

The Greatest Commandment
Matthew 22:34-40

“Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.

“And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving.

“And she went up to him and said, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.’

“But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary.

“Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.”

Luke 10:38-42

The Setting

“The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?”

“And they discussed it among themselves, saying, ‘If we say, “From heaven,” he will say to us, “Why then did you not believe him?”’

“But if we say, “From man,” we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet.’

“So they answered Jesus, ‘We do not know.’
And he said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you
by what authority I do these things.’”

Matthew 21:25-27

“When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them.

“And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.”

Matthew 21:45-46

“But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

“And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’”

Matthew 22:34-36

“And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

“This is the great and first commandment.
And a second is like it: You shall love your
neighbor as yourself.

“On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 22:37-40

1. The Greatest Commandment is **simple**.

“Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight, or volume.

“Your scales and weights must be accurate.
Your containers for measuring dry materials
or liquids must be accurate.

“I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt.”

Leviticus 19:35-36 (NLT)

“When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong.

“You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself,

“for you were strangers in the land of Egypt:
I am the LORD your God.”

Leviticus 19:33-34

1. The Greatest Commandment is simple.
2. The Greatest Commandment is **holistic**.

What is love?

Allegiance - Love is committed, faithful, and loyal to its covenant.

Action - Love serves, does good, and acts on behalf of another.

Affection - Love desires the good of another and finds joy in the other.

“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude.

“It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

“Love bears all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all things. Love
never ends.”

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

“What is sin?

It is the glory of God not honored.

The holiness of God not revered.

The greatness of God not admired.

“The power of God not praised.
The truth of God not sought.
The wisdom of God not esteemed.
The beauty of God not treasured.

“The goodness of God not savored.
The faithfulness of God not trusted.
The commandments of God not obeyed.

“The justice of God not respected.
The wrath of God not feared.
The grace of God not cherished.

“The presence of God not prized.
The person of God not loved.
That is sin.”

John Piper

1. The Greatest Commandment is simple.
2. The Greatest Commandment is holistic.
3. The Greatest Commandment is **impossible**.

Context of Deuteronomy 6

Context of Deuteronomy 6

Creed of the OT

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Context of Deuteronomy 6

Creed of the OT

Plea from Moses

“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God,

“to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve
the LORD your God with all your heart and
with all your soul,

“and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?”

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

“For I know what they are inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give.”

Deuteronomy 31:21b

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,

“not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt,

“my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD:

“I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Jeremiah 31:31-33

“I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land.

“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

“And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

“You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.”

Ezekiel 36:24-28

“For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do.

“By sending his own Son in the likeness of
sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in
the flesh,

“in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Romans 8:3-4

“‘Take, eat; this is my body.’ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you,

“for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

Matthew 26:26b-28

“The joy of heavenly love shall never be interrupted or damped by jealousy. Heavenly lovers will have no doubt of the love of each other.

“They shall have no fear that the declarations and professions of love are hypocritical, but shall be perfectly satisfied of the sincerity and strength of each other’s affection,

“as much as if there were a window in every breast, so that everything in the heart could be seen.

“There shall be no such thing as flattery or dissimulation in heaven, but there perfect sincerity shall reign through all and in all.

“Everyone will be just what he seems to be,
and will really have all the love that he seems
to have . . .

“the saints shall know that God loves them,
and they shall never doubt the greatness of
his love . . .

“there shall be none there to tempt any to dislike or hatred; no busybodies or malicious adversaries to make misrepresentations, or create misunderstandings, or spread abroad any evil reports,

“but every being shall conspire to promote love and the full enjoyment of love . . . none will be distant from each other.

“The petty distinctions of this world do not draw lines in the society of heaven, but all meet in the equality of holiness and of holy love.”

Jonathan Edwards