

THE FIRST AND GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Good morning TCC, today we continue our series on the power of Spiritual alignment discussing the seven firsts of Jesus recorded in the gospel of Matthew.

This morning we are emphasizing aligning our heart with His heart.

Matthew 22:37-39 – *(Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment?)* Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ (NIV)

How do you feel about love?

How do you feel about God?

How do you feel about the world?

If we are to truly align our heart with His heart

Q. How do you feel about love?

This question is such a contrast to the context of our passage

The religious leaders were asking the question, “What is the greatest of all the commandments?” but they were asking this question trying to trap Jesus in His own words.

Commandments

There are 613 commands given in the law, the Pharisees continually argued about the numeric importance, with no resolution – and here in a moment of treachery in their hearts, they ask Jesus, “You tell us... **what is the most important commandment?**”

Motives revealed...

Jesus instead of chiding them exposes His own motive... love

- True love exposes and empowers our motives.
- True love comes from the Father’s heart.

TCC- If we are to align our heart with the heart of God we must be motivated by love...

- Love for God and love for others

1 Corinthians 13:13 – now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

- Greater than hope... greater than faith... because love empowers our **motive**

People often talk about loving or being loved unconditionally

- It sounds so easy until we run into treachery... Jesus in the middle of His moment... said it's all about love

Q. So how do you feel about love?

Next... we are not only told to love, **but to love passionately**, with every part of our being. Our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Mother Teresa is a great example of this ... she spent a lifetime serving in the downcast of society in Calcutta, India. As a nun she considered herself to be married to Christ, and her vow was this I will minister to each person who comes my way as though they were Jesus... Her passion for God transformed in to action for others

If we are to align our heart with His heart

Q. How do we feel about God?

The way we feel about God will dictate how we feel about the people

- Because **God is love**... he is the source of all love in the universe... it is only in the depth of our experiencing His love that we can truly love others.

If we believe God is mean, unjust, aloof, disinterested in my life, we become bitter with God over loss and grief that comes our way, and it will affect the way we see others.

- We continually ask God to explain His actions to us... "You're not being fair... why did this happen to me?"
- We begin to see life through a self-centered lens.
- Our circumstances determine our feelings towards God rather than His character. So when things go good – God is praised, and when things go bad – our lives go into a spiritual funk, wondering where God is.

King David when His son died, the Bible says he went to his house, washed his face, and then went to the house of the Lord and worshipped. His testimony was that while my son was alive on this earth I prayed, but now that he is with the Lord... He cannot come to me but I can go to Him.

God's testimony about Him... He is a man after my own Heart

Job 13:15 – Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. (KJV)

Joseph said to His brothers, after a lifetime of sorrow, abandonment, betrayal, slavery, prison... all at the hands of his brothers.

Genesis 50:20 – But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive.

If we are to truly love the world and God is love... we must tap into the One from who all love flows.

Ephesians 3:19.... to know this love that surpasses knowledge... (NIV)

- I've been hurt.... His love surpassed it
- You don't know what I know... His love surpasses it
- You don't know where I've come from... God's love surpasses it

I'm not asking you if you are born again... I'm asking

Q. How do you feel about love... how do you feel about God?

2 Corinthians 5:14 – ... Christ's love compels us...

- constrains us... controls us... pushes and pulls us

We love Him because He first loved us...

Our love for Him comes from the realization that in my own strength I am sinful and lost and on my way to hell. The only thing that stands between me and eternal damnation is His love.

The woman who came and anointed Jesus feet with perfume and washed his feet with her tears... and then wiped them with her hair. Others in the room were insulted, but Jesus said... She loves much because she was forgiven much

I believe she just realized how lost she was and how grateful she was for His love as opposed to those pastors and religious leaders in the room who never believed they were ever lost in the first place.

Do you and I really get it? ... **He forgave our sin completely!!**

Q. Do we really recognize the depth of our loss and hell bound state without His love? It's about being grateful for salvation.

TCC- if we are ever to truly love God in the way this first describes we must... develop an attitude of gratitude

Start with this statement: Once I was lost but now I am found. Start with thank you!

See His passion... It takes a lot of passion to send your only son to be tortured and die... it takes a lot of dedicated love to send your son into a hostile environment... knowing the outcome will be brutal

I John 3:1 – Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. (NKJV)

It was Gods passion that sent Jesus to the cross... We love Him because He first loved us.

Lastly: It is the love of God that drives Him passionately to hate sin...Why does He hate sin? Because sin hurts what he loves the most...people.

Q. How do you feel about the world?

- God so loved the world
- In this shall all men know you are my disciples... show love one to another

Jesus said **love your enemies... bless those who curse you**

Jesus said **when you give a cup of Cold water to the least you have given it to me**

Jesus said **a new commandment I give to you is that you would love one another**

Q. How do you feel about the world? How do you feel about God ... How do you feel about love

Ephesians 4:32 – Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another just as Christ in God also forgave you. (NIV)