

TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

Scriptures:

Matthew 22:37-40 “Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “*‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’* ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 28:18-20 “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

Introduction:

What is the greatest commandment? Why ask if you do not really want to know. A commandment that comes from the Lord cannot be viewed as a suggestion or even a preference. A commandment from the Lord means that we, as Christians, are bound to those words to be faithful and obedient to the full intent of what is spoken. Jesus indicates here that the greatest of all commandments is the commandment to Love God. Period. To fulfill this commandment, we will need every resource at our disposal, our heart, our soul and our mind.

Jesus didn't stop here, but indicated that the second commandment is similar to the first. Love. Love for our neighbor. Let's look at these two commandments and try to get God's perspective on the matter.

I. The First Commandment

- A. The first and greatest commandment is about love. God is love.
- B. We are to love God with our expression of worship.
 1. This worship should come out of a heart filled with intense love for God, not just a mechanical response due to external promptings.
John 4:23-24 “...*the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.* ²⁴*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*”
 2. God has a right to expect worship out of a heart full of love because of the great expression of love shown to us.
John 3:16-17 “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* ¹⁷*For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*”
- C. Heart is the Greek word “kardia” which means the thoughts and emotions.
 1. “All our thoughts” leaves no room for anything else to capture center stage.
 2. “All our emotions” makes no room for anything or anyone to gain preeminence in our lives other than the Lord.
- D. Soul is the Greek word “psuche” (psoo-khay). This is our very breath or life. It can also be the live or strength of our will.
 1. What makes life really life for us, Christ or something.
 2. Are we spending our living for God or for temporary carnal things?
 3. Our will must be sanctified to “will to serve God”
- E. Mind is the Greek word “dianoia” (dee-an'-oy-ah) and means our intellect.
 1. With all the stimulus we receive in our mind, we purpose to love God instead of that which would distract us.
 2. Satan messes with our intellect to suggest that there are times when we would be better off to love something other than God. (Money, fame, prestige, family, position, education, pleasure, etc.)

II. The second is like the first.

- A. Without moving God out of first place we put the same kind of energy into love for our neighbor.

Title: Long Walk, Much Love

The African boy listened carefully as the teacher explained why it is that Christians give presents to each other on Christmas Day. "The gift is an expression of our joy over the birth of Jesus and our friendship for each other," she said.

When Christmas Day came, the boy brought the teacher a sea shell of lustrous beauty. "Where did you ever find such a beautiful shell?" the teacher asked.

The youth told her that there was only one spot where such extraordinary shells could be found--a certain bay several miles away.

"Why--why, it's gorgeous," said the teacher. "But you shouldn't have gone all that way to get a gift for me." His eyes brightening, the boy answered, "Long walks part of gift."

- B. We are enabled to do this because the love of God flows through us to them. We are channels for the love of God. Christ is in us, our hope of glory.
- C. If we truly love God, we will love what He loves.
- D. To fulfill this commandment we must do everything we can to bring the gospel to our fellow-man.
- E. The second commandment is like the first.
1. We are to go with the message of love and hope that directs people into the Kingdom of God.
 2. Since this commandment is like the first, it demands our thoughts and emotions.
 - a. Be creative in our thinking to win the lost to Christ.
 - b. Angels rejoice over the lost coming into the kingdom. Maybe we should too.
 3. There is a challenge for us to put our very life and will into some activity that will further the cause of Christ in this world.
 4. Regardless of the stimulus in our intellect to divert our attention to other things, we must obey the commandment to love others into a greater love relationship with the Lord.

III. Every Christian is called to respond out of love for the Lord to reach out in love to those He loves.

Matthew 28:19-20

- A. Go. We must go where they are at. Place cell groups in their neighborhoods, places of business, schools, shopping malls, etc. Are you working to build your cell ministry and group in obedience to the great commandment?
- B. Make disciples. How actively are we involved in things that are dedicated to producing disciples for the Kingdom of God? Disciples cannot be made without relationships being developed.
- C. Teaching them. We must first be taught in order to be equipped to teach others. This is a ministry of each believer. (Get on an equipping track.)
Romans 5:12-14 "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. ¹⁴But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."
- D. To observe all things I have commanded you.
1. We reproduce ourselves and they in turn become lovers of God and their fellow-man.
 2. They get involved in the process of discipling others as well. Become cell-leaders and ministers of God.

Conclusion:

- A. It's time to turn from everything that diverts our love from the Lord.
- B. It's time to respond to the commandment of our Lord to love those around us.
- C. It's time to take every opportunity to invest our lives in the work of the Kingdom of God.
- D. It's time to become a disciple and make a disciple.