

University Heights Church of Christ

BULLETIN

April 13, 2008

Which is the Greatest?

Jesus affirmed that the two greatest commandments were to love God and to love one's neighbor as one's self. **Matthew 22: 37** *"Jesus said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second [is] like to it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* In view of the emphasis that is put on the Ten Commandments today by some religious groups it is especially interesting that neither of these two commandments is one of the ten. The first commandment is from **Deuteronomy 6:5** and the second is from **Leviticus 19:18**. Yet Jesus said that on these two commandments hang all of the law and the prophets. And what Jesus said is absolutely true. Every requirement in God's word, both Old and New Testaments has to do with either love of God or love of neighbor. Of the Ten Commandments the first four have to do with loving God and the last six have to do with loving neighbor.

So, do I agree with Jesus about the relative importance of the two categories of commandments? Jesus said that the most important commandment is to love God with my whole being. Jesus said that loving my neighbor is second to loving God. What do I think about that?

1. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
10. Thou shalt not covet.

In the mind of the average person it was far more important to observe the last six commandments in this list than it was to observe the first four. That is the exact opposite of what Jesus said. Jesus said that the most important commandments are the commandments that have to do with the love of God: to worship only God, to not make idols, to not take the name of the Lord in vain, to remember the Sabbath.

It seems that people respected the last six more than the first four because they would, by those against whom they sinned, be punished here and now for not observing the last six. The real danger of immediate punishment made it seem more important to observe laws that had to do with loving neighbor. That brings us to an important thought which is, God is far more able to know of and punish sins against Him than any of our neighbors are able to know of and punish sins against them. How could any sane person ever imagine that it is of less consequence to sin against God than against neighbor?

Nine of the Ten Commandments are incorporated into the teaching of the New Testament. The only one that is not carried over into the law of Christ is the command to remember the Sabbath. The other nine are part of the New Testament commandments. The same thing is true of the New Testament that Jesus said was true of the Old Testament. Every part of it divides into two parts: laws that have to do with the love of God and the laws that have to do with the love of neighbor. That means that I must understand that the great commandment is to love God with all that I am. Do I think that it is less important to avoid taking the name of the Lord in vain than it is to abstain from adultery, murder or stealing? If I think that I have got the value system turned around backward from the way Jesus said that it is and I need to get it turned back the proper way.

It seems to be almost impossible for us to understand that the social ramifications of a sin are not a measure of that sin's gravity in the eyes of God. We must always remember that this whole sin thing started with eating fruit. God alone is the true definer of sin. Sin is what God says is sin. In order to please God, God's definition of sin absolutely must be respected. God's word absolutely must be respected and obeyed or eternal punishment will result.

The fact that God allows us to heap upon Him every insult and indignity imaginable without immediate punishment does not mean that we are going to get away with it any of it. I can fail to become a repentant baptized believer if I choose. I can fail to learn God's word. I can fail to assemble and eat the Lord's supper or to give as I am prospered. I can fail to pray to God or to thank God for all of the many blessings which are mine by His great love. The problem is that God stands between me and eternity and when I meet God in judgement it is God's definition of sin, not mine, by which I will be judged. If I am going to be in a shape to survive judgement I must observe God's definition of sin now, all of it.

Remember to Pray For

All of those with persistent colds, flues, viruses and other passing afflictions of the flesh that have been so prevalent for the last couple of months.

Janie Smith who has cancer.

Shirley Lewis in Central Baptist Hospital

Brady Gibbons, a three year old who is in UK Hospital with a severe head injury. The family asked for our prayers for him.

Carla Ward

Gail Hunter

Larry Flannery

Donnie Joseph

Lewis Harrod

Dan Moody

Alexa Ann Harper

Cheryl Spear

Lanny Hiller

Roselyn Agyare

Charity and Abdiel Pallafox

Donnie & Tracy Oliver & their baby

Helen Stephens

Brayden Grushon

The mother of Lori Dailey

Chris Handshoe

Chris and Jen Dooley

Jeffrey Howerton

Ruel Baker

Addison Pervine

Carl Stripplehoff

Sybil Jamison

Blanch Thompson

Karen Handshoe continues to be very, very ill.

Tom Kemp

Freda Blakey

James Stauffer

The fruit of the Spirit is stated in

Galatians 5:22 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23

Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." By obeying the New Testament our life becomes a life of love, joy, peace, steadfastness in spite of suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, mildness that is neither weakness or fear and self-restraint that is governed by the word of God. This is a lifelong task of self-examination by God's word and replacing what is wrong in us with what the New Testament says is right. This is a remake of our mind according to God's blueprint contained in the New Testament. **Romans 12:1** "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Thoughts

1Chronicles 16: 29 "Give to the LORD the glory [due] to his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. 30 Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. 31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let [men] say among the nations, The LORD reigns. 32 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that [is] therein. 33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he comes to judge the earth."

2Corinthians 5: 9 "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he has done, whether [it be] good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;"

Once God makes final judgement there will be no reversing it. God has promised that He shall one day make final judgement. God absolutely keeps His promises. God has given each of us a lifetime on earth in which to become acquainted with His revealed will and obey it. Whenever this life on earth ends that opportunity is over and judgement is certain. **Hebrews 9: 27** "And as it is appointed to men once to die, but after this the judgment:" It is God's desire to save us. **Hebrews 9: 28** "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and to them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin to salvation." But in order to be saved we must absolutely fear God and keep His commandments.

We must, as did Paul, know the "terror of the Lord" and that terror must drive us as it drove the apostle Paul.

Each of us must of our own accord, seek to fashion ourselves according to the revealed will of God. Each of us has a Bible that each of us can read and obey.

Each of us will stand before God and give account of our own success or of our own failure in reading and obeying the instructions that God has given in the Bible.

That is the only standard by which we will be judged. Failure to respect the Bible as the word of God and the New Testament as God's current will assures eternal damnation. Because all who fail to respect God's revealed will are going to treat it with disrespect and will not obey it. The only thing they can honestly say is "No, I really did not know much about the Bible and I did not govern my life and worship according to the New Testament." But one thing is absolutely sure, all of us will know the terror of the Lord when we stand before him in final judgement, and all of us shall.

Let each of us so fear God that for each of us the appearing of Jesus will be "without sin to salvation."

Notes

Men's business meeting today at 3:00PM

When a true answer hurts my position it is my position not the question that is to blame.

An honest question does not threaten truth. **Matthew 22:41-46**

Honesty demands forsaking any position that cannot be defended with truth.

Honesty starts with my relationship to God.

If I am not honest to God to whom will I be honest?

Matthew 7: 7 "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: 8 For every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened."

How shall we know if we do not ask, seek and knock?

A closed Bible will tell me nothing.

If the Eternal God cannot produce a book that diligent students can understand, what can the Eternal God do?

"You shall KNOW the truth and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:32

How shall we KNOW the truth?

Schedule of Services

Sunday Morning

Bible Classes 9:45am

Worship Service 10:45am

Sunday Evening

Worship Service 6:00pm

Wednesday Evening

Bible Studies for all ages

7:30pm

Monthly Song Service

First Friday 7:30pm

University Heights

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AND WORSHIP WITH US