A WEEKLY WORD   September 10th, 2023

By Lois Drover

Exodus 12.1-14; Psalm 149, Romans 13.8+14; Matthew 18.15-20

Romans 13:10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

First question I have is "Do I have to love MY neighbour?"   I live in a condominium community where loving your neighbour is sometimes very hard. That is if I take the word "neighbour" literally. In this context, our neighbour is everyone. Now, if it is hard to love my immediate neighbour, how hard is it to love everyone?

We need to remember that our focus at all times is to be on Jesus and try to be as much like him as we can be in our mortality. Jesus loves that neighbour that we are having trouble with, therefore, we are to look for the good in that person and try to emulate Jesus by being loving and forgiving.

I recently watched an old episode of the Golden Girls where they were having trouble with a very nasty lady in their neighbourhood. It came to a head when Rose got mad and told the woman to drop dead, and the woman did!! Then they felt so bad they thought it a good to go to the funeral for this lady, only to discover that she had no friends or relatives. Even though they didn't like the woman, Sophia said everyone deserves a funeral, and that they should pool their resources and give her a funeral, which they did. Even though they didn't like her, they did the right thing.

Sometimes, we don't like someone or they do something to offend us and we "wipe our hands" of that person. Think about the times we have done something to hurt Jesus. Does he wipe his hands of us? NO, he loves us through all the ups and downs. If we are to be like Jesus, we need to keep our eyes on him and remember that we are no better than that neighbour who is also loved by the one who loves us.

"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 neighbour as thyself" (**Matthew 22:37–39**).