

# The DAILY JESUS NEWS #175

(Note: You can read the online Newspaper edition of this post [here](#).)

## Jesus Ministers in Judea and Trains His Disciples

### Jesus Trains His Followers in the Basics of Discipleship

#### Jesus Teaches on the Greatest Commandment: Love for God

LK 10.25-28

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 *"What stands written in the Law?"* he replied. *"How do you read it?"*

27 He answered, "'LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND;' and 'LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'" (Duet. 6.4; Lev. 19.18)

28 Jesus answered back: *"You have answered correctly. Continually put this into practice, and you will live."*

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = <sup>MT</sup>, Mark = <sup>M</sup>, Luke = <sup>L</sup>, John = <sup>J</sup>, Acts = <sup>A</sup>. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	On the Road, Somewhere in Judea
Timeline	September (Month 31)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VI: Jesus' Later Judean Ministry
	D. Jesus Minister in Judea and Trains His Disciples
	I. Jesus Trains His Followers in the Basics of Discipleship
Title	i. Jesus Teaches on the Greatest Commandment: Love for God

#### COMMENT:

Today's reading begins a series of five teachings by Jesus on the basics of discipleship. These are the priority of love (2 readings), abiding in Jesus' word (1 reading), and prayer (2 readings). Prayer and Jesus' word equip us to respond to God's love for us in such a way that we love God, others, and self as Jesus does. The inter-related roles of love, prayer, and the word make up the core of discipleship...according to Jesus.

Today's text begins two readings concerning the priority of love for God and others. A scribe--an expert on the Torah--came to Jesus with a crucial question? "What must I do to obtain eternal life?" (10.25) This is question of the ages. Is there an absolute answer to it? Every religion and philosophy gives a different answer. Yet, it is the essential question because nothing else matters, if we are not alive!

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The start to possessing eternal life... according to Jesus... is the knowledge that we can never obtain it by ourselves, for we are sinners. Our sin disqualifies us from eternal life with God, and damns us to a life eternally separated from him. When we believe in our own sinfulness we can come to Jesus for forgiveness, and receive eternal life from him as a free gift of his grace.

Eternal life therefore comes to us through faith in Jesus, or not at all. The scribe did not understand or accept this reality. He was seeking to justify himself--thinking it was possible for him to gain eternal life in his own self-righteousness (10.29). Jesus knew the scribe's heart, and therefore sought to lead him into accepting the truth of his own sinfulness, and need for salvation from the Messiah. So Jesus asked the man what he thought the Scriptures taught about the possibility of obtaining eternal life in his own self-righteousness.

The scribe answered well--with the bedrock statement of faith of every Jew who knew the Torah, from Deut 6.4: **"Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind."** He followed that with the command from Lev. 19.18 to love our neighbors as ourselves. Thus, all-consuming love for God, expressed by loving others as ourselves is the most important priority of life in a right relationship with God. So far, so good.

The problem for the scribe was that he was self-deluded. He did not realize how totally he was failing to love God and others.

The command to love is the crucial command from God that every other command depends upon. It is the command that we fail to obey as sinners more than any other. This command should convict us our sins, and lead us to Jesus for forgiveness in failing to meet it. This was the purpose of the law--to make every person who tries to obey it realize that we are sinners--law-breakers--who need forgiveness and mercy from the God we have utterly failed to love as we should. When we realize the depth of our sin we are ready for salvation from Jesus-- the God who saves us from our sins.

The Great Commandment is the ultimate priority for every disciple of Jesus. Jesus came to fulfill the command to love God and others by adding a crucial new qualifying statement to the Old Covenant command, that changes everything! Jesus said: **"Love... as I have first loved you."** (JN 13.34-35)

Because Jesus first loves us, we receive the ability to love God back, and others as he has first loved us. Jesus Himself is the enabling power that makes obedience to the Great Commandment possible. The priority of love is the most important principle of discipleship. This is what Jesus was teaching his disciples through his encounter with this scribe, and his parable of the "Good Samaritan" that is our next reading.

Note: The "Glory of Love...According to Jesus" website contains a series of eight postings about the revolutionary character of Jesus' teaching on love. You can access the first posting [here](#). If you read the first post and want to continue through more of them, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click the link for the next posting. By repeating this process you can read through them all at your leisure.

### APPLICATION:

*Believing and receiving God's love for you is the key to loving him back, and others as well.*

*How can you grow in your understanding and experience of God's love for you?*

*What resources will you use?*