

1. (Purpose of this lesson is to continue to discern the other related awareness and responsibilities embedded in Torah—the Law of Moses. I think it may surprise us a little to see this repeated emphasis, especially since we typically consider the OT as just sort of a Jewish thing. But as will be evidenced, God desired all along for his people to be sensitive to and reach out to others. In so doing he was saying to Israel—the others need a place too; acceptance and belonging is an intense human need; welcoming others, helping others, valuing others, accepting and loving them is simply an extension of God welcoming, helping, valuing, accepting and loving us. Who are we to deny others that? *Before we go further—let's stop to think about how the need for acceptance and belonging has been addressed in our culture; how the others and their search for acceptance has played out in our stories—Superman, Tarzan, Spiderman, X-Men, Rudolph, Elf, Harry Potter, Schindler's List, even Earnest T. Bass—all represent in one way or another—the others/the aliens—trying to find a place to fit; to feel accepted and welcome. Why does that narrative continue to drive popular culture—because it is so real—we all have felt it and all around others do as well.* So here is God—long ago in his law code—saying pay attention to others and welcome them. And we can trace this exact same emphasis into the pages of the NT—making God's call to us the same as to Israel. It is about the others! Here is what the Law teaches)
2. Love the Others—Leviticus 19:33-34
  - a. Including widows and orphans—Deuteronomy 10:18-19
  - b. Including slaves—Deuteronomy 23:15 (do not exploit or oppress them; do not send them back; welcome them and help them prosper—Hebrews were once slaves)
3. Demonstrate Justice to the Others—Exodus 22:21; 23:9; Deuteronomy 24:17; 27:19; also Ezekiel 22:29; Malachi 3:5
4. Provide for the Others—Leviticus 23:22 (leave edges and corners of fields for them to eat)
5. (This is sort of a summary text—provides an overview of how God wanted Israel to approach the others) Deuteronomy 10:18-19 (which then directly connects to and puts into a historical context this NT scripture)
6. James 1:27
7. (Which then allows me to introduce another significant biblical aspect to being sensitive to and welcoming the others) It is all About Hospitality—Hebrews 13:2-3 (as the Bible describes it—**hospitality is offering others a place to belong; specifically understood as providing shelter and safety to the other without any expectation of repayment.** Which is why Jesus would say something crazy like)
  - a. Luke 6:32-34 (because our call to serve the others & to love, welcome, do right by and provide for them is a little bit crazy, but also overwhelmingly needed and thru this biblical historical hospitality lens—this outlook is all about the others and NOT what it does for us and the church. So anticipating that and our often reluctance to buy in and unconditionally welcome and bless the others Peter said this)
  - b. “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling”—1 Peter 4:9 (When and if we can truly arrive here—we will then be heirs of the longstanding biblical mandate of welcoming, accepting, loving and offering a belonging place to others—based not on what is in it for us, but what is God's will—to share his abundant blessings to all as a light to the nations. There are a lot of folks out there right now shouting to us—It's me, it's me, it's Earnest T!)