week.*

1. **Encourage One Another** (*Hebrews 10:24-25 Amplified* *Let us consider [thoughtfully] how we may encourage one another to love and to do good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking our meeting together [as believers for worship and instruction], as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more [faithfully] as you see the day [of Christ's return] approaching*)
  - a. *Charles Dickens*: No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of others.
  - b. *John Holmes*: There is no better exercise for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up. *Booker T. Washington*: Those are the happiest are those who do the most for others. [Jesus and the Woman at the Well—Lady caught in Adultery]
  - c. *Author Unknown*: You may only be one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person. [Frankie Dees Story]
  - d. **Philippians 2:2-4** Do nothing out of selfish ambition and vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.
  - e. **Colossians 3:14-17** Above everything else, **clothe yourselves with love**, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body **you are called to live in peace**. And always be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in **word or deed**, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
  - f. *Pastor Dan*: Your calling is to take away the hurt of others. A little kindness, a little love, a little care and little **taking an interest in others** is as powerful as a great sermon, it is a move of God that will never fade, it will make an eternal difference in others.
  - g. *Jessy and Bryan Matteo*: Even the smallest act of caring for another person is like a drop of water -it will make ripples throughout the entire pond.
  - h. **Hebrews 3:13 Amplified** Continually encourage one another every day, as long as [there is a day and there is an opportunity], so that none of you will be hardened [into settled rebellion] by the deceitfulness of sin [its cleverness, delusive glamour, and sophistication].
  
2. **Be Kind to Each Other** (*Henry James*: *Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind. **1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It is not irritable and it keeps no record of being wronged. <sup>6</sup> Love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup> it bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.***)
  - a. *George Washington Carver*: How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and

tolerant of the weak and the strong. Because someday in life you will have been all of these. [David, Norma McGee, Rachel and Joy story]

- b. **Ephesians 4:32** **Be kind to one another**, tenderhearted, **forgiving** one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.
- c. *Source Unknown*: When you are good to others, you are best to yourself.
- d. **Matthew 7:12** Do unto others what you would have others do to you.
- e. *Seneca*: Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for a kindness.
- f. *Source Unknown*: If you don't want to be forgotten, write your name in kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of others.

*Closing Scriptures and comments:* **Romans 12:3-5, 9-8, 21 Amplified** ... God has apportioned to each a degree of faith [and a purpose designed for service]. <sup>4</sup>For just as in one [physical] body we have many parts, and these parts do not all have the same function *or* special use, <sup>5</sup>so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually [we are] parts one of another [**mutually dependent on each other**]. <sup>9</sup>Love is to be sincere *and* active [the real thing—without guile and hypocrisy]. Hate what is evil [detest all ungodliness, do not tolerate wickedness]; hold on tightly to what is good. <sup>10</sup>**Be devoted to one another** with [authentic] brotherly affection [as members of one family], give preference to one another in honor; <sup>11</sup>never lagging behind in diligence; aglow in the Spirit, *enthusiastically* serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup>*constantly* rejoicing in hope [because of our confidence in Christ], steadfast *and* patient in distress, devoted to prayer [continually seeking wisdom, guidance, and strength], <sup>13</sup>contributing to the needs of God's people, pursuing [the practice of] hospitality. <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you [who cause you harm or hardship]; bless and do not curse [them]. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice [sharing others' joy], and weep with those who weep [sharing others' grief]. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty [conceited, self-important, exclusive], but associate with humble people [those with a realistic self-view]. Do not overestimate yourself. <sup>17</sup>Never repay anyone evil for evil. Take thought for what is right *and* gracious *and* proper in the sight of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for God's wrath [and His judicial righteousness] ....<sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.