In Matthew, there are five great "discourses" (teachings) by Jesus. All of them revolve around what Jesus calls "The Reign of God."

God's desire to create a world where people's lives with one another reflect the unconditional love and mercy God has for us all.

It's about being in this relationship with one another that reflects Godly love.

Fourth Discourse
How the Church can become a manifestation of the Reign

Assumes household (small) communities are the model; God's love must be reflected there.

The reality of sin always creeps in to the human situation. We are responsible for keeping at it, not giving up on one another. Seems as though there are folks who:

- always leave light on,
- never clean the drier vent;
- leave unwashed dishes in the sink;
- seems to think they own the remote.

Or it can become more serious:

- drinking too much, (pain) pills, recreational drugs
- someone regularly unkind

All this insistence on caring, forgiving, is reinforced in both the first and second readings.

Ezekiel
"If I say to the wicked, ‘you shall surely die’, and you do not speak to warn them, they shall die, but their blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn, they shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life."

Romans
"All the commandments are summed up in this one, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’"

In Greek, there are three forms of love:
- eros (romantic), philia (of friendship) and agape (unconditional, total self-giving)

“Owe nothing to anyone except to love. That will cost you absolutely everything … and give you even more.”

"Where two or three of you are gathered in my name, I am there with them."