

shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. Leviticus 19:7. Care for others and self-sacrifice mark the type of love the bible describes as the ultimate Christian virtue.

Discussion Questions

- How well do you do with loving your neighbor as yourself? Is it harder to love strangers or members of your own family? Why?
- Is your understanding of love based more on the bible or on what the world thinks? Is this an area of your life that needs repentance?

Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Yesterday we ended with the idea that love is the ultimate Christian virtue. Have you ever stopped to consider why this is? What is the big deal about love? The reason why love is the center of all Christian virtue is that no one embodied love more clearly in all of history than Jesus of Nazareth. Our Lord was a living, breathing example of someone who always keeps the greatest and second greatest commandments. The ultimate expression of this love is his sacrificial death for the enemies of God. Jesus knew that God would raise him from the grave and would reward his faithfulness by giving the Risen Lord a people that would belong to him. Those people would be everyday sinners, changed by the love they have been given in Jesus, to the praise of his glorious grace. Jesus gives this ultimate test of discipleship on the night he was to be betrayed to his death: *By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.* John 13:35 and in 1 John 5:3 we read: *This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.* And in Romans 13:10- *For love is the fulfilling of the law.* And finally speaking of the virtues of faith, hope, and love Paul says unequivocally *The greatest of these is love.* 1 Corinthians 13:13. So we see that love is the aim of the law, and we show that we love God by obeying him and loving our fellow man. May God increase our obedience, and our love!

Discussion Questions

- If you were on trial for being a Christian, and you had to prove you were with evidence of love, would you be convicted or acquitted?
- If you had to chose one area to focus on growing your love, would it be love for God or love for fellow man? What are some ways you can express your love this week?
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Baptist Catechism

Family Worship Guide



West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, August 4th, 2024)

Baptist Catechism Question #47

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 our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.*

Suggested Memory Verse

Matthew 22:37–40 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. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

At the capitol building in Texas, there is a large stone monument. Carved in the stone are the ten commandments. Along with the words from the ten commandments, two stone tablets are shown, depicting the two stone tablets Moses brought down the mountain. In Exodus 32:16 Moses says: *The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.* Did you ever wonder why there were two tablets? Was it just that the one tablet would be too big and awkward to carry down the mountain? Maybe so. But there is likely a symbolic significance to the two tablets. When questioned about the greatest commandment, Jesus gave a two-part answer: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* Matt 22:37-39. These facts have led biblical scholars and theologians to speak of the ten commandments as two tables, or two distinct groups of commands within the ten commandments. The ten commandments contain commandments that teach us how we ought to live in respect to God, and commandments that teach us how we ought to live in respect to our fellow man. We will spend the rest of this week exploring the implications of our Lord's two-part summary of the ten commandments.

Discussion Question

- Is it more difficult to love God or love man? How are these two “loves” related to one another?
- Why do you think that Jesus responds to the question about the greatest command this way?

Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

One of the most striking things about Jesus' response regarding the greatest commandment is that he draws on two passages that speak of love. Jesus was teaching us that our hearts are at the heart of the law. The duty that we owe to God and man is to be motivated by our love for God and love for man. God is not pleased with mere external conformity to his law, but with a heart that desires to obey God because of our love for him. Jesus illustrated this idea in Matthew's gospel, which records for us an encounter between Jesus and rich young man. The young man came to Jesus asking what he must do to gain eternal life, and Jesus tells him that he must keep the commandments. Further questioning which ones he must keep, Jesus responds with a number of the ten commandments, ending with “love your neighbor as yourself.” When the young man tells Jesus he has kept all these, he tells the young man that he must sell all his belongings and to be generous to the poor. At this, the young man went away, sorrowful because of his great wealth. Seeing beyond the external, Jesus looks into the inner man and tells him that he must obey God from the heart, by giving the treasure of his heart to God. Jesus says in another place, “*where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*” Matthew 6:21

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever thought of law in terms of the heart?
- Is Jesus focus on obedience from the heart novel, or do we find evidence of God's desire for obedience from the heart in the Old Testament? Can you think of any examples?

Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

So far we have looked at the idea that the ten commandments can be divided into two groups, summarized by greatest commandments to love God and love neighbor. But what does it mean to love God or love neighbor? Luckily for us, the bible is replete with descriptions and specifics on how we go about that. Let's take a look at our love for God. Zechariah 9:17 tells us this regarding God: *How great is his beauty.* We are to look on God and behold him. This means spending time considering the attributes of God and his actions in human history. We find both of these in the holy scriptures. So love for God requires of us to seek out what He has revealed of Himself in His word. Our love for God is then expressed in worship, giving God his due reverence and honor from a heart full of love. Besides devotion, the bible also describes love for God from the perspective of obedience. Jesus says, “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*” John 14:15. As a father of several children, one of the greatest pleasures I have is when my children honor me by obedience. Even when I ask them to do difficult tasks, if they do them willingly, and with a cheerful attitude, it is such a blessing. How much more is our Father in heaven pleased when we obey Him? Truly we ought to honor our God by keeping his commands!

Discussion Questions

- Read Psalm 63 and reflect on the way that David describes his love for God. Do you feel the same way about God? If not, what could you change in your life to help you to grow in your love for God?

Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The bible has much to tell us how we ought to love one another. From the Mosaic law, to the prophets, wisdom literature, gospels, and epistles, the bible is chalk full of commands and exhortations on how we ought to love one another. Why is this so important? The apostle John states it clearly- we prove that we love God in part by loving our fellow man. *If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.* 1 John 4:20. With all the talk about love in our culture, we need to be sure that we define our terms. Love in the worlds eyes means being accepting of everyone and everything, not matter what. God defines love very differently. In fact, sometimes loving God means hating those who hate God. *Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?* Psalm 139:21. The bible also tells us that love means sometimes we tell them the truth to our neighbor when they are in sin. *You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you*