

BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

October 25, 2020 • 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Matthew 22:34-40

The Greatest Commandment

Jesus' enemies failed in their attempt to trap Jesus into saying something that would get him into trouble with the Romans. They make another attempt to trap him into making a mistake against the Jewish faith. A scholar of the law asks Jesus which commandment is the most important.

A scholar asks, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" and Jesus responds "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (v. 37). Jesus adds that the second commandment is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (v. 39). There they are, the two great commandments, and neither of them start with, "thou shalt not." The Ten Commandments (thou shalt and shalt not) presented to Moses are a somewhat more detailed version of these two great ones.

If we know the greatness of God and love God, we don't hold anything or anyone as more important. We don't use God's name disrespectfully, and we certainly don't use his Son's name, Jesus Christ, as a form of profanity. We honor the day God named holy, the day set aside for spending time with God, by not working like we do during the week. If at all possible, we rest on the Lord's Day and enjoy the gifts of God's creation.

If we love our neighbors as ourselves, we are respectful to those especially closest to us, like our father and mother. Remembering that according to Jesus, everyone - even our enemies - are our neighbors, we are called not to kill, steal, or lie about them. We are called to refrain from envy about what others have, and we strive for faithfulness to a spouse we have pledged to love forever.

Basically, the greatest commandment is to live in God's love, and to make that love so much a part of

us that we cannot help but reflect it. Do everything you can to surround your children with love; your own love and others' love. Keep them close to the church community so they can see that love lived out in community.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Have those family members who are old enough memorize the two great commandments from today's reading. Then get out the Bible and read the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1-17. Talk about them and see if family members can come up with a few more commandments that illustrate the two great ones.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Which of the Ten Commandments do you find most difficult to live out? How can you develop the virtue that corresponds to that particular commandment? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?