



SERMON NOTES

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Title: The Greatest Commandments

1. Mark 12:28-34, "Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?" Jesus answered him, "*The first of all the commandments is: 'HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE. AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'* This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: '*YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.*' There is no other commandment greater than these." So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "*You are not far from the kingdom of God.*" But after that no one dared question Him."
- a. Mark introduces passage by referring to the doctrine of the unity of God taken from Dt. 6:4 "Hear, O Israel! the Lord your God is one." All true obedience depends on the correct knowledge of God. No one can keep His commandments that are not acquainted with His nature, His perfections, and His right to command.
 - i. Dt. 6:3-7, "Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you – 'a land flowing with milk and honey.' "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."
 - ii. Mt. 8:5-10, "Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." And Jesus said to him, "*I will come and heal him.*" The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "*Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!*"
- b. The First Commandment
 - i. Mark 12:28-30 (paraphrase by The Message), "One of the religion scholars came up. Hearing the lively exchanges of question and answer and seeing how sharp Jesus was in his answers,

he put in his question: "Which is most important of all the commandments?" Jesus said, "*The first in importance is, 'Listen, Israel: The Lord your God is one; so love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy.'*"

- ii. "*You shall love the Lord your God with all you heart...*" The meaning of this is, you shall love Him with all your faculties or powers. You shall love him supremely, more than all other beings and things, and with all the passion and zeal possible. To love Him with all the heart is to fix the affections supremely on Him, more strongly than on anything else, and to be willing to give up all that we hold dear at His command,
- iii. "*With all your soul...*" Or, with all your "life." This means, to be willing to give up the life to Him, and to devote it all to his service; to live to Him, and to be willing to die at His command,
- iv. "*With all your mind...*" To submit the "intellect" to His will. To love His law and gospel more than we do the decisions of our own minds. To be willing to submit all our faculties to His teaching and guidance, and to devote to Him all our intellectual attainments and all the results of our intellectual efforts.
- v. "*With all your strength...*" (Mark). With all the faculties of soul and body. To labor and toil for His glory, and to make that the great object of all our efforts.
- c. The Second Commandment
 - i. Mark 12:31 (paraphrase by The Message), "*And here is the second: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.'*"
 - ii. It resembles the first in importance, dignity, purity, and usefulness. This had not been asked by the scribe, but Jesus took occasion to acquaint him with the substance of the whole law. Mark adds, "there is none other commandment greater than these." None respecting circumcision or sacrifice is greater. They are the fountain of all.
 - 1. Lev. 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.*"
 - 2. Jn. 17:20-23, "*I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*"
 - iii. Jn. 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. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*"
- 2. "*There is no other commandment greater than these.*"
 - a. Rom. 13:9, "*For the commandments, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,' 'YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,' 'YOU SHALL NOT STEAL,' 'YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,' 'YOU SHALL NOT COVET,' and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'*"

3. Mark 12:32-34 (paraphrase by The Message), *"The religion scholar said, "A wonderful answer, Teacher! So lucid and accurate - that God is one and there is no other. And loving him with all passion and intelligence and energy, and loving others as well as you love yourself. Why, that's better than all offerings and sacrifices put together!" When Jesus realized how insightful he was, he said, "You're almost there, right on the border of God's kingdom." After that, no one else dared ask a question."*
 - a. Mt. 25:34-40, *"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' 'Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"*
 - i. Mt. 25:45-46, *"Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*
 - ii. James 1:22, *"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."*
 - iii. Jn. 13:17, *"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."*
 - iv. Rom. 2:13, *"...for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified..."*
 - b. Love changes everything
 - i. Col. 3:2, *"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."*
 - ii. Col. 3:14, *"But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."*
 - iii. 1 Jn. 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? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also."*
4. Take-aways
 - a. True obedience depends on the correct knowledge of who He is.
 - b. Love the Lord your God with all.
 - c. Love others as well as you love yourself.
 - d. THEY WILL KNOW by our love.
 - e. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.
 - f. The difference is in the doing.
 - g. Love changes our point of view.
 - h. Walk the talk; make your own sacrifices.