The First and Great Command

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[0:00] You know exactly where we will be because that's where we were last week. We're here in Matthew chapter 22, verses 34 to 46.

In your word, reveal to us your love for us. And you call us to love you with all our heart, soul, and mind.
And Lord, who is worthy of such things? Who is? Who can obey such a grand command?
Who can obey such a grand command? And yet, because you have commanded us in your word, and because you, by your Spirit, enable us to do what you command us, we come with faith to this passage, that you might teach us what it means to love you, and that you might enable us to love you as you deserve.
So meet with us, Father. Give us ears to hear, hearts that are ready to receive.
[1:45] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please stand if you are able, so that we can honor God as we read from his word.

Matthew chapter 22, 34 to 46. But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.
And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.
This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets. Now, while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, What do you think about the Christ?
[3:02] Whose son is he? They said to him, The son of David. He said to them, How is it then that David, in the spirit, calls him Lord, saying, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son? And no one was able to answer him a word. Nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.
This is God's holy and authoritative word. Please be seated. What is the greatest of all Christian virtues?
It's love. It's love. It's love. If I can speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I'm a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have prophetic powers, if I have all knowledge, I can understand all mysteries, and yet have not love, I'm nothing.
If I have faith so as to remove mountains, if I give up my body to be burned, if I die as a martyr for him, and yet have not love, I gain nothing.
[4:27] Love is the greatest of all Christian virtues. What is the greatest of all commandments in Christianity?

That too is love. Jesus says here, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind.
This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Why is love so central to Christianity?
Because anyone who does not love does not know God. Because God is love. 1 John 4.8
Everything we do or don't do, all our obedience or disobedience boils down to the love of God or the lack thereof.
Yes, of course, there are other factors to consider, but at the heart of it, the foundational motivation is love. Jesus made that very clear in John 14 when he said, if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

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[5:42] Whoever does not love God does not keep his words. In his book, The Confessions, Augustine, who was a 4th century African theologian and pastor, observed, made this observation that everything moves according to their weight.

By weight, he really meant density, but he says smoke, fire and smoke coming up from it goes upward because of its weight. A stone drops, sinks to the ground because of its weight.
And he asked the question, what determines how humans behave, whether we go upward toward God in heaven or downward toward death and hell?
He concludes, my weight is my love. Wherever I am carried, my love is carrying me. He's following Jesus' teaching.
This is an all-important principle, and I think that's why Jesus calls it the great and first commandment. The commandment is first not only in its primacy, in its greatest importance, but also in its priority, in the order.
[6:51] It's the command that precedes all the others and obeying this first command enables you to obey all the others. And my main point this morning is this, love the Lord with your whole self and love your neighbor as yourself.

And I'm going to break this down into two main points. First, love the Lord, and secondly, that Jesus is Lord. The Pharisees have heard that Jesus has silenced the Sadducees, their political rivals, and so now they gather together.
Before they had sent their disciples, they failed to trap Jesus and embarrass Jesus. The Sadducees then came and tried their hand, and then they also failed. Now the Pharisees themselves come, and they send one of their representatives, a lawyer.
He says in verse 35, comes to ask a question, to test Jesus. The parallel passage in Mark 12 suggests that this lawyer actually had a sincere motivation.
He really wanted to know what Jesus thought, and he really respected Jesus' opinion. However, as a representative of the Pharisees collectively who have gathered to plot against Jesus, to entrap Jesus in his words, this question still amounts to a test for him.
[8:07] This is the only time the Gospel of Matthew identifies someone as a lawyer. It refers to a Jewish scribe whose job it is to transcribe the Jewish law, the Torah, to transcribe it, to teach it, to spread it.

And so by calling him a lawyer, I think Matthew is pointing out that this is a recognized expert of the Old Testament law. The law is his bread and butter, his area of expertise.
And this question is about that law, teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? Following rabbinic calculation, Jews held that the Torah had a grand total of 613 commandments, the first five books of the Bible, 613 commandments.
248 prescriptions, things we must do, and 365 prohibitions, things we must not do. And Jewish rabbis often discussed among themselves which laws are the heavy laws and which laws are the light laws.
Even Jesus says later in chapter 23, verse 23, that some matters of the law, some matters of the law are weightier than other matters of the law. But this question about the great commandment in the law is not merely about which command is the most important of the 613, but also about which commandment encapsulates, sums up, the entire law most accurately and comprehensively.
[9:35] What is the crux of the law? What is the heart of the law? That's the question. And we know from historical examples that this was a question that was often debated by Jesus' contemporaries, and this serves as a test because there was a lingering suspicion among the Jews that Jesus flouted the Mosaic law, that he disregarded it.

And that's what he had to tell them in chapter 5, verses 17 to 20, I have not come to abolish the law but to fulfill them. And so they're asking Jesus this question, do you really uphold the law of God, the law of Moses?
If so, what is the great law? This is also, you know, something that's easy to quibble about. No matter what Jesus says, they can say, well, you said that's the great law but what about this one? What about that one? Because people, based on their temperaments and tendencies, often emphasize different and give precedence to different commands in scripture.
So it's really hard to answer this question in a way that satisfies everybody. It's bound to alienate someone. So that's their test. But somehow, Jesus finds an answer that silences them all.

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[10:50] He says in verses 37 to 38, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.

This commandment is taken from Deuteronomy 6, Deuteronomy 6, verses 4 to 6. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength.
And these words that I command you today are to be on your heart. This is what Jews refer to as the Shema. Shema is just the Hebrew verb, the first word of that passage, hear.
Hear, O Israel. From Jesus' day until today, pious Jews recite the Shema twice a day. Jews include a parchment that contains the Shema in their phylactery, which is like a leather box that they wear on their forehead, on their arm when they're praying.
This is the Bible verse that every Jew memorizes. This is the one that they cling to. Jesus picks the most familiar verse, but in the parallel passage in Mark 12, 29, so in this passage in Matthew, we don't see the first part of the Shema, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one, but in the parallel passage in Mark 12, 29, Jesus actually includes that part in his response because the declaration of the Lord as one, the Lord is one, is integral to this great commandment.
[12:27] Precisely because the Lord is one, there is only one Lord, Yahweh, and there is no other God beside him, we owe him our singular, undivided allegiance.

If we served many lords, then we would have to give each of them parts of our hearts, parts of our time, parts of our money, but because the Lord is one, we must love the Lord with all our heart.
The singularity and unity of the Lord demands our singular and undivided devotion, but what does it mean to love God? Loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind entails two primary things.
First is allegiance, second is affection. The first aspect of loving God is our allegiance to him.
Remember the original context of Deuteronomy 6, the Lord is one, so love him with all your heart and keep his commandments on your heart.
Loving God is about obedience to his commands, it's about undivided loyalty to him. The first and great command summarizes the first half of the Decalogue, the first four commandments of the Ten Commandments.
[13:43] You shall have no other gods before me, you shall not make an idol or image and bow down before it, you shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, and you shall not violate the Sabbath of the Lord your God, you shall keep the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

The first half of the Decalogue all deal with what it looks like to love God. And this is a summary of that. Will you be loyal to him alone? Serve him alone?
We can see this meaning clearly in what Jesus said earlier in Matthew 6, verse 24, no one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.
You cannot serve both God and money. Notice here, the words hate and despise are parallel to each other, and the words love and devoted are parallel to each other.
To love God, then, is to be devoted to him. It means to cling to God, hold fast to God, to be committed to God to the exclusion of all others.
[14:52] It means we don't try to straddle two worlds, one foot in the kingdom of heaven and one foot on the kingdom of this earth, kingdom of this world. Rather, it means we jump both feet into the kingdom of God and where God is and what God commends us.

As Revelation 18, verse 4 says, come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins. How can a servant faithfully serve two masters when those two masters' interests are not aligned?
God, it's impossible. A servant who serves two masters is called a traitor. Likewise, how can a bride have two husbands or two lovers?
A bride who has two lovers is an adulterer. Our God is a jealous lover and he will not share his beloved with another.
Are you devoted to God or are you divided and distracted? What in your life competes with God for your supreme attention and allegiance?
[16:08] Do you want to serve God and be successful and rich and make a name for yourself? Do you fear God and you fear your boss and fear your spouse and you fear your peers and fear all your social media followers and you try to please them as much as you try to please God?

Do you pursue God and the lusts of this world? Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? If you are living in direct disobedience to the commandments of God if you are in

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unrepentant sin do not be deceived into thinking that you love God.
Loving God is about much more than a warm fuzzy feeling that you have when singing moving worship songs on a Sunday morning. It's about your allegiance to God. your obedience to God. What good is it if we sing on Sunday morning God I belong to you you are all I need you are all I want but Monday to Saturday we live as if we belong to anyone but God as if we need anything but God.
1 John 5 3 says this is the love of God that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not burdensome.
[17:46] Are you devoted or divided? If you are divided then you are not loving God as you ought to you are disobeying the great and first commandment.

Well then is loving God only about obedience? Can we say that a person who quote unquote obeys God in a legalistic and perfunctory manner as someone who truly loves God?
No we can't say that. God chose the word love deliberately. Love involves allegiance yes but it also involves affection. Love is the intimate term that frequently describes in scripture the relationship between a husband and a wife as well as the relationship between parents and their children.
Yes those relationships parental relationships spousal relationship they come with responsibilities and obligations but if those relationships are only characterized by responsibilities and obligations duty without desire or delight then those relationships are profoundly dysfunctional is it not?
my wedding anniversary is coming up imagine if my wedding anniversary came and I got Hannah flowers and cooked a nice dinner for her at home but I did all of those things while dragging my feet and looking really unhappy and grumpy as if it were a tiresome chore and then Hannah thanks me thanks Sean and I go oh nothing it's my duty I mean would she feel so loved the greatest commandment is not simply you shall obey the Lord your God it's not you shall submit to the Lord your God although it includes both of those things it's you shall love the Lord your God
[19:56] God wants us to desire him delight in him rejoice in him he wants us to worship him as Jerry Bridges writes in his book The Discipline of Grace only conduct that arises from love is worthy of the name of obedience but does this mean we should only obey God when we actually want to obey him what about when we don't want to obey some of his commands should we just not do it because it would be fake hypocritical of course if someone were to obey God purely for self-serving reasons out of fear of punishment or to save face or impress others with no desire whatsoever to actually please God himself well then yeah that would be displeasing to God the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the

Lord he says in Proverbs 15 8 for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin and without faith it is impossible to please God however all genuine believers delight in God and have a desire to please God that underlies even all their acts of duty sometimes the gap between what we know we ought to do and what we want to do the gap between those two things simply stemmed from the fact that obedience entails great loss and suffering and hardship even Jesus felt this at the garden of Gethsemane when he prayed not my will but yours be done when he prayed to God the father at one level Jesus didn't want to be separated from the father in that way he didn't want to suffer and die on the cross and bear the crushing weight of sin and divine judgment he said remove this cup from me but at another level at a deeper level
Jesus wanted nothing but to obey his father so nevertheless not my will but yours be done and for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross likewise when we feel reluctant because obedience to God sometimes it does involve!
great pain and great loss great sacrifice great suffering and because we are human and because we are weak by our nature we struggle with that obedience but yet we obey anyway because underneath that sense of duty there is a still deeper desire to love God and obey him but our circumstances are of course not always as clear cut and dire as Jesus is it's rarely purely because of our natural human weakness which was the case for Jesus more often than not for us the gap between what we know we ought to do and what we want to do exists because of our own sinfulness does it not because we desire sin more than we desire God and in those situations yes we still must obey!
anyway but repent of our sinful desires and as we take that step of faith and obedience God sanctifies us further so that we want to obey him in all those things more and more God I know I should want to obey you this way but my stubborn heart refuses to comply Forgive me for this resistance and enable me compel me to desire what you decree there's a beautiful 18th century

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hymn by Joseph Hart that expresses this sentiment it's called Oh for a glance of heavenly I think I have it to project for you Oh for a glance of heavenly day to take this stubborn heart away and thaw with beams of love divine this heart this frozen heart of mine the rocks can rend the earth can quake the seas can roar the mountains shake of feeling all things show some side but this unfeeling heart of mine to hear the sorrows thou hast felt oh
[24:49] Lord an adamant might melt but I can read each moving line and nothing moves this heart of mine thy judgments!

devil's fear amazing thought unmoved I hear goodness and wrath in vain combine to stir this stupid heart of mine eternal spirit mighty God apply to me the Savior's blood tis his rich blood and his alone can move and melt this heart of stone even upon your failure to desire the things of God even upon your very coldness of heart toward the things of God apply the blood of Jesus Christ and receive his mercy for that's where the power lies that can melt your heart heart unto obedience for that's the kind of obedience from the heart that
God desires Jesus says you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart the heart is the inner center of a person so Jesus says in Matthew 6 21 for where your treasure is there your heart will be also whatever we treasure within our hearts that will determine the course the direction of our lives out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks out of the heart comes evil thoughts murder adultery sexual immorality theft false witness slander what's in our hearts always comes out in our words and in our deeds the heart is the core of the inner person when we speak of the heart in English we primarily speak of the emotions the seed of our emotions and feelings it includes that but that's not the whole picture it does include our feelings Deuteronomy 28 47 says we have to serve the Lord our God with joyfulness and gladness of heart the heart is where you feel joy and gladness toward the
Lord but the heart also includes more than our feelings the heart in the Bible is the seat of our thoughts and intentions Deuteronomy 15 9 to 10 warns of an unworthy thought in the heart so the heart thinks similarly Hebrews 4 12 says that God the word of God discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart and earlier in Matthew 9 4 Jesus said to the scribes why do you think evil in your heart the heart thinks this is why the heart and the mind are often used interchangeably in scripture in 1 Corinthians 12 38 acting with a whole heart is the same thing as acting with a single mind God wants us to love him with all our heart and all our mind remember earlier when
Jesus cited Isaiah 29 13 in Matthew chapter 15 verses 7 to 9 this people he says this people honors me with their lips but their hearts are far from me God is not looking for lip service God is not looking for half hearted obedience God is not merely looking for outward conformity he's looking for inward transformation God doesn't only care that we not commit murder he cares that we don't commit murder in our hearts by harboring resentment and sinful anger and hatred toward people and unforgiveness toward people God does not only care that we not commit adultery physically he cares that we do not commit adultery of the heart by lusting after people why does God care what happens in the secrets of our!
[29:11] hearts because God is not merely concerned with what you do he cares about you he wants you he wants your heart he wants your mind he wants you to love him with all your heart and soul and mind the word soul gets at the same idea the Greek word translated soul here is most often translated in the Bible as life because the soul is life once the soul departs you're dead Jesus says in Matthew 16 24 26 if anyone would come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me for whoever would save his life that's the same word save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it for what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul same word or what shall a man give in return for his soul in other words

God wants us to love him with our whole lives he wants us to surrender our very life to him our very soul to him the word soul or spirit is also often used interchangeably with heart proverbs 24 12 it says that God weighs the heart the heart of man he weighs the heart of man and keeps watch over his soul synonymous over and over again we see the words heart and soul used together as a hand dietus using referring to a single concept heart and soul love the Lord your God I'm with you heart and soul soul it's not referring to heart and soul separately it's saying that together the inner person I'm with you the original command in Deuteronomy 6 if you're sharp by maybe you caught that didn't have mind it has strength instead and then if you look at the parallel passages in
Mark 12 and Luke 10 they include both strength and mind but it doesn't really matter because they're all saying the exact same thing the emphasis of this command is not on the variety of human

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faculties that you ought to love God with but on the totality of human faculties that you ought to love God with there's nothing omitted in this command all that we have all that we are must be directed toward the love of God to love the Lord your God with your whole self but Jesus isn't done he says that there is a second great commandment in verse 39 and a second is like it you shall love your neighbor as yourself it's a quotation from Leviticus 19 18 which summarizes the second half of the ten commandments the last six earlier in
Matthew 19 18 to 20 when Jesus was having this dialogue with the rich young man he was asking him what's in the law what should I keep he told him to he listed off the second half the last six of the ten commandments and then Jesus summarized it by saying you shall love your neighbor as yourself love love love love love love of neighbor sums up all of this law all of these laws in Romans 13 9 to 10 for the commandments are summed up in this word you shall love your neighbor as yourself love does no wrong to a neighbor therefore love is the fulfilling of the law if you love someone and always consistently act out of that love for that person and you have the love of God so you know what it means to love someone truly then you will never do wrong to that person okay but the lawyer asked about the great commandment in the singular why is
Jesus giving him two commands because the second commandment is an extension of the first commandment and flows naturally and unavoidably from it they are distinct commands but they are inseparable this applies I think to love our neighbor as ourselves first and foremost I think it applies to our fellow church members to our brothers and sisters in Christ why because we are commanded in Galatians 6 10 so then as we have opportunity let us do good to everyone and especially to those who are of the household of faith in fact 1 John in the church the evidence and proof that we have passed from death to life that we are spiritually alive in Christ 1 John 4 20 to 21 says this if anyone says I love God and hates his brother he is a liar for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love
[34:30] God whom he has not seen and this commandment we have from him whoever loves God must also love his brother we are all fellow members of the body of Christ how can we claim to love Jesus who is the head of the body and yet say that we hate a brother or sister in Christ who is part of that same body how can we claim to love Jesus the bridegroom of the church and yet say that we hate his bride the people in his church how do we meet a fellow sinner saved by God's grace someone who has been covered by the blood of the lamb like we have someone who knows the sweetness of God's mercy who have tasted and seen that God is good and not well up with love for that person oh here's my brother here's my brother who knows the truth that it's the rock of my life and my foundation here's my sister who shares my deepest and dearest hope here here is one who has the same spirit of

God as I how do you not love that person that's one level but the love of neighbor goes beyond that in Luke 10 after giving this command Jesus answers the question and who is my neighbor good question right Jesus answers the questions by telling the parable of the good Samaritan and his answer to summarize it is this don't worry about defining and delimiting who your neighbor is that one's my neighbor that one's not my neighbor so I don't have to worry about this command with him no he says instead focus on being a neighbor to whomever you come across anyone that you cross paths with whom you can help or serve or love in some way shape or form that's your neighbor your neighbor your relative or your family member or your fellow countrymen or someone who shares your race or ethnicity or someone who shares your political or theological opinions not someone who looks like you or talks like you or speaks the same language as you not only people who live as you would but anyone that you come into contact with whose need you can meet how can we claim to love
God and yet not love the very people who are created in the image of God in fact this love of neighbor even includes loving our enemy Jesus said this explicitly earlier in chapter 5 verse 43 to 48 love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be sons of your father who is in heaven for he makes the sun rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust God takes care of evil people and the unjust people in this world by making his sun to shine on them and sending rain when they need it when God who is perfectly holy and therefore has every justification to crush those evildoers and show them no grace and mercy and yet he shows them such grace and mercy in caring for them and providing for them will we imperfect sinners that we are do less than God in loving our enemies by linking these two great commandments

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Jesus steers clear of mysticism on the one hand mysticism results in a detached and disembodied love of God it's the love of God that flees from fellowship with man and love of man he steers clear of that but he also steers clear on the other hand of humanism humanism seeks to define what good is apart from God and seeks to do good toward humanity apart from God people who claim to love God but want nothing to do with people or people who seem zealous for God but seem increasingly prideful and hateful toward people are gravely mistaken they do not truly love God similarly people who claim to love other people but want nothing to do with God do not truly know how to love people who are made in the image of God because they do not know true righteousness they do not know what true justice looks like and they're ignorant of humanity's deepest direst need namely to know
God let's go a little bit deeper into this specific command you shall love your neighbor as yourself we ought to love God with our whole selves but love our neighbors as ourselves we're not supposed to love our neighbors the same way we love God we do not owe other people the same kind of allegiance that we owe to God rather we ought to love other people the way we love ourselves Philippians 2 3-4 teaches us that we have as humans a sinful tendency to be selfish and conceited and to look out for our own interests but God commands us in humility count others more significant than yourself to look out for others interests not just your own this is a call to love your neighbor as yourself it's a command to self effacing self giving sacrificial love remember this is a summary of the second half of the
[40:43] Ten Commandments you shall not murder if we only think of ourselves and of how much we hate this person how angry we are at this person then we'll murder but if you think about the other person's interest then we don't you shall not commit adultery if we only think of ourselves and the pleasure that we want and we only we're only interested in satisfying our own lust then you'll commit adultery but if you love your neighbor as yourself and you consider the other person's interest then you'll be wrecking that person's marriage family at home then we don't you shall not steal if you think only of yourself and the thing that you really really want then you'll steal but if you consider that the other person also really really wants that same thing then you'll leave it alone to love your neighbor as yourself is to seek sacrificially the good of the other person sometimes people twist the second great commandment and say something like this you shall love your neighbor as yourself means that we must love ourselves because we cannot love our neighbor as ourselves if we don't love ourselves in the first place so we gotta love ourselves first that's the first order of business learn to love yourself love yourself

God commands it but that completely violates the spirit of this command if we think this way we'll say well that person really wronged me really hurt me and I need to love myself and have some self respect so I'm not gonna forgive that person in fact I'm not gonna have anything to do with that person I don't feel like working today so I'm just gonna be lazy and waste my time at work no matter that I'm being paid by my neighbor to do this work I need to love myself first I deserve it it's backwards Jesus commands us to love Jesus does not command us to love ourselves he assumes that we already love ourselves which we do no exceptions even people who hate themselves and harm themselves do so because ultimately they love themselves the intensity of their self hatred is directly proportional to the disappointment they feel from their self love they're not what they want to be and they harm themselves because they love themselves because that physical pain provides some relief and escape from their emotional pain that's their way of loving themselves no matter how twisted it might be we all love ourselves so Jesus does not tell us here to pursue self love he tells us to put down self love so that we can pick up neighbor love to become more self forgetful so that we can become more neighbor mindful on these two commandments
Jesus says depend all the law and the prophets the word the Greek word translated depend here is literally hang all of the Old Testament hangs on these two commandments the Jewish there was a Jewish rabbi who rightly commented one time that the Sabbath laws are as mountains hanging by a hair for scripture is scanty but the rules are many but not with these two commandments the rules are simple but scriptural support is robust the two commandments can bear the entire weight of the Old Testament this is the royal law the great command because it's comprehensive and inclusive of all the other commands but there's still something that Jesus must add to this great command from the Old Testament read with me from starting verse 41 now while the Pharisees were gathered together Jesus asked them a question saying what do you think about the Christ whose son is he they said to him the son of

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David he said to them how is it then that David in the spirit calls him Lord saying the Lord said to my Lord sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet if then David calls him Lord how is he his son and no one was able to answer him a word nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions Jesus was introduced to us in Matthew chapter 1 with the title son of David and people have been calling him son of David throughout the gospel David was the great king he really is the greatest king in Israel's history and God had promised to him in 2 Samuel 7 12 to 14 that his dynasty his kingdom will last forever however Israelites sinned and then they were defeated by Syria and then Babylon and then they were exiled and the last Davidic king was ejected and the dynasty was cut off so where is the fulfillment of the promise that God had given to David that's what led to this messianic expectation that the Messiah who will come one day and Jeremiah 23 explicitly prophesied of this branch that will spring up from the root of David who will come to redeem his people and to be king over his people that's the Messiah Jesus so Jesus is that son of David so Jesus is not denying here that he is the son of David we've been told all throughout the gospel of Matthew that he is the son of David but he's also trying to tell us and to tell these Pharisees that he is more than the son of David he's not merely a biological descendant of [47:34] David he is the son of the most high God this is the point that Jesus is trying to prove here by quoting psalm 110 verse 1 that psalm is explicitly ascribed to king David it says it's of David David wrote it and David says when he sees this prophetic vision he says the Lord says the Lord God Yahweh says to my Lord sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet now that raises a very interesting question David is the king and he's not just a king he is the greatest king in Israel's history who in the world is David calling my Lord it's not the Lord God God the father he says Yahweh the Lord says to my Lord who is that

Lord that Lord has to be someone greater than David and Jesus is saying well then why do you call me son of David yeah I am a son of David but don't you forget I am also the Lord of David and now put this together with what we just saw what was the great command love the Lord your God with all your heart all your soul all your mind and why does Jesus right after that go to Psalm 1310 verse 1 where David says my Lord said to my the Lord Yahweh said to my Lord Jesus is saying I am that Lord I am the Lord of creation I am the word by whom all the cosmos was created
I am the Lord to whom you owe all of your allegiance and loyalty fall before me in worship you owe me your heart your soul your mind I am that Lord it's an audacious claim and yet we crucified him yet we rejected him yet we spurn him every single day so what are we to do when we fail to love God every single day I felt so convicted this week reading a book called lectures to my students with some of our pastoral staff by Spurgeon Charles Spurgeon and he writes about an 17th century English pastor named Joseph Alain and he writes that how Joseph Alain it was his habit to wake up at 4am in the morning and then he would spend 4am to 8am in prayer and holy meditation on the word of God and whenever he would get up in the morning and he hears other tradesmen working a construction worker working before he got up to do his devotions he said oh how that noise shames me does not my master deserve better than theirs of course he does they're getting up at 3am in the morning to serve their earthly master and here I am waking up at 4am to serve my heavenly master does not my master deserve better than theirs and
I read that this week and I felt so convicted because I don't love God like I'm supposed to 4am I don't pray like I'm supposed to I don't meditate or memorize God's word like I'm supposed to I don't obey him like I'm supposed to I don't love him with all my heart and soul and mind the way he deserves so what are we to do as people who have fallen short we rejoice in the good news that we read in our assurance of pardon in 1 John 4 verse 10 verse 19 he says in this is love not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins and it says in verse 19 we love because he first loved us isn't that good news we don't love [52:58] God the way we should but he loved us first it's not that we loved him no that's not how we're saved he loved us and because he loved us and because he knew that we will never love him the way we ought to he sent his only son Jesus Christ to die for our lack of love for our breaking of the great command first commandment and the second commandment that's why Jesus died on the cross and how can that be I was thinking about this this week too like with our anniversary is approaching when I first met Hannah I liked her right away and in my youthful delusion I thought she liked me first I was like oh I think she likes me she digs me you know and and then later as I started pursuing her

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I realized oh no no no she actually is not interested in me at all it took a lot of wooing to get her to start to take interest and then if you think about it now and I'm like wow well duh of course how stupid was I like you could Sean first well of course Sean loved Hannah first right how does the Lord of creation love a sinful worm like me first how does he love me first how can that be how can that before I made any move toward him he made his move and he sent his son and he gave his life for me how does he love me and love you first that's the gospel we love because he first loved us brothers and sisters remember that love remember that love when you mourn that you don't love God enough remember that love oh but you love me enough remember that love and go to that love and go back to that love and you do it again and again and again and again and you will find ineluctably that your love for him grows day by day that's how it's meant to work let's pray oh father we praise you that you loved us first we love you lord jesus because you loved us first and gave yourself up for us father help all my brothers and sisters here in this room to know your love help them never to doubt it and may that love spur in them a deep abiding love for you that courses through all of their lives every aspect of their lives they may love you with all their heart soul and mind in jesus name we pray amen

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