

Engagement Project - Tour 4 Articles

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The Engagement Project

Tour 4-Part 1: Engagement-the Royal Task

Del Tackett, a prominent Christian educator and former senior vice president at Focus on the Family, is best known for his influential small-group study series *The Truth Project*, which has reached millions worldwide with its exploration of biblical worldview principles. Building on that foundation, Tackett launched *The Engagement Project* in recent years as a follow-up initiative. This 10-tour video series, designed for small groups, invites participants on a journey to seek God's face and understand His heart, emphasizing practical application in everyday life. Structured around four major epochs—Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Engagement—the project culminates in challenging believers to live out their faith actively in the current era.

Tour 4, titled "Engagement: The Royal Task," marks a pivotal shift in the series. Here, Tackett delves into the epoch we inhabit today, focusing on the profound implications of Jesus' departure and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Drawing from the first 24 minutes of Part 1, this segment unpacks the "King's order"—a divine mandate that reorients the Christian life around love, simplicity, and neighborhood impact. Through scriptural exposition, personal anecdotes, and thought-provoking questions, Tackett dismantles overwhelming perceptions of God's commands and reveals a vision for kingdom work entrusted to ordinary believers.

The Epoch of Engagement: Jesus' Departure and the Indwelling Spirit

Tackett begins by contextualizing the Engagement epoch within the broader biblical narrative. Just as Creation was defined by God's perfect design where every human bears His image, the Fall by sin's entry and the inevitability of death, and Redemption by Christ's sacrifice offering salvation to all who believe, Engagement is marked by two transformative events: Jesus' physical ascension and the Holy Spirit's arrival to dwell within believers. This era, Tackett explains, carries eternal ramifications, shaping how Christians are to operate in the world today.

A central question drives the discussion: Why did Jesus leave? Tackett posits that His departure was not abandonment but a strategic move to empower believers through the Holy Spirit's indwelling (John 14:16-17, implied in the teaching). This shift enables intimate communion with God, equipping ordinary people for extraordinary kingdom tasks. With the foundational "crown jewel" of God's nature—His love—established in prior tours, Tackett transitions to the "King's order," urging viewers to embrace their role in this epoch.

The Overwhelming Burden of the Law – And Its Surprising Lightness

One of the session's early highlights is a vignette illustrating the weight of biblical commands. Tackett recounts a story of a boy burdened by an ever-growing backpack of rules, symbolizing how the sheer volume of laws in Scripture—coupled with the vast needs of the world—can feel crushing.

He acknowledges the reality: the Bible contains hundreds of directives, and the global scale of human suffering adds to the sense of impossibility.

Yet, Tackett pivots to a liberating truth. Quoting Matthew 11:28-30, he highlights Jesus' invitation: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest... For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Similarly, 1 John 5:3 affirms that God's commands are not burdensome for those who love Him. This raises a probing question: How can the law, with its demands, not feel like a heavy load? Tackett invites reflection on whether viewers have ever felt overwhelmed by divine expectations, setting the stage for a simplified understanding of God's will.

Summing Up the Law: The Power of Love

Tackett masterfully distills the entirety of God's law into its essence, drawing from Jesus' response to the greatest commandment in Matthew 22:36-40: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. He adds Jesus' "new command" from John 13:34: "Love one another as I have loved you." These three "meta-commands"—love God, love your neighbor, and love one another—form the core, all rooted in **agape**, the selfless, sacrificial love that reflects God's character.

What Tackett finds "stunning" is how Scripture repeatedly condenses even further, summing everything into one directive: love your neighbor. He cites three key passages:

- Galatians 5:14: "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"
- Romans 13:9-10: The commandments against adultery, murder, theft, and coveting "are summed up in this word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."
- James 2:8: "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well."

Tackett calls this the Bible's "consummate understatement," emphasizing its profound simplicity. He wonders aloud if these encapsulate the "law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2, implied). Breaking down the Greek terms, he rephrases the command: Have a steadfast, sacrificial zeal for the true good—the **shalom** (peace, wholeness)—of the one who lives near you. The word **plesion** (neighbor) literally means "the one nearby," challenging the tendency to reinterpret it as distant or abstract obligations. Why, Tackett asks, do we prefer "far away" when God's call is to those in our immediate sphere?

A Vision for Kingdom Work: Entrusting the Ordinary

As the segment builds to its climax, Tackett unveils a compelling vision: God has entrusted the primary work of His kingdom to the common, everyday Christian family. This isn't about grand missions or institutional efforts but faithful engagement in one's neighborhood. He poses a transformative "what if": Imagine if the estimated 80 million evangelical Christians in the U.S. each engaged just three neighbors with genuine **agape** love. That simple act would touch the entire population, sparking a ripple effect of transformation.

This call to engagement isn't burdensome—it's empowering. By focusing on the "one who lives near," believers fulfill the royal law, embody Christ's love, and advance the kingdom in the epoch we inhabit. Tackett's teaching leaves viewers inspired to reflect: What does loving my neighbor look like in practice? How might this shift my daily priorities?

The Engagement Project Tour 4, Part 1, serves as a rallying cry for authentic, localized faith. As Tackett guides participants through these truths, he reminds us that the King's order is not a distant decree but a personal invitation to participate in God's redemptive story—starting right next door. For those interested in diving deeper, the series is available through resources like deltackett.com, complete with study guides and small-group tools.

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The Engagement Project

Tour 4, Part 1: Engagement, the Royal Task

Del Tackett's *Engagement Project* invites believers to seek God's heart and apply faith practically in today's world. Structured around four epochs—Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Engagement—the project emphasizes active kingdom participation. Tour 4, "Engagement: The Royal Task," Part 1 (first 24 minutes), explores the current epoch, challenging Christians to embrace their divine mandate.

Tackett frames the Engagement epoch as defined by Jesus' ascension and the Holy Spirit's indwelling, events with eternal impact. He probes: Why did Jesus leave? To empower believers through the Spirit, enabling intimate kingdom work (John 14:16-17). Building on the "crown jewel" of God's love from earlier tours, Tackett unveils the "King's order"—a simplified call to action.

Addressing the overwhelming burden of biblical laws, Tackett uses a vignette of a boy with a heavy backpack to illustrate the weight of commands and global needs. Yet, he counters with Matthew 11:28-30: Jesus' yoke is easy, His burden light. Echoing 1 John 5:3, God's commands aren't burdensome for lovers of Him. The key? Distilling the law into love.

Jesus sums it in Matthew 22:36-40: Love God fully and your neighbor as yourself, plus the new command in John 13:34 to love one another as Christ loved us. These "three agapes" center on sacrificial, steadfast love seeking others' true good (*shalom*). Stunningly, Scripture condenses further to one: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Galatians 5:14; Romans 13:9-10; James 2:8). Tackett calls this the Bible's ultimate understatement, rephrasing it as zeal for the well-being of those nearby (*plesion*).

This leads to a profound vision: God entrusts kingdom work to ordinary Christian families, countering the "humanity counterfeit" of abstract love (quoting C.S. Lewis). If 80 million U.S. evangelicals engaged just three neighbors, the nation could transform. Tackett urges reflection: What does loving my neighbor look like? Are we captive to distractions, ignoring spiritual needs (2 Timothy 2:25-26; Luke 4:18-19)?

Tour 4, Part 1, ignites a call to localized engagement, making God's law liberating through *agape*. As Tackett guides, believers are commissioned for this royal task—starting next door. For more, visit deltackett.com.

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