

Loving God and Others

Read the following statement by President Dallin H. Oaks. Then discuss the questions that follow:



When Jesus was asked which was the great commandment, He gave two. *First* was to love God, which we show by keeping His commandments. *Second* was to love our neighbor. We must do both, and that is not easy. Many of us have a tendency to give less attention to loving our neighbor and to over-emphasize keeping the law (commandments). ...

The need to combine and apply both law and love, with inspired timing, is ever present. Elder Christofferson has reminded us that “putting the first commandment first does not diminish or limit our ability to keep the second commandment. To the contrary, it amplifies and strengthens it. ... Our love of God elevates our ability to love others more fully and perfectly because we in essence partner with God in the care of His children” (“The First Commandment First” [Brigham Young University devotional, Mar. 22, 2022], 2, speeches.byu.edu). ...

... I have previously referred to our “continually [trying] to *balance* the dual commandments of love and law,” but I now believe that goal to be better expressed as trying to *live both of these commandments in a more complete way*. [For example, anyone] who does not treat individuals who face gender identity challenges with love and dignity is not aligned with the teachings of the first and second great commandments. Thus, on the subject of God’s law, we need to remember that God has revealed again and again that He created male and female. And on the subject of our duty to love our neighbor, we need to remember that God has commanded us to love even those who do not keep all of the commandments. ...

I urge you to apply both the law of the gospel and the love and mercy of our Savior and Redeemer, who will help and guide you if you patiently walk in His paths. (in “Stand for Truth” [worldwide devotional for young adults, May 21, 2023], Gospel Library)

- What important truths are in this statement by President Oaks?
- How did Jesus Christ exemplify applying both law and love during His mortal ministry?
- How can you apply both law and love to a challenging situation?

Write a scenario in which a person might struggle loving both God and their neighbor. Then discuss the following questions:

- What do you find challenging about this scenario?
- How could someone show their love for God and their neighbor in this scenario?