

# Grace Guide



**FEBRUARY 16-22**

## **“Between Stranger and Neighbor”**

**MONDAY**  
**2/16**

**LEVITICUS 19:9-18**

In this passage, God weaves together instructions about worship and everyday life, showing that loving God and loving neighbor cannot be separated. The command to leave portions of the harvest for the poor and the stranger reveals a vision of community where generosity and justice are built into daily living. God’s people are called not just to avoid wrongdoing but to actively seek the well-being of others. The climax of the passage, “you shall love your neighbor as yourself, ” reminds us that neighbor-love is not abstract or sentimental, it is practical, costly, and rooted in the character of God. In Lent, we are invited to notice the spaces “in between” stranger and neighbor and ask how our ordinary choices might reflect the generous heart of God.

1. Where in your daily routines do you have opportunities to show practical care for someone who might otherwise be overlooked?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Is there anyone in your life you struggle to see as a neighbor rather than a stranger? Why?

**TUESDAY**  
2/17

## **ISAIAH 58:6-12**

Through the prophet Isaiah, God confronts a form of faith that stays in worship services but never reaches the streets. True fasting, God says, is found in challenging injustice, feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, and caring for those in need. This passage shifts our focus from private spirituality to public compassion. When we move toward those who are hurting, God promises that light will break forth and healing will come, not only for them, but for the Jesus follower as well. The distance between stranger and neighbor narrows when we step into another person's struggle with mercy. Lent invites us to examine whether our faith is only spoken or truly lived, trusting that when we embody God's compassion, we participate in the restoration God is already bringing into the world.

1. How might God be inviting you to practice a "fast" that leads to greater compassion for others this season?
2. Where have you seen needs around you that were easy to ignore but difficult to forget once you noticed them?

**WEDNESDAY**  
2/18

## **MARK 12:31-44**

Jesus declares, referring back to Leviticus 19, that loving your neighbor as yourself stands alongside loving God as the greatest commandment. Immediately afterward, he lifts up a poor widow who gives two small coins, an offering easily overlooked by others but deeply seen by God because it is an offering made with a sacrificial heart. In placing these moments together, the Gospel reveals that neighbor-love and devotion to God are measured not by status or abundance, but by the sincerity of the heart. The widow's quiet act shows a life oriented toward trust and generosity even in scarcity. Living our life of faith in the space between stranger and neighbor often calls us to see with new eyes: to notice quiet faithfulness, hidden needs, and opportunities to honor others. As we follow Jesus through Lent, we must remember that love of God becomes visible through humble, everyday acts of care.

1. Where have you seen small, easily overlooked acts of generosity that reflect a deep trust and faith in God?
2. How does your love for God shape the way you love other people?

**THURSDAY**  
**2/19**

## **ROMANS 12:9-21**

Paul paints a vivid picture of what genuine love looks like in community. It is not polite or distant, but sincere, patient, generous, and even willing to bless those who cause harm. These instructions move us beyond the comfort of loving those who are easy to love and into the challenging space between stranger and neighbor. When we choose empathy over judgment and hospitality over fear, we reflect the transforming mercy God has shown us in Christ. This kind of love is not passive; it actively seeks peace, resists revenge, and overcomes evil with good. During Lent, we are invited to examine our hearts and practices, asking where God might be calling us to embody a love that bridges divides and reveals his grace in everyday relationships.

1. Which of Paul's descriptions of love challenges you most right now, and why?
2. How might choosing blessing instead of resentment change one strained relationship in your life?

**FRIDAY**  
**2/20**

## **PSALM 126**

Psalm 112 offers a portrait of a life shaped by reverence for God and expressed through generosity toward others. The righteous person described here is gracious, compassionate, and willing to share freely with those in need. Their stability and courage flow from trust in God rather than fear of circumstances. This psalm reminds us that our relationship with God naturally spills outward into the way we treat people around us. When our hearts are secure in God's love, we are freed to live openly, seeing others not as strangers to avoid but as neighbors to embrace. Lent is a season to root ourselves again in trust, allowing God to form in us a steady compassion that reflects his own enduring mercy.

1. What does it look like to be "steadfast of heart" in your relationships with others?
2. How does your reverence for God impact every relationship of your life?

**SATURDAY/  
SUNDAY  
2/21-22**

## **LUKE 10:25-37**

In this parable which we call the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus shifts the central question from “Who is my neighbor?” to “How can I be a neighbor?” The story unfolds along a dangerous road where religious duty and compassionate action collide. While others pass by, the Samaritan who is an outsider and, to many, an enemy chooses mercy, crossing boundaries of ethnicity, religion, and risk to care for the wounded man. In doing so, he reveals that neighborliness is defined not by proximity or similarity but by compassion in action. We often live in the space between stranger and neighbor, unsure how to respond to the needs we encounter. Yet Jesus calls us to move toward others with courage and care, reflecting the boundless mercy God has shown us. This Lenten journey invites us to notice who lies along our road and to respond with love that draws us closer together.

1. When have you felt like the wounded traveler, and who showed you mercy in that time? Have you ever been any of the other characters of this story?
  
2. What fears or assumptions or prejudices might sometimes keep you from moving toward someone in need?

### **VERSE OF THE WEEK**

**“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”**

**The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”  
Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”**

**(Luke 10:36-37)**