

Theology Simply Explained — WSC42 “Loving God, Self, and Neighbor”

Pastor walks his children through Westminster Shorter Catechism question 42—especially explaining how loving God with one’s whole being is the purpose of our existence, and the only true way to love oneself, which demands that we also desire the same for our neighbor.

Q42. What is the sum of the ten commandments? ***The sum of the ten commandments is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.***

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Our shorter catechism this week is number 42. What is the sum of the Ten Commandments? The answer is the sum of the Ten Commandments is to love the Lord, Our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind, and our neighbor as ourselves.

Well, of course the Ten Commandments. Very helpfully concisely, like we. I heard last week, the moral law is summarized just in these 10 words. But the sum of the Ten Commandments here. Is not just being more concise. It is giving us the purpose and the character. Of what it means to obey.

God. What it means to obey God what it means to keep his moral law. to live in right response. To who he is. And to whom he has made us to be. So God being the creature and the blessedness. of all things. Well, not the creature. So God being the creator.

And the ever blessed God in himself. When we don't just follow the Commandments merely to obey it. We follow the Commandments rightly to respond. To him being the ever blessed God, which means finding all blessedness in him. Giving our whole life as an adoring worship. Of him. The pouring out.

Of our entire being to him but even more because he is God. And we are the creature. Receiving of, His goodness and generosity and life being poured into us. so But again, there is this. dependence and devotion and Delight. but dependence and Delight. Perhaps, primarily loving the Lord, Our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, And with all our mind, if we remember that this is the first great part.

And that's not just something that we do in the first table of the law. It's something we do in both tables. Of the law, but if we remember that, we'll remember that. the moral law, the Ten Commandments. is not merely telling us what our Behavior should be.

It's telling us why and how Our Behavior should be. Because God is who he is. And is the why? And the how is with the response of our whole being to him. So that's why it's heart. Soul strength. And every part of our being. But all heart, all soul, all strength, all mind.

The entirety of every part. Of our being. And since God in his creating has given man. The unique place of being made in His image. That means we don't just love our neighbor as ourselves. In order to Put our neighbor on the same level that we are. It's recognizing that we being made in His image.

Ought to find all of our Delight, all of our life in him and devote, our whole self to him. And that our neighbor. Being made in God's image. Ought to find all of his Delight in God. And devote all of his being to God. This is the proper love of oneself and this is the proper love of one's neighbor.

And so it's not defined by what our neighbor wants. It's not even defined by what we want. Sometimes you hear people say well you can't love your neighbor as yourself unless you love yourself first. And what they mean? Do certain kinds of things that the world considers self-care some of which Appropriate and permissible and helpful, and some of which may not.

Now, the saying is actually true. If it is subject to the first great, commandment, You cannot love your neighbor as yourself until you love yourself first. And Loving yourself means. Finding all of your Delight, all of your life in the Lord and devoting all of your life to him.

That God himself is your blessedness and his glory and worship is your aim. If that's not what you want for yourself, you're not loving yourself. You may be pleasing yourself or comforting yourself. But, to love yourself. Truly is to keep the first great commandment. And if you know that, then you are ready.

To keep the second great commandment. And love your neighbor as yourself. Keep all of God's law with an aim towards. Your neighbor. Loving the Lord. Having the Lord as their God. And loving him as their God with all their heart soul, mind and strength. So that it is not.

To encourage your neighbor and sin. To celebrate their pride. Of any kind. And they're or to celebrate their pride in any kind of sin. Let alone the sorts of sin that.

Signs of God's Wrath. Against all of our sin. So, what is the sum of the Ten Commandments? The sum of the Ten Commandments is to love the Lord, Our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength. And with all our mind, And our neighbor as ourselves.