

“The First Commandment”

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Text: Matthew 22:35-38

Theme:

Introduction:

1. LOVE- a great theme. A proper understanding of the nature of GOD's love for us and the love we are to have toward God; the proper exercise of that love would solve the problems that we face in the Church, the home, the community, etc.
2. Bible places great emphasis on Love (Its overwhelming nature).
 - a. Love is the personification of God Himself- I John 4:8,16.
 - b. Love may well be described as that virtue in which all other virtues are summed.
 - 1) "The fulfillment of the law" Romans 13:10
 - 2) "The first and great commandment" Matthew 22:35-38
 - 3) "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves" I Peter 4:8
 - 4) The "more excellent way" I Corinthians 12:31
 - a) Many problems in the church at Corinth:
 - 1) Division and carnality- Chapters 1-3
 - 2) Fornication- Chapter 5
 - 3) Going to law against one another- Chapter 6
 - 4) Denying the resurrection- Chapter 15
 - b) So the church at Corinth was disturbed by sin, by heresies, false doctrines, but Paul said

I'll show you the answer to these problems-

LOVE- ICorinthians13

- 1) Love must be the motivating factor in all we do- 13:1-3
- 2) Love is the principle that guides and governs our action- 13:4-7
- 3) Greater than faith and hope- 13:13
- 4) The very badge of discipleship- John13:34,35
- 5) "The bond of perfection" - Colossians3:14
- 6) In II Peter1:5-7. Peter concludes his list of "*Christian graces*" with LOVE- that which permeates, encompasses, and is the motivating factor in all other virtues necessary to please God!

Discussion: Matthew 22:

I. Brief Outline

- A. The marriage Feast (22:1-14). A parable in which Jesus sets forth the kingdom under the figure of a wedding feast.
- B. Three Malicious Questions (22:15-40), asked by the Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees, and the scribes or lawyers, to try and "entangle Jesus in His talk."
 1. Who are these people?
 - a. Pharisee- a sect of the Jews that arose before the time of the Maccabees. They believed in the resurrection and immortality of the soul (Acts13:8); future reward and punishment.
 1. Established to combat Greek influence
 2. They emphasized conformity to the law.
 - b. Herodians- a group that supported the government of Rome, but united with the Pharisees to destroy (oppose) Christ.
 - c. Sadducees- a wealthy party of the Jews that strongly opposed the doctrine of the Pharisee; denied divinity of the oral traditions; didn't believe in the resurrection.
 - d. Scribes and Lawyers- part of the Pharisees; the doctors of the law, and interpreters of the

- scriptures. Had great influence and power, the chief seats in the synagogues- Matthew 23:5; Luke 4:7
2. The questions:
 - a. A political question- 22:15-22- by the Pharisee along with the Herodians
 - b. A "doctrinal" and "social" question 22:23-33 by the Saducees.
 - c. An "ethical" question 22:34-40- by a lawyer of the Pharisees
 3. Jesus asked a question of the Pharisees- 22:41-46
- C. The First and Great Commandment- Matthew 22:35-46
1. The Question- "Which is the great Commandment? Matthew 22:36. "Which is the first commandment of all?" Mark 12:28
 - a. Apparently the Pharisees hoped Christ would belittle the commandments of God by naming only one of the 613 commandments, (248 positive and 365 negative), as the "great" or "superlative" commandment.
 - b. While the Pharisee were "skilled in the law," they were ignorant of the meaning of the scriptures.
 2. The Answer- : "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" Matthew 22:37. "...and with all thy strength" Mark 12:30.
 - a. A quotation from Deuteronomy 6:5.
 1. In answering two of the temptations in Matthew 4, Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy.
 2. Matthew 22:39- The Second Commandment is taken from Leviticus 19:18. A book that shows the effect and impact that God intended for the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the tabernacle to have on the lives of the people.
 - b. Love is a spiritual principle- the place where all righteousness begins.

1. It's what determines the value of anything-
Matthew 22:42- Mark 9:41
 1. "In my name " is equal to "Loving God."
 2. Love takes this insignificant act and makes it something great enough for God to reward.
 3. Both commandments " Love for neighbor growing out of a love for God.
- c. Matthew 22:40- Jesus took the word "love" and drove a nail in it and said you can hang every commandment upon that!
3. The "Great" Commandment because:
 - a. Its object- GOD- is great!
 1. Our creator- Genesis 1:26,27
 2. Source of all blessings; material- Genesis 2:7; Psalms 10:10-12, and spiritual Romans 1:33,36; 8:38,39.
 3. He first loved us - I John 4:19; John 3:16
 - b. Gospel Truth is based upon love-
 1. All God's commandments are based upon love.
 2. I John 3:18- "My little children let not the love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."
 - c. Love elevates man to his greatest potential for good.
 1. David's love for God enabled him to overcome sin and weakness- Psalms 18:1; 73:25,26; 116:1.
 2. Paul accomplished much in God's kingdom because of his love for God- Romans 8:28; Galatians 6:14; I Corinthians 13:3
 - d. Its priority- We must love God first (above all) Matthew 10:37, and with our total being Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30.
 1. All thy heart- feelings, desires, emotions, affections, and longings.
 2. All thy SOUL- all our life (whole being)
 3. All thy mind- All our intellect

4. All thy strength- all our energies.
- e. The blessings of love are great- salvation!
- f. The demands of love are great! LOVE DEMANDS:
 1. Obedient Action-
 1. John⁴:15,21,23,24: I^{ohn}³:3
 2. Like faith, Love must be active
 3. Faith without works is dead- James²:17
 4. Love without works (Action) is useless.- I^{ohn}³:17,18; Galatians³:6; I^{hessalonians}¹:3
 2. The Faithful Proclamation and Defense of the Truth.
 1. The demands of love are not always pleasant, those in error must be told the truth (in or out of the church) John⁸:32; Ephesians⁴:25
 2. It's not love to tell a person that he is alright when he is not- I^{timothy}⁴:2-4; Galatians²
 3. Love demands that we be uncompromising when it comes to the truth and right.
 3. Discipline-
 1. Self-discipline or self denial- Matthew⁶:24
 2. In the Home- Proverbs²²:6; Ephesians⁶:4; Proverbs³:24
 3. In the church- I^{corinthians}³:1-5; Romans⁶:17,18
 4. That we hate somethings-
 1. I^{ohn}²:15-17
 2. Can't love God and evil at the same time- James⁴:4; Matthew⁶:24; 12:30
 3. God hates some things- Proverbs⁶:16-19
 4. Should hate every false way- Psalm¹⁹:104, Cf.Proverbs⁸:13
 5. The fulfillment of obligations:

1. The mother who loves her child will not ignore his needs; but will seek a way to supply his needs.
2. The Christian who loves his neighbor will not ignore his needs (physically or spiritually) but will seek a way to supply those needs.
3. Brethren who love one another will fulfill obligations to one another.
4. The person who loves God will not ignore the will of God, but will assume his obligations to faithfully serve God no matter what the cost.
 1. *It's not so much that God demands obedience; but He demands our love! If that love is genuine and sincere, It will demand obedience.*
 2. *That which does not demand and impel obedience to God is not love.*

D. The background of Matthew 22:35-38, is the Book of Deuteronomy. Let's notice some principles of Love for God in this book.

II. Man's Love For God In Deuteronomy.

- A. Deuteronomy 5:10- the motivation for keeping God's commandments
- B. Deuteronomy 6:4,5- Love for God must not be divided.
- C. Deuteronomy 10:12,13,19- Love apart from obedience is useless- Cf. 11:1,13, 26-28
- D. Deuteronomy 13:1-5- The person who loves God will not follow error.
- E. Deuteronomy 19:9- Love for God is essential to receiving God's blessings.
- F. Deuteronomy 30:1-6,16,17- To get out of captivity they had to return to loving God and keeping His commandments.

III. New Testament Passages That Emphasize The Danger Of Divided Affections Or Lack Of Love-

- A. Matthew 6:24(Cf. Matthew 23; 12:30; Romans 7:16

- B. IJohn2:15-17 (Cf. James4:4)
- C. John3:39-42
- D. John8:37-42
- E. John2:42,43
- F. John5:8-10
- G. Jude21 (Cf. John4:15)
- H. John1:15-17
- I. IICorinthians6:22 (Cf. Galatians6:6-9)
- J. Revelation2:4

Conclusion:

1. The real problem in the church today is LACK OF GENUINE LOVE FOR GOD! The root problem of:
 - a. Lack of Bible study
 - b. Forsaking the assembly
 - c. Lack of involvement in the church (work)
 - d. Immoral living
 - e. Liberalism- the teaching and practice of false doctrines and the fellowship or condoning of such.
2. Do you truly love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength??

Invitation: