



## Islam in America | A Special Edition from thESource for Youth Ministry

thESource exists to provide Jesus-centered resources for those at work with youth in the Lutheran congregation and beyond ...

### THE DIRECTORY

#### talk sheets

THE TRUE ROOT OF TERROR

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

RIGHTEOUS WRATH & ANGER  
MANAGEMENT

BUT IS THAT REALLY FAIR?

#### bible studies

HOLY WAR IN THE BIBLE

WHOSE LAND IS IT?

BROKEN TEETH, BLOODY BATHS,  
& BABY BASHING: IS THERE ANY  
PLACE IN THE CHURCH FOR  
IMPRECATORY PSALMS?

## Boundary Stones | by Rev. Dr. Jerry Joersz

**Core Text** Romans 13:8-10

### Core Visual/Illustrations:

In OT times, people marked property lines with a single boundary stone or pile of stones (Deut. 19:14). God assigned each neighbor his space and prohibited moving the stones to steal land. Our neighbor’s life, possessions and well-being are “sacred space” to be protected by love.

Make a “boundary stone” to remind you of God’s commandment “love your neighbor.” Using tempera paint, create a design picturing special love for a special need. Pile your stones and pray together for a list of “neighbors in need.” Remember: a “neighbor,” literally, is “one who is near or close by” (and not just spatially!).

### Major Teaching /Talking Points

#### Teaching Point # 1

Rom. 13:8-10. Christian love for our neighbor means: setting behavior boundaries that we will not cross. God’s commandments are behavior boundaries. Love fulfills God’s commands because it seeks to do nothing harmful to our neighbor (its negative purpose). Because of God’s love in Christ we are obligated to do everything for our neighbor’s well-being (positive purpose).

#### Teaching Point #2

Gal. 6:1-5. Christian love for our neighbor means: helping the neighbor caught in harmful or destructive behavior. God’s love seeks rescue, just as Christ rescued us. Love requires facing and speaking the truth, not hiding behind denial. A spirit of gentleness and humility—not harsh judgment—goes a long way to restore someone overcome by sinful temptation.

#### Teaching Point #3

James 2:8-13. Christian love for our neighbor means: looking beyond the barriers. Favoritism based on such things as appearance, ethnic background, wealth, popularity, etc. prevent us from showing kindness and mercy to one in need. Just as God’s mercy in Christ “triumphs over judgment,” so love for our neighbor leads us to put aside a judgmental heart and offer a helping hand.



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### Questions / Discussion Starters for Youth

1. What are the signs that your “neighbor” is hurting and needs a Christian friend to help? Why is it important to sense these signs early?
2. Sometimes love for our neighbor requires tough choices. What is the toughest decision you have ever had to make (that is, to show “tough love”)?
3. Surveys tell us that teenagers believe “honesty and trust are essential in personal relationships.” Yet, significant percentages of them admit to such behaviors as: lying to parents and teachers, cheating on tests, and stealing from others (including copying other people’s work). (See <http://www.josephsoninstitute.org/reportcard/>) How do such things affect others negatively, as well as harm ourselves? How about their affect on relationships?
4. Showing respect for others (1 Pet. 3:15-16; also, Rom. 13:7) and their “life space” may be one of the highest expressions of love for our neighbor. List five specific ways (or the if you feel inspired!) you can show honor to your neighbor.
5. Read Lev. 19:14. This verse is quoted 8 times in the NT! Make a contest of seeing who can find the 8 NT passages quoting this verse the quickest. What does this bare fact tell us about its importance for the Christian faith?

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