

Matthew 22:34-46

The Challenge of Discipleship Study 6: *Love*

Focus Question: *When did you first realize God loved you?*

Word of Life

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

Matthew 22:37

Read [Matthew 22:34-46](#)

Throughout Matthew 22 Jesus has been challenged and questioned by the Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees. In this week’s reading, it is a lawyer who poses the question to entrap Jesus. At first glance, the question seems easy. Which is the greatest of the laws? Keep in mind that there were well over 600 laws at the time. Is it possible to select one law above others?

Jesus answers with profound clarity. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). Even before the lawyer asks a follow-up question, Jesus clarifies the second greatest commandment, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (v39)

1. *How might the response of Jesus put an end to the debate?*

In Luke’s Gospel, the lawyer asks one more question, “And who is my neighbour?” Jesus expands the definition of *neighbour* by telling the parable of the Good Samaritan ([Luke 10:25-37](#)). Our neighbour is not only the person who lives next door to us or those people we like. Anyone who is in need is our neighbour and is to be loved.

2. *Who are we called upon to love?*

3. *How can you love someone you don’t even like?*

Jesus links two very old commandments: the love for God ([Deuteronomy 6:5](#)) and the love of neighbour ([Leviticus 19:18](#)). Love becomes the very hinge upon which the law and the prophets are joined (See [Romans 13:9-10](#)). But love is more than just a warm fuzzy feeling; it is a commitment of heart, soul and mind. Loving God becomes a life-long commitment demanding all of who we are. This love is not completed in a day or week; instead, our love for God calls for our full attention every day, every hour.

Jesus’ answer is very simple. The difficulty – for the lawyer then and for disciples now -- is to live constant love.

4. *What is so challenging about loving God with heart, soul and mind?*

5. *What is so challenging about loving our neighbour?*

Disciples of every age have recognized the challenge of loving. Daily, we fall short. Daily, we confess our shortcomings to God. We have not loved God, ourselves or our neighbour as God desires. Fortunately, God is gracious, forgiving and loving. God hears our prayer and gives us the opportunity to try again to love as God intended.

6. *This week, how can we love God with our whole heart, mind, and soul?*

7. *This week, how can we love our neighbours as ourselves?*

Prayer

Loving Spirit, fill us with love for God, ourselves and our neighbours. Amen

Dig Deeper

[Luke 10:25-37](#)

Last Word

This week, each morning, noon and night, ask God to fill you with love for God, yourself and others.