



WHERE'S YOUR CART? (AND WHY IT MATTERS)

WHERE'S YOUR CART?



Two for the price of one:

Matthew 22:34-40 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

1 John 4:20-21

If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

James 2:14-17

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?

Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

The Faith-Love Connection

- Faith in God alters every facet of our lives
- Correct understanding of God's love for us opens our eyes to the preciousness of others
- Sincere faith leads to "Others Orientation," expressed through loving action

A definition: An acute awareness of other people and seeking opportunities to affect their lives for good through intentional, distinctive, godly actions.

- Others = seen and unseen, known and anonymous
- Actions = large and small

Matthew 25:31-46

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Matthew 25:31-40 (continued)

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

WHERE'S YOUR CART?



According to Jesus in Matthew 25, the small, godly acts of service that you do really do matter.

What does any of this have to do with shopping carts?

What I see in those shopping cart photos:

- Desire to be served, rather than to serve
- Elevating own needs above the needs of others
- Uncaring about those who come after
- Opportunity for Christians to show the distinctiveness that comes from their faith in the one true God.

WHERE'S YOUR CART?



Shopping carts – a metaphor for the hundreds of little opportunities to train ourselves to think of others (and complete the greatest command):

Here at Meadowlark

Out there in the world....

Even in the virtual world...

What happens when we begin practicing small acts of love and sacrifice for neighbors that we don't know, and may not even meet?

- We exhibit distinctiveness in the world
- The burdens of "the least of these" are reduced
- We create teachable moments with our kids
- We train ourselves to spend less time thinking about ourselves
- We condition ourselves for larger acts of service and sacrifice
- We validate our profession of faith in God (the first greatest command) by our actions for others (the second greatest command)

WHERE'S YOUR CART?



MEADOWLARK
CHURCH OF CHRIST



Is this a lesson about returning your shopping cart?

Phil 2:3-4

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or 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.

Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.