

Sixth, the Samaritan put the needy man's need before his own personal comfort or convenience. In thus doing he showed love to the wounded man.

Seventh, he identified himself before other men with this stranger and enemy who needed help. He identified with him before other travelers, before the innkeeper, and before other guests at the inn. In thus doing, he showed love to the wounded man.

Eighth, he personally took care of the wounded man until there was nothing more he could do; then he left the next morning. Thus he showed love to him.

Ninth, he not only paid for the wounded man's physical needs during the critical time; but also guaranteed material aid until the man could get back on his own feet. He thus showed love to the wounded man.

In these ways (and no doubt others) the Samaritan's love was manifested to this stranger who was in desperate need.

What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself?

In the Bible selfishness is constantly viewed as morally and spiritually wrong, whereas a proper love for one's self is commended.

In Ephesians 5:28, 29, 33, Paul states: "So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it . . . Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself"

Love for one's wife includes a sincere desire for her well-being, her welfare, her best interests. And love for one's self includes a sincere desire for one's own well-being, one's welfare, one's best interests. In this sense, love for one's self is commended, not condemned!

When one loves himself in the proper sense, he seeks for his own welfare and highest interests. If he seeks for his own best interests, he cannot accomplish this without at the same time seeking for the best interests of his neighbor. If he seeks for his own well-being at the expense or to the exclusion of another's, he does not achieve his own best interests. This assumes that a man's own highest interests are somehow wrapped together with the best interests of others.