

So ***love defines*** what it means to ***act lawfully***,  
but the ***law defines*** what it means to ***act lovingly***.

If the **Great Commandment** tells us the "how to" in obeying the law,  
then the lesser commands like the 10 Commandments  
will tell the "what" in acting lovingly.

**Verse 34-**: "You are not far from the kingdom of God." Mark 12:34

**What does that mean? Two things.**

**1.** The only way to get out of being motivated by fear or pride is you have to admit you're lost. Jesus is saying, "The only way to unbelievable, perfect self-esteem is for you to lose all self-esteem."

There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:22-24

Religious motivation for honesty is either fear or pride. Trying to earn God's love so he doesn't send you to hell. Obey in order to get love from God and others.

**2.** Conviction gets you halfway home, but you're not home yet.

God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. .... <sup>26</sup>he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Romans 3:25,26

You have to see there was only one who really offered the ultimate sacrifice for you, in receiving Christ's sacrifice you enter into His kingdom forever.

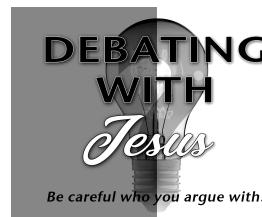
This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.<sup>11</sup> Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4:10,11

For the *entire law* is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "*Love your neighbor as yourself.*"

Galatians 5:14

Sierra Community Church June 30th, 2019 Dan Wilvers



**How Jesus Flips The Law of Moses With Love**

**Mark 12:28-34**

<sup>28</sup> 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?"

<sup>29</sup> "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.'<sup>30</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'<sup>31</sup> The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

<sup>32</sup> "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.<sup>33</sup> To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

<sup>34</sup> 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.

**The Backstory:** It's Passion Week within two days Jesus will be crucified. Days earlier Jesus rode in triumphantly into Jerusalem. This day, most likely Wednesday, Jesus has been teaching in the Temple all day. Earlier in the day he has been confronted by both Pharisees and Herodians. Most recently the Sadducees attempted to trap him with a question about the after life. Both times Jesus silenced them with his answers. Here in Verses 28-34 we see a third and last attempt this time by a scribe of the Sanhedrin, (the ruling council of 70 men over Israel) to discredit Jesus and his teaching.

### **Matthew's Gospel adds insight to the scene:**

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.<sup>35</sup> One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: Matthew 22:34,35

### **Pharisees felt that what Jesus taught was an attack on the Law of Moses.**

Looking for a reason to bring charges against Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"<sup>11</sup> He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out?<sup>12</sup> How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."<sup>13</sup> Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other.<sup>14</sup> But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

Matthew 12:10-14

### **Part of Jesus' brilliance is that He answers them once again from within the context of what Moses wrote in the Law.**

Taken from Deuteronomy 6:5 for vs.30 and Leviticus 19:18 for vs.31.

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.<sup>30</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'<sup>31</sup> The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:29-31

### **What's interesting is the law expert gets it:** "Well said, teacher.

You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.<sup>33</sup> To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself this more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." Mark 12:32,33

### **That gets a very positive response from Jesus:**

"You are not far from the kingdom of God." Mark 12:34

### **The Jewish sacrificial system was instituted by Moses**

after the nation was taken from bondage in Egypt. By Jesus time some 1,400 years later, it had grown exceedingly corrupt, and as we discover in Paul's writings later in the New Testament its purpose was never intended to bring righteousness, but rather awareness.

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. Romans 3:20

"The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.<sup>3</sup> So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. Matthew 23:2,3

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. Matthew 23:13

**What Jesus was actually saying:** "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."<sup>31</sup> The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' Mark 12:30,31

**All of the law boils down to this:** Love God and love others  
**Meaning:** God wrote the law to show you how to love!  
**Love is what the law is always after.**

The problem comes when we misconstrue the law in its a negative form. Look at the commandment, "*Thou shalt not* commit adultery." Though it has a negative form, what Jesus is you cannot fulfill that commandment just by simply refraining from extramarital sex. Love calls you to be a loving spouse not just a rule keeper.

One religious approach is you have to tell the truth; otherwise, God won't let you go to heaven. **That's fear.** The other religious approach says you'd better tell the truth. Because that's the only way, you know you're better than all these other sinful people who don't. **That's pride.**