

Lesson Ten: What is the #1 Commandment?

We have come to the end of the questions that I wanted to cover and next week we are going to try to answer some of your questions? I say try because I may not do it to everyone's satisfaction but I'll give it my best. I want to give credit once again to Dr. David Jeremiah for providing the themes and much material for this study. The book is "Ten Questions Christians are Asking" by Turning Point Publishing.

Up until now we have covered...

- How can we be sure we are saved?
- How can we overcome temptation?
- How can I get off the worry wheel?
- How can I find forgiveness?
- Is Jesus really the only way to God?
- Why Do Christians have so many problems?
- Why doesn't God answer my prayers?
- "Is there a sin that God can't forgive?"
- What is Faith?

So for question #10 we come to: What is the greatest or most important or top

We don't have to wonder what the most important thing in life is. We don't have to wonder what God says is the most important commandment. There are 613 commandments in the Old Testament. All of them are summarized in the 10 Commandments. There are **248** "thou shalts" and **365** "though shalt nots".

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Hear – *Shema*.

Mark 12:29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. 30 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. 31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment

greater than these. "Wow! We know what a danger it is to add to or take away from God's word don't we? What are we to make of this? Jesus added to God's word! Why can he do that? The answer is obvious; Jesus is **God**.

The simple command to love God leads us to several very powerful conclusions.

- We were made to **love God**.
- We were made to love God and to fail to love Him is the **ultimate** sin. 2 Timothy 3:4 1 Corinthians 16:22.
- We are to love God with all of our **heart**. (There is an **emotional** cost)
- We are to love God with all of our **soul**. (There is a **volitional** cost)
- We are to love God with all of our **mind**. (There is an **intellectual** cost)
 - Romans 7:25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the **mind** I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.
 - Romans 8:6 For to be carnally **minded** is death, but to be spiritually **minded** is life and peace.
 - Romans 12.2 ...be transformed by the renewing of your **mind**
 - Romans 15.6 ...that you may with one **mind** and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose **mind** is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.
 - Philippians 2:5 Let this **mind** be in you which was also in Christ Jesus...

We can never **thank** God beyond what we can **think** of God. A disengaged **lazy** mind cannot please God. The roots of Theology are to study God in order to know Him so we can love Him. Whatever **occupies** our mind that is not in accordance with God's will is sinful rebellion.

- We must Love the Lord with all of our **strength**. (There is a **physical** cost)
 1. Loving God according to His Word
 - a. We show our love for God through **obedience**
 - i. *John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. V.21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.*

- ii. *1 Jn 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.*
 - b. We show our love for God by **hating evil**
 - i. *Ps 97:10 You who love the LORD, hate evil!* Wow! If we are tolerating sin either in our minds or in our habits we are not hating evil; we are practicing it and therefore approving it.
 - c. We show our love for God by **anticipating Christ's** return
 - i. *2 Ti 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.* What kind of love would it be if a wife was too busy to greet her husband at the airport when he is coming home from war? *Re 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*
 - d. We show our love by **passing** the tests. Adam and Eve failed the test in the Garden of Eden.
 - i. *Dt 13:1 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*
 - ii. *John 21. 15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"*
 - iii. What if Jesus stepped into a situation and asked you, "Do you love me more than _____?"
2. Finding meaning according to God's word
- a. Jesus added something to the Great Commandment in the Mark chapter. He added: *Mk 12:31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You*

shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." It is a "like" command. This second commandment shows up several times in the gospels. We call it the "**golden rule**". Also *Mt 7:12; Lk 6:31*

- b. The "golden rule" cannot **save us**; we can't get to heaven by the golden rule.. *Php 2:4; Ro 15:2; 1 Co 10:24*
 - i. Love is *eros* – **sensual**
 - ii. Love is *Philia* – **brotherly**
 - iii. Love is *ludus* – **playful**
 - iv. Love is *ágape* – godlike selfless and **sacrificial**.
 - c. Love is not merely a warm fuzzy feeling that you get when they sing an old hymn or you reminisce about old friends and old times. It is an action word. So love **obeys** the rules, **hates** evil, **does something** to help and is not easily **offended**. *Ga 5:14*
 - d. In fact, Jesus said that **all** the law and the prophets are fulfilled in loving God and loving your neighbor. *Mt 22:37 - 40* *On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.* In Exodus 20 the first 4 commandments are about loving God and the **last 6** are about loving our neighbor.
3. Seeking the Kingdom according to God's Word
- a. Back in the edited passage on the Shema – the one edited by Jesus, we find an interesting statement about the scribe. Let's begin reading at 12.32.
 - b. Look what Jesus said in response. *Mk 12:34* *Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."* "Not far from the Kingdom," is still not in in the kingdom. Judas was not far from Jesus but he died and went to Hell.
 - c. A passage we need to address is Matthew 10.37-38. Yet the truth is that when we love God first and foremost all other relationships are **healthier** because of it.
 - d. So what is the first and complete commandment that God wants us to obey? Love God with our **whole being** and to love others as we love **ourselves**.