



One Pastor's Thought

Not long ago I saw someone wearing a t-shirt that read “What part of “Thou Shalt Not” do you not understand?” I thought about that for a while. I remembered a delightful old man in my first church who was in his eighties and still walked to church (refusing rides except when it was raining). The first time I visited him in his home he gave me a dozen fresh eggs and we talked about faith. We said a prayer together and as I began to leave, he caught my arm and pointed to a copy of the Ten Commandments framed on his wall. It was an inexpensive frame for a document obviously so valuable to him. The picture was a bit water damaged and had obviously been on his wall for a very long time. It crossed my mind that it might be an original copy (except the original was carved into stone tablets.) He pointed to the picture over and over and said, “Pastor, it’s good enough for me.” I was young and he was my elder that I had been taught to respect. But I really wanted to reply to him, “Pop, if the Ten Commandments is good enough, why did Jesus have to die on the cross?”

Christians value the Old Testament, but it clearly was not good enough for our God. God so loved the world that he sent his only Son. Jesus came with a radical new message that love is more important than mere obedience to commandments etched in stone. Jesus taught us that it’s not enough to love your neighbors. Jesus challenged us to love our enemies.

I’m thinking of a new message for my t-shirt. What part of “Love your neighbor” do you not understand?