

## THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

*Lesson: Matthew 22: 34-40*

You know that Christmas Day is the Lord's birthday. When He was born on earth, He was a tiny baby. But all babies grow up and the Lord grew up to be a Man, the most wonderful and wisest Man there ever was or ever will be.



When the Lord was a Man He taught people many things. People asked Him questions. Some asked questions to learn from Him what they should do to be good and help others. Others asked Him questions they thought He could not answer or else they thought that His answer would get Him into trouble with the rulers.

One day the Lord was teaching many people. Some did not like what He said, because it meant that they would have to give up their evil and selfish ways. So they asked Him questions they thought He would not dare to answer. But He answered all their questions so wisely that no one could say that the answers were in any way wrong.

At last one man, wanting to find an excuse for having the Lord arrested and put to death, asked which was the great commandment. Long, long before this time, the Heavenly Father had given Ten Commandments. He had also given other commandments. But which was the great commandment, which was the most important? This was the Lord's wise answer:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Who could find anything wrong with this answer? The man, who asked the question, and all the men there who were trying to find some excuse for arresting the Lord, knew that His answer was just what the Word had always taught.



The Lord's answer teaches us that a commandment is not merely an order that is to be obeyed once. The Two Great Commandments are two great loves. They are the love of the Lord, more than anyone else or anything else, and the love the neighbor or of other people as much as one loves oneself.

The most important, the best, the greatest thing anyone can do is to love the Lord. But we cannot love Him unless we know about Him and see Him and do many things for Him. You cannot love someone you do not know or have never heard anything about. Nor can you love someone whom you know about, but can never see. And you cannot love someone for whom you never do anything.

As you learn more and more things about the Lord from His Word, you will be able to see Him more clearly and truly in His Word, but only when, at the same time, you do things for Him every day. So learn to read the Word and to think while you are reading it. Then, if every day you do things for other people, to help them and make them happy, you will be doing things for the Lord, and will love Him "with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment."