

A Question about the Commandments

Matthew 22:34-40

Halifax: 8 October 2006

Introduction:

In our study of Matthew's Gospel,

- we have been seeing how the Jewish leaders at Jerusalem were growing more and more antagonistic toward our Lord Jesus.
 - Every time He came around them, He exposed their shallowness and hypocrisy.
 - As they thrived on putting on a display of religiosity, this was more than they could stand.
- Just lately, we have seen how different ones approached him with questions to test him...
 - They were hoping that by asking Him difficult questions, they could find a way to discredit Him...
 - either by causing Him to stumble in His words or by stumping Him with a question He could not answer.

Last week, we saw how Jesus answered the Sadducees when they tried to show Him how ridiculous it was to believe in the resurrection...

- The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection,
 - Most of the Jews did believe in it, so the Sadducees had a number of arguments that they had come up with against it.
 - They pulled out from their supply, no doubt, the one objection they thought was the most difficult to answer...
 - But Jesus was able to answer them with a wisdom they could not resist.
 - Verse 34 says that Jesus "silenced" the Sadducees with his answer...
 - The word "silenced" literally means "muzzled."
 - They were shut down—they had nothing to say and had to walk away.

Now the Pharisees definitely believed in the resurrection, so you would think that they would have been glad to see Jesus shut down the Sadducees...

- But their malice toward Jesus was too great for rejoicing in **any** victory of His.
 - They would have been glad, in fact, if the Sadducees had been able to unsettle Jesus on this question...

- We have already seen how they joined together with the Herodians to try to find occasion against him regarding his view of taxation...
 - They didn't care if it was the Sadducees or their Herodians that stumbled Him—
 - It had come to the point that all they cared about was that somehow He would be caused to stumble.
- But when they saw that Jesus had failed, they decided to take another crack at him themselves... verse 34 says:
 - v. 34: But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.
 - They were in a huddle, making plans for their next attack.

But then this lawyer comes forth from the huddle to test Jesus:

- v. 35: "Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying..."
- By **lawyer**, Matthew refers to someone who was an expert in God's Law...
 - He was a scribe who was a specialist in the study of the Law of Moses... an expert.
- It's hard to understand just what is going on here...
 - In the parallel account in Mark,
 - we are told that this man comes because he perceived that Jesus had answered the Sadducees well...
 - and then He publicly commends Jesus for His answer...
 - and Jesus in turn tells him, "you are not far from the kingdom of God!"
 - Apparently, he was one of the more honest Pharisees...
 - It seems that he is willing to give Jesus an honest assessment...
 - Perhaps he was even defending Jesus in the little huddle with his fellow Pharisees...
 - You know, the huddle may have been talking about how Jesus would answer, and this fellow may have argued that He would answer well and volunteered to go and ask the question to prove the point...
 - And the others, supposing otherwise, were happy to have him go...
 - We really don't know...
- But one thing is very likely here...
 - those who thought this question would stumble Jesus probably thought that Jesus would set Himself over against Moses...

- Wasn't it likely that some of them had heard Jesus say, regarding their traditions, "You have heard it said... but I say to you...?"
- Remember that in their minds, the rejection of the traditions of the fathers was one and the same with rejecting the scriptures.
 - It was not the same in **truth**, but it was the same **in their minds**...
 - So they probably hoped that by asking Jesus what the greatest commandment was,
 - they could get Him to speak against Moses.
- Of course their plan fails...
 - Jesus did not come to abolish even one jot or tittle of the Law of Moses, but to fulfill—
 - He would fulfill all the types and ceremonies that set forth God's promises, and He would establish forever the moral precepts for His kingdom.
 - He had already said that even the smallest details were to be observed in His kingdom—
 - not the traditions around the law that actually distorted the Law, but the Law itself.
 - And so His answer to the Lawyer's question comes straight out of the very heart of Moses' teaching in Deuteronomy...
 - "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."
 - This was a passage that His hearers knew quite well...
 - It was quoted by every faithful Jew twice a day!
 - The Pharisees' attempt to trap Jesus had flopped again!

TRANS> But as with the other questions that were brought to Jesus,

- there is some very important instruction for us in the answer itself that you must not miss.
 - We should be thankful that Jesus was asked these questions because out of them we have some rich instruction...
 - In this exchange with the lawyer,
 - We have one of the most helpful pieces of instruction about our duty to God in whole Bible!
 - Jesus provides us with a summary of our whole duty to God:
 - v. 37-39: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is *the* first and great commandment. And *the*

second *is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

How thankful we should be that the Pharisees asked Jesus this question...

- God, in His providence, uses this question to give us this very valuable instruction!
- Let’s look at it more closely...

I. Consider what these two great commandments call for from us.

A. The first and greatest one calls us to love God with our whole being!

- Jesus uses the same kind of three-fold repetition that Moses used to show that no part of us is exempted from this duty...
 - Everything about you is to be directed toward loving God...
 - It is not so much a detailed understanding of what “heart, soul, and mind” refer to as the understanding that is everything that really matters...
 - But as it is helpful for us to grasp the comprehensiveness and completeness of this love,
 - we will take a moment to look at each of the three words...

1. First, to **love Him with all your heart** means that you are to love Him from the inside.

a. Whenever the Bible speaks of the **heart**, it refers to the inner man as opposed to the outer man...

- For example, when God rejects Saul and chooses David, the scripture says,
 - “Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart.”
 - When wrong worship is brought to God in Isaiah, it is condemned because the people are said to draw near with the lips, but that their hearts are far from the Lord.

b. God is not like an earthly king...

- You can satisfy an earthly king with a mere external love...
 - if you obey him and honour him in all your actions, it is enough for him...
 - He will be pleased with you and will never find out what you **really** think of him in your heart...
- But when you serve God (and you are always supposed to be serving Him)
 - He can see your motives and your attitudes as clearly as your actions.

- Every grumbling thought, every distrusting thought, every rebellious thought, every wandering affection toward what he had forbidden comes up before His view!
- All things are naked and opened to Him.
 - This is why He demands that we love Him with our whole heart.
 - Your unloving thoughts toward God are just as displeasing to Him as unloving actions.

2. Secondly, Jesus tells you to **love God with all your soul...**

a. This is very similar to the heart, only the soul refers more to what animates us...

- The soul is the *life principle* that God breathed into us at creation...
 - In fact, the word translated **soul** in our English Bibles is often translated by the word **life**...in almost half of the occurrences in the NT.
 - So we could translate this phrase, “Love God with your life...”
 - The idea is that everything you do should be animated by love for Him.

b. Your whole life—every action—should saturated with love to God, an expression of love to Him...

1) Do you understand what I mean?

- You all know what it is to do acts of love—
 - A wife prepares dinner for her family—that is an act of love...
 - She is giving her life for them.
 - A husband takes the time to speak to his wife about her day—that is an act of love...
 - He is spending his life for her.

2) Jesus is saying here that everything you do with your life should be an act of love for God...

- When you get up in the morning, it should be because of love for Him...you should be getting up so you can serve Him...
- When you eat your food, it should be with love to Him... you are eating to prepare yourself to serve Him...
- When you are at work, all your work should be a giving of your life in service to God...

- When you take up your cross, you know—when you do something that people don't like—it should be because of love for Him—your life poured out for Him.
- When you are gravely ill, you should enter into that sickness with an eye to serving your God in love to Him—you are to go through that experience for Him, for His glory...
- When you worship, it should be a giving of your life for God...

TRANS> So you are to love him from the heart and in all of your living...

- both your motives and your actions are to be for Him and in love to Him.

3. Thirdly, you are commanded **to love Him with all your mind...**

a. This adds another whole dimension to loving God!

- It reminds us that there is a part of love that involves taking delight in the one you love.
 - Admiring that one, gazing at his beauty and glory.
 - There is an enjoyment of the one who is loved and glad receiving of and delight in his kindness and service to you.

b. This is to be another aspect of your love for God...

- It is not just about serving Him with a right motive,
 - it is also about knowing Him.
- Love for God is not to be blind—
 - You are to exert ourselves to know Him...
 - To find out about Him, to examine the things He has done and to rejoice and admire Him
- You are to acknowledge Him in all your ways—
 - To see His hand in giving you your daily bread, in giving you your friends, in answering your prayers, in giving you salvation.
- You are to behold all His glorious attributes, especially as they are revealed in Christ—
 - To love Him for His grace that is shown in giving His only Son for sinners...
 - To love Him for His power displayed in raising Him from the dead...
 - To love Him for His justice displayed in the laws demand that He suffer if we are to be forgiven...
 - To love Him for His wisdom revealed in His counsel and works.

- Our love is to be an intelligent love that delights to learn more and more of Him with eager joy.

TRANS> So you see what it means to love Him with all your heart, soul, and mind...

- Again, the point is not to press the words “heart, soul, and mind,” but to stress that it is with the whole being that you are to love God...
 - But before we move on to look at the second commandment, let me ask you something...

B. Does it seem odd that you are here **commanded** to love?

1. I mean, we usually think of love as something that is not genuine unless you fall into it.
 - I mean, some one can do acts of love for a king they don't love in a mechanical way, but how can sincere love be commanded?
 - If my heart is not inclined toward God, how can I be held responsible for that?
 - Well, my brothers and sisters,
 - The truth is, you **are** held responsible for even the thoughts you have toward God...
 - The fact that you do not love Him with all your heart, soul and mind does not change the standard...
 - Even though you don't and even though in your fallen condition you can't, you still ought to love Him with your all!
2. You see, our failure to love Him perfectly has no basis in Him...
 - It is not that there is something wrong with Him, the problem is with us.
 - It is not that there is anything unlovely in Him,
 - but it is that we are corrupted so that we do not see how lovely He is, nor do we respond to is loveliness as we should...
 - God is altogether glorious and excellent and there is no flaw in Him to hinder our love for Him...
 - all the problem for any lack of love is a problem with us!
 - Certainly, in some matters we may have a difference of opinion about what is good and excellent...
 - One person loves liver and onions—
 - another can't stand it.

- But if somebody loves to drink sewer water (when clean water is available)...
 - you can rightly say that there was something wrong with them!
 - Well how much more is there something wrong with a person who doesn't love God?
- Inasmuch as you don't love God with all your heart, soul, and mind,
 - it is **that** much that you are corrupt and twisted and out of sync with justice.
- It is a great wickedness of our sinful hearts to try to blame God for whatever deficiency there is in our love...
 - We try to justify our lack of love by finding fault with Him...
 - Instead we need to repent and see that it is nothing but our own corruption and perversion that hinders our love.
 - There is nothing wrong with Him, it is all us.
 - The standard to love Him with all our heart, soul, and mind, is just and right.

C. Second to the command to love God is the command to love our neighbour as ourselves.

1. Just as loving God with all is simple justice because of His excellence, so loving our neighbour as ourselves is also simple justice...
 - a. Our neighbour is also a son or daughter of Adam—
 - we are all of one blood...
 - you are no better than your neighbour.
 - b. Some people have questioned the Lord about this standard and said, "What if I don't love myself?"
 - But I think that is to misunderstand what Jesus is saying here.
 - It is true that we often foolishly do great harm to ourselves—
 - we make choices that are harmful to our bodies... drug or alcohol abuse...
 - We choose companions that are not good for us...
 - We may even commit suicide.
 - But Jesus is not setting **what we do** as the standard, but the strength of commitment we have to ourselves...

- Suicide and drug abuse can be looked at as deeds of self-hatred, but they can also be looked at expressions of very foolish self-love.
- A person who does these things is so committed to his own comfort that he is willing to go to such great lengths—even to murder—to try to obtain personal relief or comfort!
 - To get high, he will harm others, steal, neglect his duty to others, and do anything—all in an effort to obtain greater comfort for himself.
 - Such a person may not know how to love himself with wisdom, but there is no doubt that he has a huge commitment to himself!
 - It is that commitment that is to be our standard in loving others.

2. But who is your neighbour?

- Jesus emphasises in the parable of the good Samaritan that your neighbour is the person God puts in your path—
 - a. no matter if it is an enemy or a friend—you are to do good to him...
 - You are to love your neighbour as yourself.
 - b. A funny perversion of this teaching is those who love the stranger and don't love the people near to them...
 - More than once, I have spoken to a frustrated wife or daughter whose father was full of volunteer work and generosity to those outside the home...
 - But who was cold and uncaring to the needs of his own wife and children!
 - This is a wretched sort of hypocrisy, but one that is far too common.
 - A person enjoys the reputation that comes from caring for those far away, but does not want to go to the trouble to love his nearest neighbours.

TRANS> But sure than that you do not exclude any neighbour, whether near or far.

3. Consider further Love for your neighbour is very closely related to love for God...

- Jesus says this second commandment “is like the first and greatest commandment.”
 - What is the connection?
 - a. Well, it is this:
 - Because you and your neighbour are made in God's image,

- to hate your neighbour is to hate God's image—and to hate God's image is to hate God...
 - This is especially true when it is your Christian brother in whom God is restoring his image...
 - In John's epistle, you are told on no uncertain terms that if you hate your brother, you do not love God.
- b. You see, God has given you your neighbour as a receptacle of your love to Himself...
- God is in heaven and He needs nothing from you...
 - Your heart, soul, and mind are all to be devoted to Him,
 - But how are you to express your love in action?
 - You are to express your love in action primarily by loving your neighbour.
 - Jesus teaches us that our love for him will be measured by how we have loved our brothers.
 - He counts what we do for one another as having been done for Him.
 - In other words, if you want to do something for God, then do something for your neighbour!
 - Your neighbour is the receiver of your service to God!
- c. That is why a person can never claim to love God if he does not love his neighbour.
- John asks, "How can you love God whom you have not seen if you do not love your brother whom you have seen?"
 - It is a lie to say that you love God if you don't love your neighbour.

So now I have shown you what we are called to do in this summary...

- First, to love God with all that we are, and then to love our neighbour as ourselves.

II. And now I want you to consider how helpful it is to have this summary!

A. First of all, this summary is helpful because it gives us a goal to aim for—a focal point, a point of emphasis.

1. Without a great goal like this, it is easy to get lost in all the particular commandments and forget the whole point of it all!

a. Do you know what I mean?

- You can get so focused on something like, say, keeping the Sabbath, that you forget that Sabbath keeping is, at its roots, an expression of love to God!
 - It is not an end in itself!
 - As Jesus said, “man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was made for man!”
 - It is a day for focused communion with God—
 - As I have described it before, it is like a date with God...
 - If I set aside time for me and my wife to go out on date, and she has no interest in being with me,
 - but in a very cranky way sacrifices her work and pleasures because I asked her to set aside the time...
 - she may be keeping the date, but she is not keeping the date in love to me.
- b. Brothers and sisters, what a problem this is!
- You can do a lot of good things that are really not good at all because they are not done in love to God!
 - You can go to your pastor and get marriage counseling because your marriage is miserable.
 - You want to have better marriage because it is so awful to have a bad one and it makes you miserable...
 - And you can make changes and actually start to have a happy marriage...
 - But if you are not first of all making these changes for God...
 - It is not acceptable to Him...
 - If you are not living for God in your marriage—if you are not looking to be the kind of husband that **He** wants you to be—with an eye to pleasing Him—then I hope you will keep having marriage problems!
 - The worst thing that could happen to you is that you would have happy marriage that is not rooted in love for God!

TRANS> This summary helps us to see that the priority is not just getting away from an annoying sin—or a sin that makes me unhappy...

- The priority is loving God.
 - Keeping specific commandments when the keeping of those commandments is not rooted in love to God is to break the commandments.

- c. Isn't this what Jesus is getting at when He says that all the law the prophets hang on these two commandments?
 - If you are keeping certain particular commandments of God...
 - You are not stealing or you are doing your work heartily...
 - But this obedience is not growing out of a heart and life devoted to your God—if it is not done for Him—
 - then it is all so much dung!
 - I have told you before,
 - I have run into people that do all sorts of works of charity who are extremely bitter toward God!
 - They do it with an attitude that God has wronged these people and they are going to make it right!
 - It would be better to be a mass murderer on the day of judgement than charity worker who has done your work with malice toward God...
 - Everything you do is to grow on the tree of love to God...
 - If that is not the root of your action, then it is bitter root that God will reject.

TRANS> This summary is helpful because it helps us to focus on what really matters...

- B. The second reason this summary is so helpful is because it is able to humble us!
 - 1. What a high standard it is! There is no one who has fulfilled it!
 - a. Do you ever have a problem with pride?
 - Do you feel that you are superior to others?
 - Then come to this summary of the Commandments and you will find that you have nothing to boast about.
 - b. Who among you can say that you have loved God as much as you should?
 - Who among you can say that you have loved your neighbour as yourself?
 - c. Pull out this standard to measure yourself,
 - and you will never be able to believe in perfectionism—that a person can reach a state of perfect holiness in this life...
 - We have hardly even begun!
 - Surely all have come desperately short of the glory of God!

- A great injustice has been done!
 - God has not been given His due and we are to blame!
2. It is good to use these commandments to see how little true holiness and godliness there is in the world!
- a. Then you will see what a need there is to animate your prayers and labours for that God's will would be done on earth.
- It will set you to praying for yourself...
 - It will set you to praying for your family...
 - It will set you to praying for the church...
 - It will set you to praying for the nation...
 - It will set you to praying for the world

TRANS> When you use these two commandments to see how little true holiness and godliness there is in the world it will not only animate your prayers...

- b. You will see your need (and the need of others) to come to Christ for salvation...
- for mercy and forgiveness!
 - for grace and strength to change!
 - Measure with this standard and you will see your need for a Saviour.

TRANS> Well then, we have seen what God calls us to do in these two commandments, and we have seen two reasons why it is helpful to have a summary like this...

- Now I want to motivate you to bring your life into conformity with these two commandments!

III. Why should you love God with all your heart, soul and mind, and your neighbour as yourself?

A. Because God is altogether lovely!

1. He is the Lily of the Valley, the Fairest of Ten Thousand.
- There is no spot or blemish to be found in Him.
 - He is the only uncreated, being
 - and so He is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

- For all eternity, He has lived in perfect loving fellowship as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...
 - There has never been a division, never a cross word, never a spec of hatred or malice...
 - Only a deep deep sweetness and joy in perfect happiness.
 - The Father has always given all things to the Son—and the Son has always given Himself to the Father...
 - and the Son and the Father have given all to the Spirit, and the Spirit has always served the Father and the Son in perfect fidelity.
 - God is a being of incomprehensible, inexhaustible glory!
 - The depths of His beauty and power and love and perfection can be sounded out by us for all eternity and we will never reach the end of it!
 - There are pleasures at His right hand forevermore!
2. In other words, love Him with all because He is **worthy** of *all* your love!
- a. As I showed you before, the only reason we don't love Him with all is because we are blind and corrupt...
 - But brethren, does this not inspire you to ask Him to **show** you His glory...
 - Beg Him, plead with Him!
 - The more you see it, the more you will love Him for He is altogether lovely!
 - b. Come now, surely you see enough excellence in Him to love Him more than you do...
 - But even as much as you don't see Him now,
 - give your all to Him in faith, knowing that as you discover Him more, you will wish you had loved Him more!

TRANS> Love Him because He is altogether lovely. That is the first reason to love Him.

B. Second, love Him because He is your Creator.

1. Why are you here my friend?
 - You are here because the Lord God put you here!
 - You did not put yourself here...
 - All you are and all you have is the gift of God...

- He has made you for Himself.
 - You will be forever restless until you realise that...
 - You will be reaching for this and that, and striving for this and the other...
 - But you will find no rest until you settle upon living for God, finding all your purpose in serving Him and knowing Him—in bringing glory to Him.
2. Not only did He make you, but He made you in His own image!
- What is an image?
 - It is a picture of something, a portrait, a likeness...
 - You are a portrait of God, because God made you in His image...
 - That is why, on a creaturely level, you have some wisdom, some power, some mercy, some love, some justice...
 - That is why you are a social creature...
 - You were made to reflect the glory of God in human flesh.
 - That is what a person is supposed to be.
 - What a privilege it is to represent God—to be made in His image!
 - Can you not pour out your heart and soul in loving devotion to Him who gave you His very own glorious image?
 - He is your Creator!
3. And just look at all the things He has given you to enjoy in creation!
- He has given us each other,
 - He gave you a husband or wife—children and parents!
 - He has given us a huge variety of delicious foods...
 - He has given you a fascinating world to explore, a sun to rule the day and a moon and stars to rule the night.
 - What excellent thing do you have that you did not receive from His hand?
 - Oh yes, I know that sin has corrupted many of these things, but God handed them to us in the beginning without corruption...
 - And so because He is our Creator and sole provider of all that we are and have,
 - can you give Him less than total allegiance and love?

C. Love Him because He is your redeemer—if He is your redeemer!

1. Just consider what He has done, brothers and sisters who know Him...
 - Our world came from His hand in perfection, but we corrupted our way by rebelling against Our Creator...
 - He justly sentenced us to eternal death in the Lake of Fire for spurning His great person and His great love...
 - Justice could do nothing else—it would be imperfection and corruption in Him to let us go free!
2. But He did not leave us all to perish in our sin and misery under His condemnation.
 - In His marvellous love and grace, He sent His Son—the One He lived with in glory for all eternity...
 - And the Son came willingly into our world, took our flesh to Himself, and humbled Himself to the point of death on the cross...
 - He did it to take our sin away.
 - This is unbelievable mercy and love!
 - Who could have thought that sinners like us could be cleansed!
 - We had no way to cleanse ourselves, but Jesus has gone to Hell in our place so that all who believe in Him are set free from condemnation!
3. This is the foundation of our love for God now—
 - a. We love Him because He first loved us!
 - His greatest commandment is to love Him—and we do it because He first loved us!
 - This is what the whole Bible is about...
 - b. You cannot love Him until you come to know His redeeming love...
 - Yes, we live in a hard world—a world torn by sin and ugliness...
 - But this is our own fault...
 - And now our God has come to redeem us through grace of His only Son and restore the glory He designed.
 - c. And if you will come to Jesus,
 - He promises to give you a heart of love...
 - He promises that He will circumcise your heart to love Him...
 - He will show You His love in Christ, and you will love Him...

- and that love will grow and grow until it fills your heart and soul and mind!

d. Oh my friends, you cannot know this love unless you will look to Jesus.

- He is the lens through which the glory and beauty of God will begin to shine forth on the horizon of your life...
 - And He will fill your heart and soul until there is no room left—
 - You will love Him with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind!
 - Every bone and every artery will love Him.

TRANS> And this will be all your happiness! This leads us to reason number four...

- We have seen that we have reason to love Him because is lovely, because He created us, and because he redeemed us, and now see that you should...

D. Love Him because this is all your happiness!

1. This is the how you are brought to the fullness that your heart aches for—that wholeness, that completeness, that satisfaction...

- It is found in giving yourself wholly to Him...
 - This is the first and great commandment!
 - This is your life as life ought to be!

2. Jesus tells us that this sums everything up...

- There is no other reason to live.
 - But when you live this way, what joy will be yours!
 - Jesus is the only source of this life...
 - Come to Him who is the source and root of love and be restored your Father through Him.
 - He promises that He will take away that stony heart and give you heart that warmly responds to the living God!
- Heaven is loving God...
 - That is what Jesus came to restore us to...
 - And at that last day, it will be restored to all those who have loved His appearing to perfection.

3. How happy we will be in Heaven where this love is perfected in all!

- a. We will love God with all our heart soul mind and strength!

- We will see His glory with clear vision and be enraptured with Him!
 - Absolutely delighted in Him!
- b. We will love our neighbour as ourselves...
- No more of these bitter selfish malicious attitudes...
 - We will have only a sweet going out from self to care for others and to serve them.
- c. We will be loved by others...
- No one will try to take advantage of you...
 - All will be out for other!

This is what you have to look forward to!

A. What did they hope to accomplish?

1. Probably hoped that Jesus would put His own commandment over Moses'
 - Remember, they thought Jesus did not respect Moses because he rejected the traditions. To them, the two went hand in hand.
 - They hoped to accuse Him.
2. Of course their hope was foolish...
 - Jesus did fully respect the Law of Moses and insisted that nothing would change.

- He did not come with a new law, but to fulfill the old.
- B. How glad we should be that they asked Jesus this question.
- It was the occasion for some very helpful instruction that we will look at today about the greatest commandment.

I. Here is a summary statement.

- A. A summary statement is very helpful because it helps us evaluate our performance. (the result is, we are humbled)
- B. A summary statement is very helpful because it gives us a focal point (a single goal to aim at)
- C. The way it works...
1. We need a summary to keep us from getting lost in the details...
 2. We need details to keep us from settling for the illusion that we are generally doing what is right when the specifics aren't there.
 - Jesus says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments"

II. Consider the content of the summary statement

- A. That we are to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind...
1. Our heart is the inner person
 2. Our soul is our life
 3. Our mind is our thoughts
- B. That we are to love our neighbour as ourselves.
1. This is sheer justice (for we are brothers)
 2. This is inseparable from our love to God (for our neighbour is made in God's image).

III. How are we ever to meet this requirement?

- A. We love Him because He first loved us.
- B. We receive grace for obedience (Deut 30:6). This love is a certain primary product of the new birth. This explains why true believers are referred to by this characteristic alone (I John 2:3-5) and believers are called those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible (Eph 6:24) and unbelievers are called those who do not love our Lord Jesus. (1 Cor 16:22).
- C. Jesus Christ fulfills this for us as our righteousness

A Question about the Commandments

Matthew 22:34-40

Halifax: 8 October 2006

Psalm 116, 18-A, 31-G, 45, 145-C

Gathering Music Hymn 593: Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord

Song of Praise: Psalm 45

Song of Confession: Psalm 119-M

Song of Gratitude: Psalm 116-C

Outline:

Introduction: The test that was put to Jesus by a lawyer

C. What did they hope to accomplish?

1. Probably hoped that Jesus would put His own commandment over Moses'
 - Remember, they thought Jesus did not respect Moses because he rejected the traditions. To them, the two went hand in hand.
 - They hoped to accuse Him.
2. Or course their hope was foolish...
 - Jesus did fully respect the Law of Moses and insisted that nothing would change.
 - He did not come with a new law, but to fulfill the old.

D. How glad we should be that they asked Jesus this question.

- It was the occasion for some very helpful instruction that we will look at today about the greatest commandment.

IV. Here is a summary statement.

- A. A summary statement is very helpful because it helps us evaluate our performance. (the result is, we are humbled)
- B. A summary statement is very helpful because it gives us a focal point (a single goal to aim at)
- C. The way it works...
 1. We need a summary to keep us from getting lost in the details...

2. We need details to keep us from settling for the illusion that we are generally doing what is right when the specifics aren't there.

- Jesus says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments"

V. Consider the content of the summary statement

A. That we are to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind...

1. Our heart is the inner person
2. Our soul is our life
3. Our mind is our thoughts

B. That we are to love our neighbour as ourselves.

1. This is sheer justice (for we are brothers)
2. This is inseparable from our love to God (for our neighbour is made in God's image).

VI. How are we ever to meet this requirement?

A. We love Him because He first loved us.

B. We receive grace for obedience (Deut 30:6). This love is a certain primary product of the new birth. This explains why true believers are referred to by this characteristic alone (I John 2:3-5) and believers are called those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible (Eph 6:24) and unbelievers are called those who do not love our Lord Jesus. (1 Cor 16:22).

C. Jesus Christ fulfills this for us as our righteousness

Luke parallels only in a secondary sense. It was a different occasion.

34 ¶ But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

34 oi de farisaioi akousantev oti efimwsen touv saddoukaiouv sunhcyhsan epi to auto

silenced

- MORRIS> lit> muzzled.
- MAC> Pharisees must have had mixed feelings when they heard about this, for they would have been glad that the Sadducees were put to silence, but at the same time, dismayed that it was proving so difficult to discredit Jesus. Now they would send one of their own, since their disciples and the Herodians had failed.

gathered together

- MORRIS> This looks like a more or less formal assembly, but it is difficult to tell how the silencing of the Sadducees prompted it.

35 **Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question, testing Him, and saying,***

35 kai ephrwthsen eiv ex autwn nomikov peirazwn auton kai legwn

lawyer nomikov

- MORRIS> one learned in the law of Moses.
- JRS> Ordinarily, Matthew calls these men scribes, but this one is referred to as an expert in the law.
 - MAC> Perhaps he was their most learned and astute expert on scriptural and rabbinical law in their ranks. But he also seems to be a cut above the others in honesty and humility.
- HEND notes that this man seems to be better than most. He approves of the answer Jesus gives and repeats it, and is commended by Jesus in Mark. He also received no rebuke from Jesus for his question (as in 22:18).
 - It is difficult to know why this more noble fellow was chosen to represent the Pharisees. Was it that they thought Jesus would not suspect Him? Or did he go without being sent, perhaps to prove that Jesus would answer well? Or maybe he changed his mind about Jesus because of his answer.

testing Him

- MORRIS> Another restless attempt to trick Jesus into an answer that would discredit Him either in the eyes of the authorities or in the eyes of the people.
- RYLE> The question was not asked in a friendly spirit, but great good came out of it!
- JRS> Perhaps they even hoped that Jesus would claim superiority over Moses and present a new commandment of His own. Even though He had said that not one jot or tittle would fail in the law (Matthew 5:17-18), these legalists did not believe that He respected the law because He did not follow the traditions of the fathers that were designed to ensure that the Law was kept (like the washing of hands). In their minds, remember, the two could not be separated.

36 **"Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?"**

36 didaskale poia entolh megalh en tw nomw

MORRIS> The idea here was that of the 613 commandments, it would be difficult to say which was the greatest. He hoped that Jesus would give an answer that could be used to discredit Him. The discussion could lead anywhere, but that was his hope.

MAC agrees with Morris here, adding that the scribes had their own schemes which they proudly defended about the priority of the commandments.

HEND> The Pharisees and Rabbis, devoted to hair-splitting legalism, often discussed and debated about the relative greatness of the commandments.

37 Jesus said to him," 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

37 o de ihsouv efh autw agaphseiv kurion ton yeon sou en olh kardia sou kai en olh quch sou kai en olh th dianoia sou

MAC> the shema (Deut 6:4-9, 11:13-21, Numbers 15:37-41) was cited by the faithful Jews of Jesus' day twice daily.

CAL> There is no fault in the righteousness that the Law requires, the fault is in man who is unable to obtain that righteousness.

- God sets forth the requirement, then he offers a gratuitous righteousness without works, or better to say, but the works of another.

the Lord your God

- CAL> Love should be excited because:
 - He is our creator (the actual creator of heaven and earth).
 - He is our redeemer. (free adoption)

love

- MAC> The love in view here is that intelligent, purposeful, committed love that is an act of the will. Contrast with phileo which refers to tender affection and emotion; and eros which speaks of sensual love.
- MAC> The one who loves demonstrates his love by:
 - Meditating on God's glory: I will love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies." (Ps 18:1-3 NKJV)
 - Trusting in God's power: "Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! *For* the LORD preserves the faithful, And fully repays the proud person." (Ps 31:23 NKJV)

- Seeking fellowship with God: O God, You *are* my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness *is* better than life, My lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the *night* watches. Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.” (Ps 63:1-8 NKJV)
- Loving God’s law: “Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble.” (Ps 119:165 NKJV)
- Being zealous for God’s honour: “Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.” (Ps 69:9 NKJV)
- Loving what God loves: “The law of Your mouth *is* better to me Than thousands of *coins of gold and silver.*” (Ps 119:72 NKJV) “MEM. Oh, how I love Your law! It *is* my meditation all the day.” (Ps 119:97 NKJV) “How sweet are Your words to my taste, *Sweeter* than honey to my mouth!” (Ps 119:103 NKJV)
- Loving whom God loves: “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.” (1Jo 5:1 NKJV)
- Hating what God hates: “You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.” (Ps 97:10 NKJV)
- Grieving over sin: “And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.” (Mt 26:75 NKJV)
- Rejecting the world: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (1Jo 2:15 NKJV)
- Longing to be with Christ: “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2Ti 4:8 NKJV)
- Obeying God wholeheartedly: ““He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”” (Joh 14:21 NKJV)
- MAC> To say that Jesus died for sin is to say that He died for man’s hatred of God, because hatred of God the essence of all sin.

heart, soul, and mind

- HEND> No need to overanalyse here. What is meant is that man should love God with all the faculties with which God has endowed him. He must use all his powers to the full. God's wholehearted love must not be answered in a half-hearted manner. After all, there is no love so great as His love (John 15:13, Rom 5:6-10, 2 Cor 8:9).
- MAC> These are not three categories, rigidly defined, but comprehensiveness that is in view. Yet, it is helpful to look at these words to see the fullness of love...
 - heart speaks of the core
 - soul speaks of the emotion
 - mind speaks of intellectual, wilful vigour and determination.
- MORRIS observes a slight variation from the original here (all your mind instead of all your might). This is more or less irrelevant because the three fold repetition is what makes the difference, showing that love is to be with one's whole being.

RYLE> Would we train children aright? Let us teach them to love God.

JRS> We may add strength (as Deut and Mark do).

- RYLE> None work so well as those who work for love. We may work out of fear of punishment or for reward, but love will bring much better labour from us.

38 "This is *the* first and great commandment.

38 auth estin prwth kai megalh entolh

HEND> It is the greatest because it epitomises the most excellent response to the Most Wonderful Being, and is basic to all other genuine love.

39 "And *the* second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

39 deutera de omoia auth agaphseiv ton plhsion sou wv seauton

Jesus was not asked this, but as He wanted to give a complete summary of man's duty, He added it.

love your neighbour as yourself

- MORRIS points out that while more than the guy next door is meant, the guy next door is also to be included (sometimes its easier to love the neighbour as an abstract subject).
- RYLE> Love is the grand secret of right behaviour toward your neighbour.

40 "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

40 en tautaiv taiv dusin entolaiv olov o nomov kai oi
profhtai kremantai

MORRIS> Anyone who loves God and people wholeheartedly will not come short in religious observances or in doing what is proper to other people.

- Jesus swept aside all the pettifogging nonsense with his revolutionary insistence on the centrality of love and for good measure he added that the teaching of the prophets is included in the command. At one stroke he did away with any understanding of the service of God that sees it as concerned with the acquiring of merit or with an emphasis on liturgical concerns. What matters can be summed up in one word: love."

RYLE> Many profess to admire love and talk much of its importance and their desire to see them increased, and yet they hate the principles which alone can produce them. Let us stand fast in the old paths. We cannot have the fruits and flowers without the roots; we cannot have love to God and man without faith in Christ and without regeneration.

- RYLE says: How can we love God?
 - First there must be faith: Faith is necessary because we love God because He first loved us. Until we are reconciled and have the spirit of adoption, we may love idols, but we will never love God—the God of the Bible.
 - Second, there must be regeneration: Before we can love our neighbour, we must be born again. We must put off the old man which is full born selfish, hateful, hating one another (Titus 3:3) and put on the new man who bears the fruits of the Spirit, the first of which is love.

RYLE says of Jesus' answer here:

- How simple, yet how comprehensive
- How soon repeated, yet how much they contain
- How humbling and condemning they are
- How much they prove our need of daily mercy
- How happy the world for observing them

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Question 42

Halifax, 29 August 2004

Q. What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?

A. **The sum of the Ten Commandments is, to love the Lord our God with all heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbour as ourselves.**

In previous weeks, I have shown you how the Ten Commandments are a very helpful summary of the moral law.

- They do not tell us how to be saved now that we have fallen into sin...
 - but they tell us how God expected us to live from the start.
 - They are a summary of His unchanging moral law.
- It is a very gracious thing that God has given us this law now that we are fallen.
 - Sin causes us to distort and twist what we know to be right,
 - and it is a mercy of God that He condescends to us in our weakness to clearly lay out what is expected of us.
 - It gives us a much needed objective basis to measure ourselves by.
 - Here, God has laid out all the main points of the moral law for us so we can be clear about what He expects of us.
 - The Ten Commandments are a very helpful summary for us to turn to.

But God, in His divine wisdom, has also seen fit to give us a summary of this summary.

- Jesus presents this summary to us in Matthew 22.
- Listen now as I read to you from Matthew 22:34-37:

34 ¶ But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.
35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying,
36 "Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?"
37 Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'
38 "This is *the* first and great commandment.
39 "And *the* second *is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
40 "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

When Jesus says that on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets,

- He is telling us that these two commandments sum up everything that God requires of us.
- If the Ten Commandments are a summary of God's law, these two commandments are a summary of the summary.

IV. Consider what these two commandments call for from us.

II. The first one calls us to have total love for God!

1. To love Him with all the heart means that we are to love Him from the inside.
 - Whenever the Bible speaks of the heart, it refers to the inner man as opposed to the outer man...
 - It is enough to love a king outwardly—
 - to obey him and honour him and delight in him in all your actions...
 - He will be pleased with you and never needs to know what you really think of him in your heart...
 - But we greatly displease God if we do not delight in Him with our whole heart because He knows what we think of Him and all the thoughts we have toward Him.
 - Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart.
 - That means that He sees every thought of distrust, rebellion, dissatisfaction, love for idols and other gods—
 - He sees it all and demands that we love Him with our whole heart.

2. Secondly, He tells us to love Him with all our soul...
 - This is very similar to the heart, only the soul refers more to what animates us...
 - The soul is the life principle that God breathed into us...
 - And the idea is that everything we do should be animated by love for Him.
 - When you get up in the morning, it should be because of love for Him...
 - When you eat your food, it should be with love to Him...
 - When you serve your neighbour at work, it should be because of love for Him...
 - When you take up your cross, it should be because love for Him.
 - When you endure trials, it should be with love to Him.
 - When you worship, it should be motivated by love for God.

- That seems very obvious, doesn't it?
- But how often do we come to worship with other motivations!
- We are to love Him with all our soul!
 - to desire none besides Him!

TRANS> besides love with all the heart and all the soul...

3. We are also commanded to love Him with all our mind...
 - Love for God is not to be blind—
 - You are to exert ourselves to know Him...
 - You are to acknowledge Him in all your ways—
 - To see His hand in giving you your daily bread, in giving you your friends, in answering your prayers, in giving you salvation.
 - You are to behold all His glorious attributes, especially as they are revealed in Christ—
 - To love Him for His grace that is shown in giving His only Son for sinners...
 - To love Him for His power displayed in raising Him from the dead...
 - To love Him for His justice displayed in the laws demand that He suffer if we are to be forgiven...
 - To love Him for His wisdom revealed in His counsel and works.
 - Our love is to be an intelligent love that delights to learn more and more of Him with eager joy.

III. Now it may seem petty and odd to be commanded to love...

3. We think of love as something that is not genuine unless you fall into it.
 - To command it makes it insincere and put on...
 - But this is just the point of this love—
 - It is expected of us and commanded of us that we love Him without any insincerity!
 - The fact that we do not love Him does not change the fact that it is our duty to love Him...
 - and that we ought to love Him and would love Him if we were good.
4. You see, our failure to love Him perfectly has no basis in Him...

- It is not that there is something wrong with Him, the problem is with us.
 - It is not that there is anything unlovely in Him,
 - but it is that we are corrupted so that we do not see how lovely He is...
- God is altogether glorious and excellent and there is no flaw in Him to hinder our love for Him...
 - all the problem for any lack of love is a problem with us!
- You know how you feel if there is a book that you absolutely adore...
 - And then you meet someone that can't stand that book...
 - It seems like there is something wrong with person—
 - Why can't they see the virtue and the excellence of that book?
 - Something seems to be wrong with them.
- I have used the illustration before of someone who loves to swim in the sewer...
 - There is something wrong with such a person...
 - How much more is there something wrong with you if you don't love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- Yet, how anxious we are to accuse Him—
 - to look for reasons in Him to justify our lack of love for Him!
 - Instead we need to repent and see that it is nothing but our own corruption and perversion that hinders our love.
 - There is nothing wrong with Him, it is all us.

IV. Second to the command to love God is the command to love our neighbour as ourselves.

4. Just as loving God with all is simple justice because of His excellence, so loving our neighbour as ourselves is also simple justice...
 - c. Our neighbour is also a son or daughter of Adam—
 - we are all of one blood...
 - we are no better than our neighbour.
 - d. Some people have questioned the Lord about this standard and said, “What if I don't love myself?”
 - But I think that is to misunderstand the nature of love.
 - It is true that we often foolishly do great harm to ourselves—

- we make choices that are harmful to our bodies... drug or alcohol abuse...
 - We choose companions that are not good for us...
 - We may even commit suicide.
- But Jesus is not setting what we do as the standard, but the strength of commitment we have to ourselves...
- Suicide and drug abuse are not deeds of self hatred, but expressions of very foolish self-love.
 - A person who does these things is so committed to his own comfort that he is willing to go to such great lengths—even to murder—to try to obtain it!
 - To get high, he will harm others, steal, neglect his duty to others, and do anything—all in an effort to obtain greater comfort for himself.
 - Such a person may not know how to love himself with wisdom, but there is no doubt that he has a huge commitment to himself!
 - It is that commitment that is to be our standard in loving others.
5. But who is your neighbour?
- Jesus emphasises in the parable of the good Samaritan is the person God puts in your path—
- c. no matter if it is an enemy or a friend—you are to do good to them...
- You are to love your neighbour as yourself.
- d. A funny perversion of this teaching is those who love the stranger and don't love the people near to them...
- More than once, I have spoken to a frustrated wife or daughter whose father was full of volunteer work and generosity to those outside the home...
 - But who was cold and uncaring to the needs of his own wife and children!
 - This is a wretched sort of hypocrisy, but one that is far too common.
 - A person enjoys the reputation that comes from caring for those far away, but does not want to go to the trouble to love his nearest neighbour.
6. This love for neighbour is very closely related to love for God...
- d. God is in heaven and He needs nothing from you...
- Your heart, soul, and mind are all to be devoted to Him,

- But how are you to express your love in action?
- e. You are to express your love in action primarily by loving your neighbour.
 - Jesus teaches us that our love for him will be measured by how we have loved our brothers.
 - He counts what we do for one another as having been done for Him.
 - In other words, if you want to do something for God, then do something for your neighbour!
 - He is the receiver of your service to God!
 - f. That is why a person can never claim to love God if he does not love his neighbour.
 - John asks, “How can you love God whom you have not seen if you do not love your brother whom you have seen?”
 - It is a lie to say that you love God if you don’t love your neighbour.

So that is what we are called to do in this summary...

V. And now I want you to consider how helpful it is to have this summary!

II. First of all, this summary is helpful because it gives us a goal to aim for—a focal point, a point of emphasis.

1. Jesus says that loving God comes first—then loving our neighbour!
 - a. It is so easy to get our focus off God and start focusing on loving other people and trying to please them.
 - In Luke 14:26, Jesus says: "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."
 - Loving God comes first!
 - If our own mother wants us to do something contrary to Christ, we are to please Christ.
 - You have to be willing displease people you love whenever obedience to Christ displeases them.
 - b. Paul puts it like this:
 - Ga 1:10: “Do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”
 - What a problem this has become today in churches where the whole worship service is designed to please men instead of to honour God!

- Instead of preaching Christ, these churches try to market Him!
 - This is to love your neighbour more than God.
2. It so easy for us to forget what is most important (to lose this focus)
- In our sanctification, we often focus on the less important thing instead of the more important...
 - a. For example, a man has a problem with pornography—
 - What is his big concern?
 - It is the pornography.
 - Well, that should be a concern, but if he remembers that everything is summed up in loving God,
 - then he might realise that his greater problem is that he does not love God as He should!
 - He can put up all His barriers to try to keep him away from pornography,
 - but what he needs most of all is to love God and to delight in Him.
 - Then He won't feel that he needs his pornography to get his little high—now he has something far better.
 - b. This summary helps us to see that the priority is not just getting away from an annoying sin—
 - It is loving God.
 - So often we forget that in the midst of all our rules.
 - If I (as a pastor) see someone who had a problem with too much television,
 - my priority is not to try to get that person to stop watching so much television...
 - my priority is to get them to love God more—the television will take care of itself!

TRANS> This summary is helpful because it helps us to focus on what really matters...

III. Secondly, this summary is helpful because it reminds us that we must have a heart in our obedience.

1. It is the easiest thing in the world sometimes to conform outwardly to God's commandments, but this is nothing without love.

- 1 Cor 13.
 - You can give to the poor and do all sorts of wonderful things, but if these are not done with a motivation to please God,
 - if they are not done out of love for Him—they are worthless!
2. Consider these examples of outward obedience without love...
- a. Sabbath keeping- A person can refrain from labour the whole day,
 - but if He really doesn't delight in being meditating on God but finds it a real drudgery,
 - He has not really kept the commandment at all.
 - The whole purpose of the Sabbath is that we might be able to worship God the whole day publicly and privately.
 - b. Another man may tithe at the rate of fifteen per cent—
 - But if he does it without love for God—
 - If he cares nothing for the worship he is supporting but is just keeping the rule...
 - He has not really pleased God with his tithe...
 - Or if he has no delight in helping the needy, no love for them—but only gives to meet the requirement,
 - He has missed his way!
 - c. Still another may be very friendly and full of outward civility and kindness when underneath he is raging with malice and bitterness...
 - This is not a loving person in God's eyes, no matter what other people may think.

TRANS> So the second reason this summary is so helpful is because it reminds us that shallow obedience without a root of love is useless obedience.

IV. The third reason this summary is so helpful is because it is able to humble us!

- 3. What a high standard it is! There is no one who has fulfilled it!
- d. Do you ever have a problem with pride?
 - Do you feel that you are superior to others?
 - Then come to this summary of the Commandments and you will find that you nothing to boast about.
- e. Who among you can say that you have loved God as much as you should?
 - Who among you can say that you have loved your neighbour as yourself?

- f. Pull out this standard to measure yourself,
 - and you will never be able to believe in perfectionism—that a person can reach a state of perfect holiness in this life...
 - Much less will you be able to tolerate the foolish doctrine of supererogation!
 - The doctrine that we can do more than God requires of us-- imagine, more than to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength!
 - We have hardly even begun!
 - Surely all have come desperately short of the glory of God!
 - A great injustice has been done!
 - God has not been given His due and we are to blame!
4. It is good to use these commandments to see how little true holiness and godliness there is in the world!
- c. Then you will see what a need there is to animate your prayers and labours for that God's will would be done on earth.
 - It will set you to praying for yourself...
 - It will set you to praying for your family...
 - It will set you to praying for the church...
 - It will set you to praying for the nation...
 - It will set you to praying for the world

TRANS> When you use these two commandments to see how little true holiness and godliness there is in the world it will not only animate your prayers...

- d. You will see your need (and the need of others) to come to Christ for salvation...
 - for mercy and forgiveness!
 - for grace and strength to change!
 - The promises of the covenant that we looked at this morning.
 - In Luke 10, Jesus used these two commandments to humble a man...
 - And the man began to squirm with the second of these:
 - Luke 10:29: But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

- This man could not bear the search light of these two commandments.
- Measure with this standard and you will see your need for a Saviour.

TRANS> When you use these two commandments to see how little true holiness and godliness there is in the world it will not only animate your prayers and show you your need for Christ...

- e. It will also cause you to yearn for heaven...
 - What a wonderful perfect place heaven will be where love is perfected!
 - It is good for us to long for such things, to aspire to them and contemplate them!
 - to give thanks that God is leading us to such perfection!

TRANS> And this leads us to the third thing I want you to consider tonight about this summary...

VI. Consider how wonderful it is to have a God whose law is summarised by love!

II. He has created the world to run by love!

1. How rational this is!

- Who could argue with this?
- Who could suggest some better standard to live by?

2. How drawing this is!

- Does it not draw you to your God when you learn that His law is love?
- That love is the thing He most delights in?
- How happy are you to be a servant in this kingdom!
 - It is not power, but love He values most...
 - rather, all power is to be used to love!
 - It is not knowledge, but love
 - rather knowledge is to be used to love (to learn of God and discover His goodness that you might love—to know how to love)
- There is no better more attractive principle for a kingdom to run on than love.

III. How happy we would have been if we had kept this law of love!

1. What delight we would have in God, what pleasure and joy in one another!
2. Let us therefore lament our fall and be deeply humbled by the ruin our sin has brought to God's world.

IV. How happy you should be to have a Saviour like Jesus is full of this love.

- How lovely is Jesus who kept this law of love in a fallen world...
1. How beautiful this man who came to give Himself a ransom for others...
 - who had no sin at all, but who bore the sin of others to set them free!
 - who had no other desire but to please the Father because He had loved Him from before the foundation of the world...
 - He delighted in Him so much that He went to such great measure to restore us to Him again!
 - What love for the Father, what love for us!
 2. Here you see the love of God revealed!
 - If you have seen Jesus, you have seen the Father!
 - He reveals the Father to you!
 - What reason you have to worship Him and give thanks to His name!

V. How happy we will be in Heaven where this love is perfected in all!

1. We will love God with all our heart soul mind and strength!
 - We will see His glory with clear vision and be enraptured with Him!
 - Absolutely delighted in Him!
2. We will love our neighbour as ourselves...
 - No more of this bitter selfish malicious attitudes...
 - We will have only a sweet going out from self to care for others and to serve them.
3. We will be loved by others...
 - No one will try to take advantage of you...
 - All will be out for other!

This is what you have to look forward to!