

Love, the First and Great Commandment

Matthew 22:35-40

I. The First and Great Commandment.

How is it the first and greatest?

A. In respect to the *object*.

1. "Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave [the guilty] unpunished...'" (Exodus 34:6-7a).
2. "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness...You are just in all that has come upon us; For You have dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly" (Nehemiah 9:32-33).
3. "For the Lord your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the alien by giving him food and clothing. So show your love for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. "You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name. He is your praise and He is your God, who has done these great and awesome things for you which your eyes have seen" (Deuteronomy 10:17-21).

B. In respect to the *order*.

C. In respect to the *obligation*.

1. We all come "*As Is*".
2. "*As Is*" is not good enough for God.

We fall short...

- a. Our currency of personal *integrity* is not enough.
 - b. Our currency of domestic *faithfulness* is not enough.
 - c. Our currency of social *involvement* is not enough.
 - d. Our currency of church *commitment* is not enough.
3. Jesus specializes in loving us "*As Is*". (Luke 7:36-50).
 4. We are called to love others "*As Is*".

II. Application and Action

- A. We are all "*fixer uppers*" (Let Him fix you up).
- B. We are all "*damaged goods*" (Let Him heal you).
- C. We all come "*as is*" (Don't let anything keep you from coming).