



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

⁵ *Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. But all this time Jonah was sound asleep down in the hold. ⁶ So the captain went down after him. “How can you sleep at a time like this?” he shouted. “Get up and pray to your god! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives.”*

Jonah 1:5–6

In times of catastrophe and crisis, we often have incredible opportunities to love our neighbours. Through the story of Jonah we have the juxtaposition of the pagan and the prophet's response to the storm. The pagans are alert, praying and doing all they can to avert the danger they are facing, whereas the prophet is fast asleep. As we face our own “storm” of Covid-19 let us not be found fast asleep in the hold.

Let us learn how to challenge our dangerous defaults and allow our faith to be of significant public use, allowing the peace of God to flow through us as we connect this to Jesus' life and teaching on the two greatest commandments.

²⁸ *One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realised that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”*

²⁹ *Jesus replied, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. ³⁰ And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ ³¹ **The second is equally important:** ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.”*

Mark 12:28–31

Questions

1. What did you see that you've never seen before through the contrast between Jonah and the pagans?
2. What are the dangerous defaults you feel are being challenged at this time?
3. What opportunities did God highlight where you can practise loving your neighbour?