

“Which Is the Great Commandment of the Law?”

Matthew 22:34-40

Introduction:

- A. A great question: “Teacher, which is the great commandment of the law?”
 - 1. It is same as “Which is the first commandment of all?” (Mk. 12:28).
 - 2. It was given as a test (vs. 34-36) - Jesus passed the test (Mk. 12:32,33)
 - 3. It reflects the Pharisee practice of assigning relative importance to commands. (Matt. 23:16-23).
- B. A great answer: “You shall love ...” (vs. 37,39).
 - 1. It was great or first, not because more important than all others, but because it included all others. (v.40).
 - 2. It put an end to such foolish testing. (v.46).

Discussion:

I. “The First and Great Commandment” (Vs. 37,38).

- A. Love that demands total commitment - all.
 - 1. To God's kingdom. (Matt. 6:33).
 - 2. To God's word. (Matt. 4:4; cf. Col 3:17).
 - 3. To God's pleasure. (1 Thess. 4:1-8).
- B. Love that demands total sacrifice. (Luke 14:25-33).
- C. Love that demands total obedience.
 - 1. Obedience tied to original command. (Deut. 6:5-9,17).
 - 2. Obedience that is not a burden. (1 John 5:3).

II. “The Second..Like it” (V. 39).

- A. Love that demands self-examination.
 - 1. What we you really think of ourselves?
 - 2. How much do we really love ourselves? How much self-respect?
- B. Love that demands honesty with ourselves.
 - 1. Would we talk about ourselves the way we do our neighbor? Be honest.
 - 2. Are we as charitable and forgiving with neighbors as ourselves? Be honest! (cf. Rom. 2:1).
 - 3. Would we be as insensitive to own feelings as we are of others'?
- C. Love that means an active good will toward your neighbor.
 - 1. It is doing anything that leads to his edification. (Rom. 15:1-3).
 - 2. It is setting a good example for him to follow.
 - 3. It is acting with consideration for another's weakness. (Rom. 14:13-15).
 - 4. It is rebuke and discipline when needed.
 - a. Original command preceded by command to rebuke. (Lev. 19:17,18).
 - b. Discipline is proof of love. (Heb. 12:6).
 - c. One cannot have good will toward one without using every right means to recover him from sin.

Conclusion:

- A. Someone has said that “love is the badge of Christianity”.
 - 1. It is indeed the highest form of love.
 - 2. It love with responsibility.
- B. Some have tried to make love more important than other commands.
 - 1. Many Protestant Parents said, “It does not matter what you believe or do in religion as long as you love God.
 - 2. Many protestant children say: “It does not matter what you do morally as long as there is love.
- C. Do you love God? Really? Enough to obey him?