

The Challengers are Silenced – Part 2

Matthew 22:15-46 - NCBC, May 9, 2021

Main Point: **Jesus silences all challenges to His supremacy.**

Review:

- Round 1: The challenge of a competing allegiance. (15-22)
- Round 2: The challenge of an earthly perspective. (23-33)

- Round 3: The challenge of a selfish arrogance (34-40)
 - False Choice: Either divide or abolish the law!
 - Jesus: The whole law is from love, and for love.
 - Therefore, nothing is more important for you than loving Jesus.

- Victory: The supremacy of the victorious Christ! (41-46)
 - False Choice: Either son of David or Lord!
 - Jesus: The Messiah is both fully human and fully God.
 - Therefore, be in awe of the royal glory and power of Jesus!

Application: **Worship Jesus the Christ as your Lord!**

Opening Announcements:

- **Happy Mother's Day!** We are making a donation to the Peoria Rescue Ministries' Esther House in honor of all our moms today. Thanks for all your prayers, sacrifice, and example of godliness!

- **Mateo and Gabby Alzate Ministry Report.** An exit offering will be collected today at the end of service to help support this couple's ongoing ministry for righteousness and peace in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco!

<<Jesus Messiah>>



What an appropriate song for us to sing together today. Messiah is the Old Testament word for “Christ.”¹ So when we refer to Jesus as “Messiah,” or “the Christ,” we are recognizing Him as God’s anointed Prophet, Priest, and King who rescues His people from their sins. Jesus is the Messiah who now reigns and rules over all!

¹ Messiah comes from the Hebrew word meaning “the anointed one,” and in Page **1a** of 14

the Greek New Testament the equivalent word is “Christ.”



So let's continue our worship of Him now by opening God's Word to **Matthew chapter 22**. If you do not have a Bible with you, simply raise your hand to receive a Bible this morning.

And while you are preparing to read from **Matthew chapter 22**, I want to invite you to join our,



Summer Ministry in Goodfield.

This summer, there's two weekly opportunities to grow deeper and reach farther for the glory of God in Goodfield. Starting Wednesday June 2 at 6:30pm, our elders will be teaching a 13-week Bible Study called

“Discovering Christianity.” We pray that instruction on the basics of Christianity may interest some of our Goodfield neighbors who don't yet have a church home. And all of you are also invited on Wednesday nights to grow deeper into your understanding of God's grace.

Also starting *this week*, every Thursday evening at 6pm, you are invited to meet at the Goodfield Building where you can choose to either pray or join one of our Door-to-Door ministry teams.

These Thursday evenings are very family friendly, and I want to encourage all of us to attend at least one of these Thursday evenings sometime this summer.

This is something all of us can do – either praying or going door to door – you can pick whichever is a better fit for you. But together as the body of Christ, we will pray and serve together each Thursday evening for His future glory in Goodfield.

Church – this is such an exciting time in the history of New Castle Bible Church. God desires to do something in us and through us that is bigger than any of us.

But please realize... this ministry expansion into Goodfield is an opportunity that God has entrusted to every member here...not just our leaders.

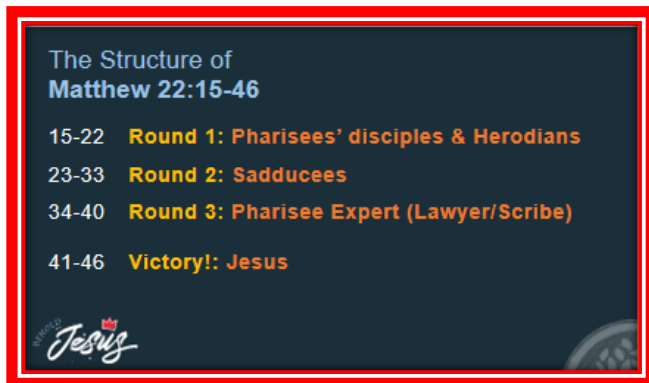
Since our leaders are the ones who initially receive a building donation like this, sometimes we assume that it's the leaders' responsibility to follow up and do the actual ministry. But God has unexpectedly brought this opportunity to all of us. We didn't expect this, and we weren't looking for it. But God is stretching us and calling

us all away from our comfort zones in order to increase our satisfaction in His glory. Therefore all of our lives must be affected in some way this summer.

So please don't miss out! Plan now for how you can be a part of this summer ministry. If you absolutely can't attend in person, set an alarm on your phone during these times to specifically pause and pray. Because the builders labor in vain unless the Lord is building the house.² None of us yet know how God is going to finish this story...but this we do know: Our God is good, and He is in control, and He desires to show us more of His glory as we humbly follow His leading into these new harvest fields.³

Now today is part 2 of our study in **Matthew 22 verses 15-46**, where Jesus silences all of His religious opponents one final time before the cross.

Last week we introduced this passage as if,



It was a verbal boxing match between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.

In the first three rounds the religious leaders challenge Jesus with questions intended to trap him. However every time Jesus' answer leaves them speechless.

Round 4 is the knock-out round. In Round 4 Jesus turns the tables on His unbelieving opponents and asks them a question they cannot answer, thereby proving for the final time before His death that He indeed is the Son of God, the Christ, who alone is deserving of our worship.



So please stand in honor of the reading of God's Word, as I read this 4-part debate from **Matthew 22, verse 15**, in the English Standard Version:

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. 16 And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. 17 Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" 18 But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? 19 Show me the coin for the tax." And they

² Psalm 127:1
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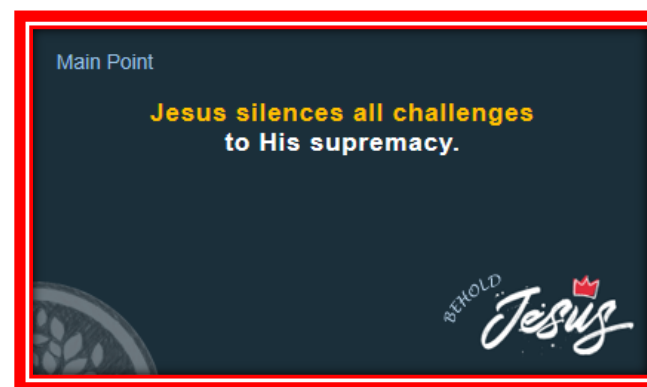
³ C.f. Matthew 9:36-38

brought him a denarius. 20 And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” 21 They said, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” 22 When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away. 23 The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question, 24 saying, “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.’ 25 Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. 26 So too the second and third, down to the seventh. 27 After them all, the woman died. 28 In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her.” 29 But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. 31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: 32 ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.” 33 And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching. 34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” 37 And he 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 great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, 42 saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” 43 He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, 44 “ ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet” ’? 45 If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” 46 And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Verse 44 of **Matthew 22** in our text today paints quite the picture of victory doesn't it? All of God's enemies are now laying submissive before Jesus, and Jesus is using their necks as His footstool in a posture of ultimate supremacy.

It's a provocative image of the future conquest of our Lord that is strategically used in Round 4 of this verbal boxing match to silence all of Jesus' challengers.

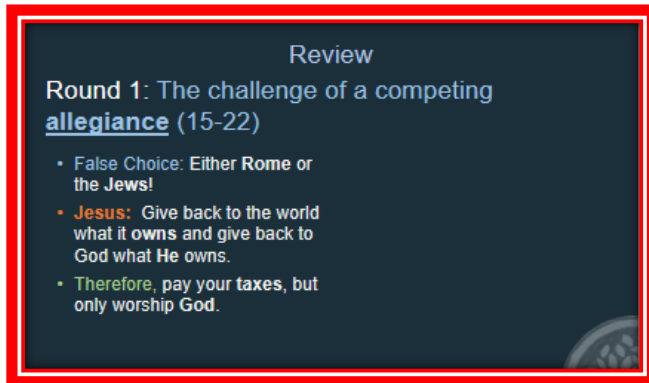


After all, Matthew is writing this section of his gospel account to help us understand how Jesus silences all challenges to His supremacy. No competition to Jesus

will ever defeat or silence Him. Jesus is Lord, and He reigns over all!

Last time we looked at the first two rounds of these challenges that came from religious leaders on the Tuesday before the cross. It was an interesting Scripture that covered everything from taxes, to marriage and sex, to the glories of our resurrection nature.

And do you remember who had the nerve to approach Jesus first in an unholy alliance? In **verse 16** we met some Pharisees-in-development along with the Herodians who approached Jesus with,



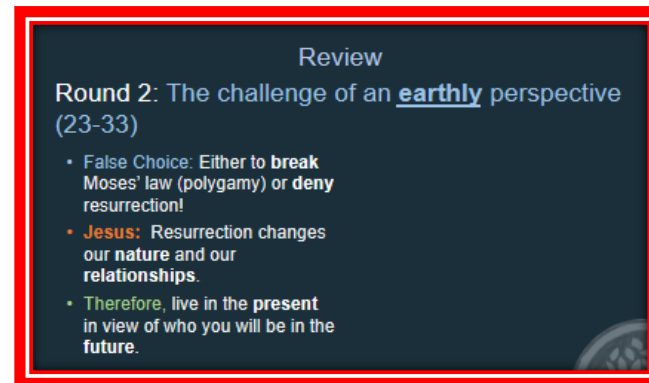
The challenge of a competing allegiance.

They asked Jesus about paying the Roman poll-tax. They were trying to trap Jesus with the false choice of either choosing allegiance to Rome or allegiance to the Jews. But Jesus masterfully exposed their hypocrisy, and reframed their question vertically, answering, “Give back to the world what it owns, and give back to God what He owns.” The world’s currency carries the image

of earthly rulers, and so it belongs to them. But your life carries the very image of God. Therefore your soul and your worship belongs to God alone. So pay your taxes to all human government, but only worship God. For it is only your devotion to God that will empower your ability to rightly submit to and serve your sinful authorities on earth.⁴

In other words, live your life to fulfill God’s purposes rather than your own. For all competing allegiances on earth will settle into proper harmony when we are living for God’s glory and most devoted to His supremacy over all things.

Then in **verse 23**, the secular liberals brought their,



challenge from an earthly perspective. Remember the Sadducees rejected all things supernatural, like angels and the afterlife. So they try to trap Jesus using a hypothetical story of a woman who was sequentially married to 7 brothers. And in **verse 28**, they ask, “In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be?”

⁴ C.f. Acts 23:5; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13-17

You see, the Sadducees were giving Jesus the false choice to either break Moses' law by affirming everlasting polygamy, or deny the reality of the resurrection. But in **verse 29** Jesus rebuked these elite rulers for not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God. Jesus explained that resurrection changes our nature and our relationships.

There's no human marriage in heaven because,



Our imperfect, earthly marriages here on earth – as sweet and precious as they are to us – are only created to be a temporary picture or reflection of the perfect, heavenly marriage of oneness that will exist forever between Christ and His church.

Ephesians 5:32 makes it clear that the ultimate purpose of marriage is not about making babies or finding earthly companionship. The ultimate purpose of earthly marriage is to be a living visual picture of the heavenly marriage between Jesus and forgiven sinners! And when we are in the very presence of the heavenly reality, there will no longer be any need for the temporary, imperfect picture.

Review

Round 2: The challenge of an earthly perspective (23-33)

- False Choice: Either to **break** Moses' law (polygamy) or **deny** resurrection!
- **Jesus:** Resurrection changes our **nature** and our **relationships**.
- **Therefore, live in the present** in view of who you will be in the **future**.

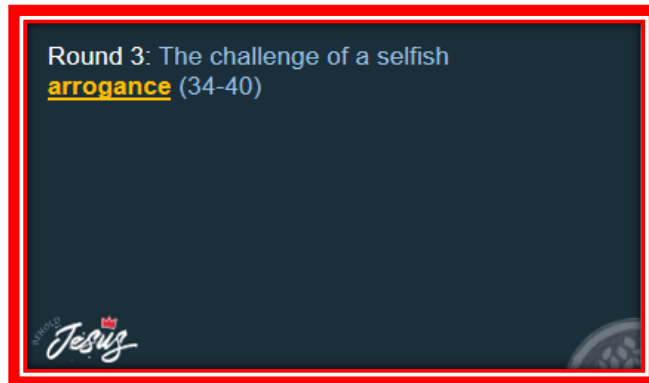
The resurrection changes our relationships, and our very nature. When we each experience our resurrection from the dead, we will be glorified – like the angels – unable to sin anymore and unhindered by sin's corruption!

Therefore, Jesus silences these secular teachers of naturalism... and calls us to live with an eternal perspective! Live in the present in view of your future! In other words, live most devoted to whatever will continue into eternity. For God is not a God of the dead, but a God of the living! And utmost devotion to Jesus will only make other human loves better, not worse.

Now we find ourselves at **verse 34**, where the Pharisees regather to strategize before entering Round 3 of this debate. After their own disciples and the Sadducees have been literally muzzled by the wisdom of Jesus, **verse 35** tells how they put forward their most renowned biblical scholar to test Jesus.

The word in **verse 35** is the word "lawyer," but like we previously mentioned, don't think defense attorney. Think seminary professor. This was the Pharisees' most respected expert in God's law and rabbinic tradition. If

anyone could go toe to toe with Jesus, certainly this intellectual giant of religion would have a chance.



Therefore Round 3 of this conflict represents the challenge of a selfish arrogance.

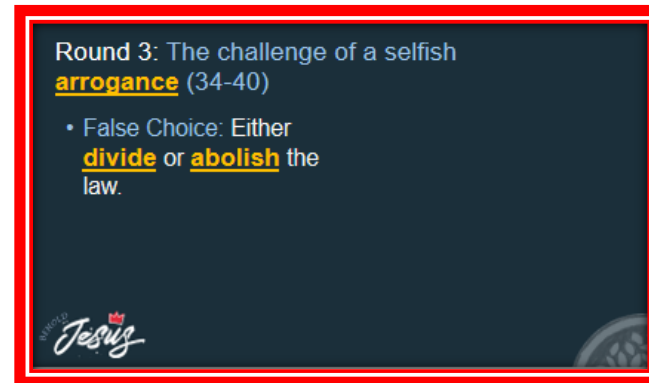
Again **verse 36** betrays the Pharisees' flattery as they address Jesus as "Teacher," as if He was one of their own respected rabbis. Then they set the trap:

Which is the great commandment in the Law? Which of Moses' commandments is the most important?

This expert in God's law knew well that there were 613 different laws given to God's people through Moses. According to the Pharisees, 365 of these laws were negative, and 248 were positive. Jewish scholars had debated for centuries which of these laws were "heavy" or absolutely binding, and which of these laws were "light" or less binding. After all, it seemed impossible that any person could perfectly obey all 613 laws in the fullest expression, and so countless hours were spent debating which of God's laws were major and which were minor.

⁵ Matthew 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44.

So please understand that this question presented,



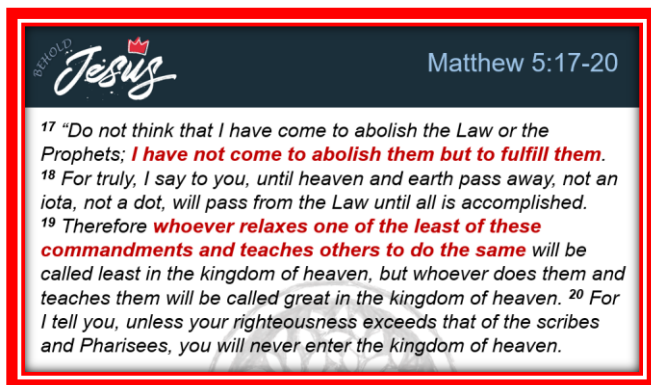
Another false choice. Here the Pharisees were trying to trap Jesus by putting Him in a position where He would have to either divide or abolish Moses' law.

Remember, the Pharisees were convinced that Jesus was teaching a different message than orthodox Judaism. So if they could get him to publicly dismiss or abolish the law of Moses, then of course He'd lose Jewish support as a heretic.

But in fact, while Jesus wasn't teaching something different from Moses, He was teaching a different gospel than these religious legalists. It wasn't Jesus that had moved away from Moses' law but the Jewish leaders themselves! All throughout the Sermon on the Mount Jesus used the phrase, "*You have heard it said, ... but I say to you.*"⁵

Jesus knew that He was teaching a different message than the religious legalists, but it wasn't because Jesus was trying to abolish or do away with the law of Moses,

but He was rather seeking to uphold and fulfill Moses' law! In fact, during the sermon on the mount,



Jesus clearly said,

*I have not come to abolish [the Law or the Prophets], but to fulfill them.*⁶

The Pharisees and the scribes were the ones making artificial divisions in God's law, relaxing some commandments they viewed as "lighter" than others.⁷ It was the Pharisees and scribes who had arrogantly added layers of human tradition onto God's law, only to make God's Words unrecognizable under all its Jewish dress.

Jesus' point was that the kingdom of heaven required a greater righteousness than what was taught and practiced by Israel's leaders.⁸ The kingdom of heaven requires not just external law-keeping, but love and devotion from the heart. The kingdom of heaven requires perfect obedience to all of God's will,⁹ since anyone who

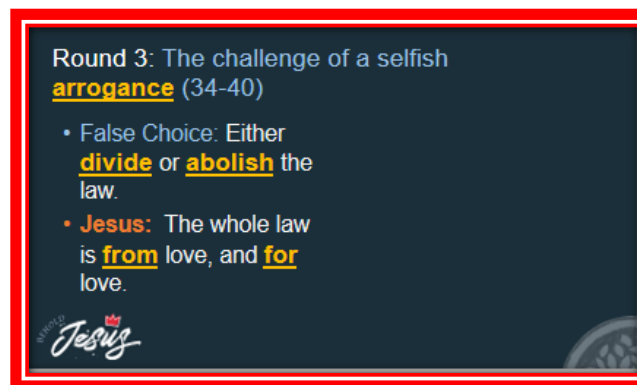
⁶ Matthew 5:17

⁷ Matthew 5:19

⁸ Matthew 5:20

breaks even a single commandment is accountable to the whole law.¹⁰

So here's the genius answer from Jesus in **verse 37**. Rather than fall into their trap of either dividing or abolishing God's law, Jesus upholds and unifies all of Moses' law under the banner of love.



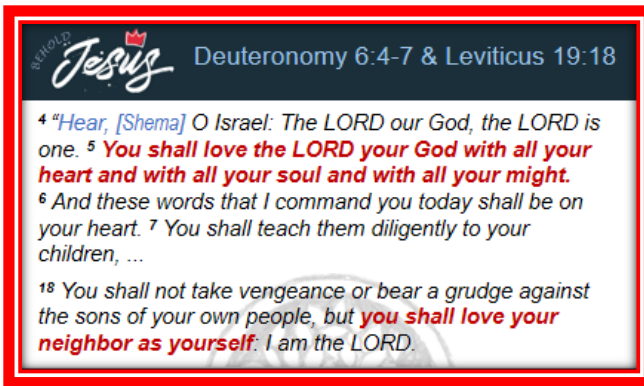
Jesus' answer is the stunning revelation that God's whole law is from love, and for love. Contrary to the external emphasis of the Pharisees, God never gave the law so that our relationship with Him would be all about following rules or law-keeping. God revealed Himself to His people through the Law and the Prophets as an expression of love, and for the purpose of love.

Look at **verse 37 – 40** carefully, and you'll see what I mean.

Jesus first answers by quoting from,

⁹ Matthew 5:48

¹⁰ James 2:10



The great Shema in **Deuteronomy chapter 6**. This passage was called the great Shema after the Hebrew word for “hear” or “listen” that begins **verse 4**, and this Scripture along with a few others¹¹ would have been recited by every faithful Jew twice every day in Jesus’ time!

So you are asking which of Moses’ commandments is the greatest? How about the one that you Pharisees have all memorized and recite twice every day?

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

There’s no more significant command for mankind than this...Loving God with every part of you *is the great and first commandment.*

And a second is like it, and then Jesus quotes from Leviticus 19:18,

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

¹¹ The Shema consisted of Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21; and Numbers 15:37-41. By far these were the most familiar, most quoted, and most
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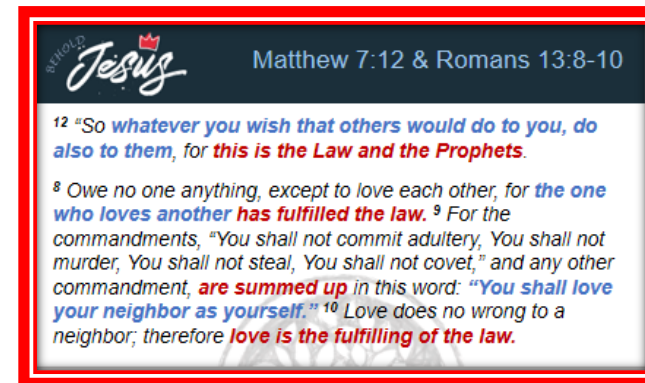
And then watch how Jesus unifies these two commands in **verse 40**,

On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

These two commandments – the command for you to love God with every part of your heart, soul, and mind, and the command for you to love your neighbor with the same love that you have for yourself... these two commandments summarize both the origin and the aim of God’s special revelation to His people.

Now **verse 40** opened a new window of understanding in my soul this week, and I’ve prayed God will give me the grace to be able to pull back the heavenly curtains just an inch or two for you all now as well.

For in past studies together, we’ve already learned how loving our neighbor fulfills God’s law:



copied Scripture passages in Judaism.

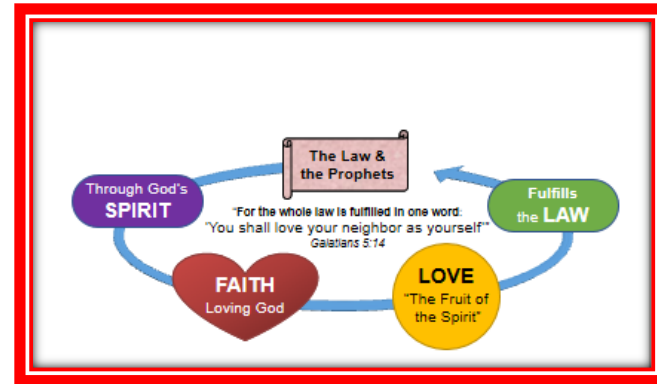
For example, in **Matthew 7:12** Jesus teaches the Golden Rule, saying that when you do for others as you would have them do to you, *this is the Law and the Prophets*.

Then in **Romans 13** Paul writes,

The one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,' and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

So think carefully ... how does loving someone with the same love I have for myself actually fulfill the righteous requirement of God's law?¹²

And why do these passages focus only on the second commandment as the fulfillment of God's law, rather than the first?



Perhaps this diagram is helpful to show how God's law leads to and finds fulfillment in our love for one another?

God reveals Himself to the world through His Scriptures, which the Jews referred to as the Law and the Prophets. And through the power of God's Spirit,¹³ the Law of the Lord converts the human soul,¹⁴ so that the human heart puts faith in God's Word, believes God's promises, and is saved.¹⁵ At this point of salvation, the human heart goes from hating and resisting God¹⁶ to loving God and delighting in Him. After all, the essence of saving faith is loving God.¹⁷ So we can understand that saving faith is obeying the first great commandment: to love God with all my heart, soul, and mind.¹⁸

Once the Spirit of God and the Word of God have ignited saving faith in the human heart, faith necessarily produces love for others,¹⁹ which is called the Fruit of the Spirit.²⁰ It is this Spirit-powered love for others that accomplishes the very purpose of God's law. It is this

¹² Romans 8:1-4

¹³ John 6:63; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Titus 3:5

¹⁴ Psalm 19:7; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23

¹⁵ Romans 10:10; Hebrews 11:1, 6

¹⁶ Romans 1:18-32, 8:7-8; Ephesians 2:1-3

¹⁷ 1 Peter 1:7-9

¹⁸ Jeremiah 31:33-34; Ezekiel 36:26-27

¹⁹ Galatians 5:6; James 3:18-26; 1 John 3:14ff, 4:7-5:5

²⁰ Galatians 5:22

internal reorientation of the human soul towards seeking the good of others that fulfills the law and gives outward evidence that God's love abides in us²¹ and that we have received eternal life.²²

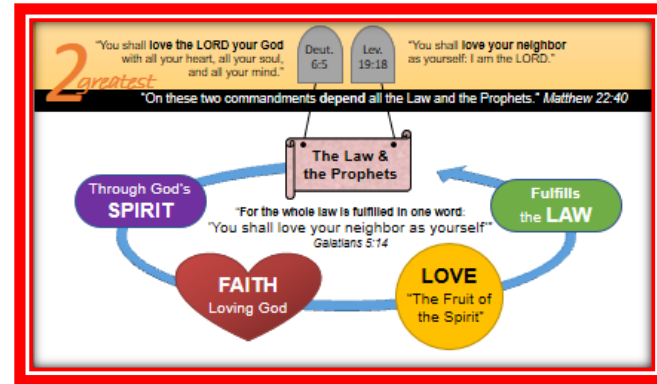
This is why **Galatians 5:14** can focus only on the second commandment and so clearly state that,

The whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Because loving our neighbor as we love ourselves is how our invisible love for God is made visible. Loving God with a whole-person devotion is the essence of Spirit-powered faith, and such spiritual life within us must overflow in a sacrificial love for our neighbors that makes visible and practical the righteousness of God. Therefore, God's law is *for* love. The aim or purpose of God's law is to bring about the radical love for others which is a visible expression of God's Spirit governing the believing heart.

If you have any questions about this diagram, the manuscript footnotes contain a number of supporting Scriptures which would make a rewarding Bible study for you this week. But of course, that's all extra credit only!

But now listen, because here's where **verse 40 of Matthew 22** blew my mind. If you notice our text carefully, **Matthew 22:40** doesn't say that these two commandments *fulfill* the Law and the Prophets. Instead, Jesus' answer to this religious scholar pulls back the curtains of heaven and says all the Law and the Prophets *depend on*, or literally hang on, these two commands!



In other words, Matthew 22:40 exposes the source of the Law and the Prophets in the mind of God. Jesus here teaches that the whole law is not only *for* love, but also *from* love as well.

Here the first and second commandments for loving God and loving others leads to and finds its full expression in the Law and the Prophets. Therefore, all of biblical history, all the special revelation of God's plans, promises, and provision for His people are hanging on, and depending on, something before them...namely God's passion that He would be loved and that people would love others with a Spirit-powered love that reflects God's righteousness on the earth.

So God's law can't be artificially divided or abolished, since it's a unified whole expression of these two great purposes of God: that God be loved with a whole-person devotion from the heart of faith, and that all of God's people love each other as we love ourselves.

We could say it this way, God's passion for His own glory and the good of people is the well-spring of His written

²¹ 1 John 4:12, 21
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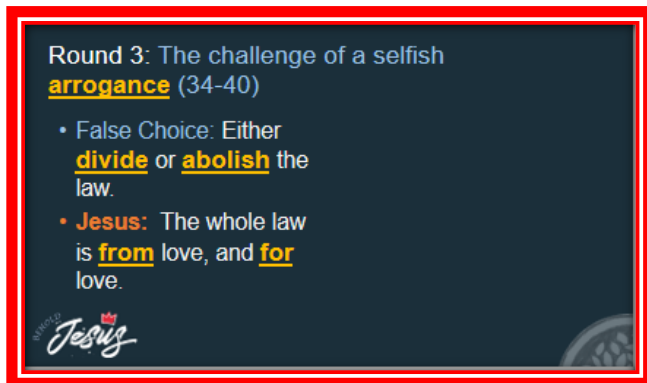
²² 1 John 3:10, 14

revelation to the world... all so that His Spirit might cause the human heart to believe His word and be saved...thereby fulfilling the first commandment to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind, ...all so we might bear the Spiritual fruit of a supernatural love for others which fulfills or completes the essence of God's righteousness in His kingdom.

Isn't this simply wonderful church?

Now, unfortunately I'm only half-way through our outline, and I have still much more to teach from this glorious Scripture. So we'll save the rest for next week and call this part 2a...and part 2b will have to wait for next week!

But before we close and respond by worshipping our God in song together... let this picture of **Matthew 22:40** stun us and reorder our priorities! God's commandments are not grievous.²³ They flow from God's desire for His own glory and the good of others.



The whole law of God is from love, and for love! God is love,²⁴ and He has revealed Himself to us through the

written Word, and the person of Jesus Himself, all so we might enter into the delightful joy of His righteous love.

We have much to learn yet about what love is, and how the Spirit recenters our priorities for God's glory through sacrificially giving our lives away for others' eternal good...but that will wait for next time.

For now, let's pray that God will deepen our appreciation for Jesus and His Word. Let's pray that God will cause our hearts to soar with a fresh affection for His commandments. That we would see all of God's Scriptures as an expression of righteous love, and a catalyst for righteous love. May we see our Spirit-powered love for God and others as both the be-all and the end-all of our relationship with our glorious God.



Let's pray.

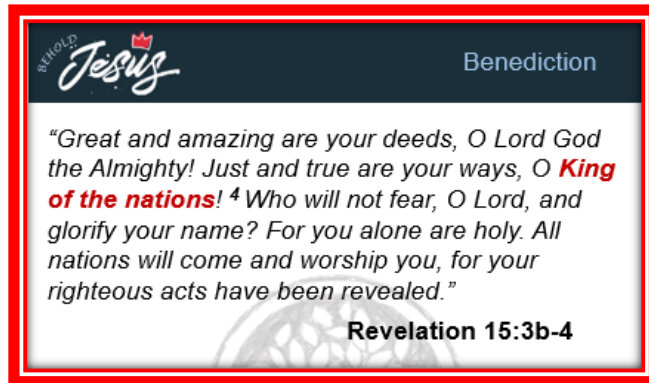
<<Is He Worthy?>>

²³ 1 John 5:3

²⁴ 1 John 4:16

<<Exit Offering for Mateo and Gabby Alzate>>

Let's pray our benediction together:



Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.
Revelation 15:3b-4

Recommended Resources on Matthew 22:15-46:

- Genesis 38:8
- Exodus 3:6
- Leviticus 19:18
- Deuteronomy 6:5; 25:5-10
- Psalm 110:1
- Daniel 12:2
- Matthew 7:12
- Mark 12:13-37
- Luke 20:19-44
- Acts 23:6-8
- Romans 1:3-4; 13:1, 5-7, 8-10
- Galatians 5:14
- Colossians 1:17-18; 2:8-10
- 1 John 4:7-9, 13-21

- <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-are-angels-doing-today>
- <https://www.gotquestions.org/taxes-Bible.html>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/love-your-neighbor-as-yourself-part-1>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/love-your-neighbor-as-yourself-part-2>

- *Who is Jesus?* Greg Gilbert
- *Putting Jesus in His Place*, Bowman & Komoszewski

Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions

1. Review Matthew 22:15-40. What were the underlying motives of those who questioned Jesus here?
2. Review Matthew 22:15-22. Explain the meaning of verse 21. Just as Caesar would stamp his likeness on coins to declare his sovereign ownership over all things in his kingdom, where has God placed his likeness? (C.f. Genesis 1:26-27). How does Jesus' answer compare with the modern concept of "separation of church and state"? Is there any aspect of your life that God does not own?
3. Review Matthew 22:31-32. Where were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when Moses wrote Exodus 3:6? Why didn't God say, "I was the God of ..."? How does this verse show the power of God?
4. Read Psalm 110:1 and Matthew 22:41-46. Why was Jesus' question perplexing to these Jewish leaders?
5. Read Matthew 22:43. How would you respond to someone who said they rejected the authority of God's Word but they loved Jesus? (c.f. John 8:42-47)
6. Review Matthew 22:34-40. What is the beginning and end of all God's revelation? Compare and contrast 22:40 with Matthew 7:12 and Romans 13:8, 10. Which verse/s reveal the source of God's law, and which verses reveal the purpose of God's law? How is our love for others related to our love for God?