

The Confrontation—Part 7
“What is the Greatest Commandment?”
Matthew 22:34-40
(cf. Mark 12:28-34)

I. **The Lawyer’s T_____** (vs. 34-36)

- a. This is not the same account as in Luke 10:21-37
- b. **silenced** (*phimoō* / *φιμώω*) = “to silence...to muzzle, to forcefully restrict the opening of the mouth” (cf. Mark 1:25; 4:39; 1 Cor. 9:9)
- c. Bittersweet Victory: Glad to see the Sadducees’ argument against resurrection defeated...unhappy that **they gathered themselves together** to plot another attack (cf. Luke 20:39)
- d. **lawyer** (*nomikos* / *νομικός*) = “an expert interpreter of the Law” (cf. Luke 7:30; 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52; 14:3)
 - i. Matthew usually used the term scribe, so this was probably a very learned scholar
 - ii. Some toy with the idea that it “might” have been Saul, later the Apostle Paul (cf. Mark 12:32-34a)
- e. **testing** (*peirazō* / *πειράζω*) = “to try to trap, to catch in a mistake” (cf. Matt. 4:1; 6:13; 16:1; 19:3; 22:18, 35; 26:41)
- f. **Teacher** = condescending address (cf. Matt. 22:16, 24)
- g. **which is the great commandment in the Law?**
 - i. The Jewish Religious Leaders had “decided” that there were 613 Commandments (Letterism, Theomatics, & Numerology)
 - ii. 248, one for what they thought was every part of the human body, were Positive (the do’s)
 - iii. 365, one for every day of the year, were Negative (the don’ts)
 - iv. Some were Heavy (serious) and some were (Light) not as serious; but they never agreed on which were which or which was the greatest.

II. **The Lord’s T_____** (vs. 37-40)

- a. Jesus declared that He did not come “**to abolish the Law or the Prophets...but to fulfill**” (Matt. 5:17)
 - i. So, He quotes the Shema: a daily prayer for devout Jews (cf. Deut. 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Num. 15:37–41)
- b. **HEART...SOUL...MIND** is not a lesson on the essence of man’s nature dichotomous vs. trichotomous (cf. Heb. 4:12; 1 Thess. 5:23; Gen. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:45)
 - i. It is making the point that we need to love God with everything that we are, think, feel, and do!
 1. **HEART** = desires and affections
 2. **SOUL** = emotions and feelings
 3. **MIND** = volitional will and strength
- c. God does not want your time, talent, or treasure...what He wants most is your **LOVE!** (cf. John 14:23–24; 1 John 2:5; 3:17; 4:12–13, 16–21; 5:3)
 - i. **Eros** (*ἔρως*) = romantic or physical love
 - ii. **Storge** (*στοργή*) = familial love (cf. 1 Tim. 3:3; Rom. 1:31)
 - iii. **Philia** (*φιλία*) = Friendship or brotherly love (cf. James 4:4; Rom. 12:10; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1)
 - iv. **Agape** (*ἀγάπη*) = unconditional love (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1-8)
- d. Love is an action that you can’t separate from obedience (cf. Matt. 28:19-20; Ezek. 36:26-27; cf. Jer. 31:31-33)
- e. **LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF** (cf. Phil. 2:1-11; 1 John 2:9, 11; 3:10–18; 4:7–21)
 - i. This is NOT a command to love yourself (you already do)
 - ii. Your love for others is a measure of your love for Jesus
- f. **On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.** = You can sum up all of God’s Commands and even the Ten Commandments with Love for God and Love for One Another
 - i. Our Love for One Another is our Greatest Testimony of Jesus’ Love for US!!!! (cf. John 13:34-35)