

Two Great Commandments

Scripture Reading — Matthew 22:34-40

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' . . . 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' — Matthew 22:37-39

If you've ever visited a lawyer's office and seen bookshelves filled with impressive bound volumes explaining laws and many years' worth of legal -cases, the sight can be pretty overwhelming. It can make people want to entrust their case to the expert who understands it all.

But the law of God that governs our relationships is not difficult to understand.

Jesus said, "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." And "these two commandments" are *Love God* and *Love your neighbor*. It's a simple yet profound summary of the purpose of the whole law of God. Justice in society and harmony in all our relationships hang on these two basic commandments, summarizing the two tables of the law.

Some folks think you don't need some parts of the commandments—that you can get along with your neighbor, for example, without loving or even believing in God. But that kind of thinking just deepens the rift between classes, ethnicities, generations, and the sexes. Even a truce results only in a loveless standoff, characterized by tense and strained relations, lacking in mutual trust.

Loving God, loving others. Like two sides of a coin, these go together and can't be separated. Together they are the key to harmony.

Prayer

Your law, O Lord, is so simple and yet so profound. By your Spirit, move in our hearts and fill us with love for you and for one another, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

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