

The Great Commandment 1: The Jesus Creed

Introduction

An expert on scripture once asked Jesus what the greatest commandment was. He meant to test Jesus, but perhaps also to see if this man really did have some sort of special insight. Jesus gave the pretty standard answer. He quoted the *Shema*, the first prayer Jewish children learned. The prayer every good Jew started and ended their day with. However, he did make an amendment to the *Shema*. It created something new, yet something that had always been there. It gave us a path to follow. It gave us a creed directly from the mouth of Jesus.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be spiritually mature or spiritually formed? Who's guidance have you caught out to accomplish this? What do you think Jesus' definition of spiritual maturity would be?
2. Read Matthew 22:34-40. Jesus' great commandment is simple to understand but hard to absorb. What does love mean in this context? How do we even begin to live this out?
3. Read Matthew 6:9-13. Read the Lord's prayer again. How does this relate to the great commandment? Which parts are the "love God" parts and which are the "love others" parts? In saying this prayer, are we asking God for something, or are we offering to help him make these things a reality?
4. God loves you. This is so core to everything we believe, but it's one of the hardest truths to come to grips with? How do you understand God's love for you? What or who has influenced your thoughts on this?
5. In the message when talking about loving your neighbor as yourself, Brandon said that neighborly love is whenever and whatever love. What does this mean to you? Where do we start?

Changing Your Mind

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Dt 6:4-9).

Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord. (Lev 19:18).