

Devo #57

The Greatest Commandment

Read Mark 12:28-34

28 One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" **29** Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The LORD our God is the one and only LORD.

30 And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' **31** The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these."

32 The teacher of religious law replied, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth by saying that there is only one God and no other.

33 And I know it is important to love him with all my heart and all my understanding and all my strength, and to love my neighbor as myself. This is more important than to offer all of the burnt offerings and sacrifices required in the law."

34 Realizing how much the man understood, Jesus said to him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God." And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

What did the teacher of the law ask Jesus (v. 28)? Which one of the commandments is the greatest/most important?

How many commandments were there? The rabbis counted 613 commandments in the Old Testament, 365 positive and 248 negative. But mostly we think of the Ten Commandments and so did the teacher who asked Jesus. They are the moral law.

How did Jesus answer the question (vv. 29-31)? Read vv. 30-31.

Do you see a common message/word in both of the commandments? Love. That's what God really wants from us. **How are you doing when it comes to loving your neighbors and classmates?**

What are some ways we can love God? By obeying God with the right heart. We love God by our *attitudes* and our *actions* – the two "A" words. *And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands (2 John 1:6). If you love me, keep my commands (John 14:15).*

What did the teacher of the law say to Jesus (vv. 32-33)? You are right Jesus. Loving God and loving your neighbor are more important than sacrificing animals.

What did Jesus say about the teacher (v. 34)? You are on your way to becoming a Christian. **What was keeping him from becoming a Christian?** He knew the truth in his mind but not in his heart.

How did the other Jewish religious leaders respond? They quit asking Jesus questions.

Why do you think they quit? Jesus had outsmarted them by answering all their questions and made them look foolish in the eyes of the people. They were probably angry at Jesus and felt humiliated.