

The Question About the Greatest Commandment

Mark 12: 28–34

(Mt. 22:34-40; see Lk. 10:25-37)

1. *The setting: A teacher of the law approached Jesus*

- a. Observed Jesus' arguments
- b. Posed a test question: Which is the most important commandment?

2. *The greatest commandment*

- a. The Lord our God, The Lord is one

- b. The Lord our God is to be loved

- c. The Lord our God demands that we love our neighbours as ourselves

3. *The great scope of the commandment*

- a. So great it causes honest and thinking men to agree

- b. So great it exceeds all offerings and sacrifices

- c. So great it almost assures salvation to those who understand it

28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

32 "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.

33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.