

Matthew 22:34-40 - The King's Love!

Scriptures:

34 But when the Pharisees heard that

He had silenced the Sadducees, they

G5392 – muzzled.

gathered together.

Notes:

He had silenced' – the word gives the sense of muzzling an animal so that it cannot open its mouth. Jesus' response to their hypocritical questions made it so that they were unable to respond.

Scriptures:

35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him* a

G3544 – “jurist
(lawyer) n. — a
legal scholar;
especially versed
in the Mosaic
Law.”

question, testing *Him*, and saying,

G3985 – tempt.

Notes:

‘lawyer’ – experts on the law of Moses. They believed that no one understood the heart, mind, and will of God as He revealed Himself in the Scriptures better than they did. Jesus, God in the flesh, is one with God. There is nothing they know that He doesn’t know, and He understands everything.

As Jesus stands there as the fulfilment of the prophecies that promised a coming Messiah, these experts in the Law and Prophets are trying to trap Him into saying something false. The so-called ‘experts’ don’t always know the truth even though they have the knowledge. This lawyer, and those who sent him, knew the truths Jesus will lay out but they missed the application.

Scriptures:

36 “Teacher, which *is* the great

G3173 – most
important.

commandment in the law?”

G1785 -

G3551 – Torah.

Notes:

This is a debate that had waged for centuries - which of the commandments was the most important? At the time of Christ, the Jewish religious leaders had identified 613 commandments. They were divided into two categories – light and heavy, or small or great. This led to confusion because people had differences of opinions on which ones were small and which others were great.

Scriptures:
Deuteronomy 6:5 - You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

37 Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD

G25 - ἀγαπάω (agapaō).

Notes:
Jesus quotes (Deuteronomy 6:5). This covers the first four of the Ten Commandments.

"If God is loved supremely, no one will violate anything He has commanded." (Ironsides, 1948) page 189

your God with all your heart, with all your soul,

G2588 -

G5590 – "soul n. — the immaterial part of a person which is the actuating cause of an individual life; the site of all the psychological faculties (such as the heart, mind, and conscience)."

When we love someone, it determines how we behave toward them. The opposite is also true. The way I behave toward someone is evidence of our love for them.

It is, at the very least, hypocritical to say you love someone and then treat them in an unloving way.

and with all your mind.'

G1271 - mind n. — that which is responsible for one's thoughts and feelings; especially the seat of the faculty of reason."

Scriptures:

38 This is the first and great commandment.

G4413 - πρῶτος (prōtos).

G3173 -

Notes:
The sense of what Jesus is saying here is to violate this law is the greatest of sins. We were created by God to be the objects of His love. It is an expression of God's love that He created us and made us capable of loving Him back. He loves us unconditionally. As God's loving creation it is our highest calling to love God. It is through the experience of God's love and reciprocating in love back to God that we find our fullest sense of being and purpose. Sadly, because we are fallen beings, we must be commanded to love God.

Scriptures:

Leviticus 19:18 - You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

John 13:34-35 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

1 John 4:20-21 - If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

39 And *the* second *is* like it: *You shall love*

G3664 - similar, like, resembling, i.e., pertaining to being of a same or similar nature or quality.

G25 -

your neighbor as yourself.'

G4139 -

Notes:

'second is like it' – This puts loving others on the same level as loving God.

Jesus quotes from (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus also spoke of this (John 13:34-35). This covers the last six of the Ten Commandments.

The greatest evidence we can give the world of the reality of God and salvation in Christ is our love for other people, especially for other believers. It is a contradiction to say that you love God and then not love someone made in the image of God (1 John 4:20-21).

Scriptures:

1 John 4:16 - And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Romans 5:5 - Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

2 Peter 1:2-4 - Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

40 On these two commandments hang all the

G2910 – “to depend utterly ⇔ hang v. — to completely depend upon; conceived of as being suspended or hanging on something for physical support.”

Law and the Prophets.”

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Notes:

The Bible teaches us that the very nature of God is love (1 John 4:16). As creations of God’s love we are to abide in, or live in, God’s love.

‘hang’ – has the sense of being utterly dependent upon. An illustration of this might be a tree. Loving God is the trunk and roots – loving others is the branches – the Law and the Prophets are the leaves. You cannot obey the commandments of God unless you are loving God with your whole being and loving others as yourself.

Legalistic religion focuses on the keeping of the Law as an expression of loving God. Others focus on loving themselves as a pathway to loving God. Jesus is saying that putting our love for God at the highest place, followed closely by loving others, only then are we able to obey the rest of God’s commands in a righteous way.

This also means that all God’s commands are an expression of God’s love and instructive for loving others. That means that violating God’s laws is contrary to love. For example, people who want to be in a same-sex relationship may feel love for each other, but because it violates God’s laws, it is not loving God or others, not even the person they say they love. You cannot truly love and break God’s commands at the same time.

There are two primary elements in salvation. First there is atonement or propitiation. The penalty for our sins was dealt with when we believed in the sacrificial death of Christ on our behalf. Second, there is regeneration – we are made into new creations – capable of loving God and others (2 Peter 1:2-4). The divine nature of God is love.

The essence of true Christian faith and religion is serving God by serving others with a motivation of love for God and others.

Prior to coming to Christ, we were incapable of loving God or others. We may have had feelings of love, and we may have strived to act in love but only by loving God first are we imbued with the ability to truly love others as we should (Romans 5:5).