

This morning I want to look @ 4vvs that we all know well... they're found in **Luke 10.25-28...** but this isn't the only place within scripture that this incident is recorded... It's actually 1 of 3 parallel passages¹... it's also recorded in both **Matt 22.37 + Mark 12.30** although they are all slightly different....

Mark records the scribes response in a different order & Matt only has three attributes mentioned... we often refer to these vvs as the great commandment...

But as we come to these VVS today... the question is...
how do they relate to me...
how do these VVS impact my life... today in 2019...

READ VVS Luke 10.25-28

This passage opens up with an **expert in the law...** coming to test Jesus with a question & it isn't like he didn't know the answer, but he wanted to see if Jesus would correctly answer a fundamental question - **how can I be sure that I'll be saved in the final resurrection...** & don't people want to know the answer to that question- what is the 1 thing **I must do to inherit eternal life?...**

But even in this, the Scribe indicates a misconception that a lot of people have... He views eternal life as something that happens after death... as a form of reward for a life well lived... a life of good deeds... & providing you have enough on the credit side... you'll receive eternal life... but in **John 17.3²...** Jesus tells us that eternal life is a relationship with the Father... through C & that begins in this life... **Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life³....** Present tense... We experience eternal life now...

But Jesus doesn't directly answer the lawyer's question does he...

See... The scribe is actually asking the wrong question - the issue isn't, what must I do to inherit eternal life.... but rather - who is God & how can I have a relationship with Him...

but... rather than answering the scribe's question - Jesus turns it back on him, by asking him 2 questions - knowing he's a man of the Law - Jesus refers him back to their common source of authority - the Law. He asks him **What is written in the Law?** 2nd ... he asks Him - **How do you read it?** or how do you understand what the law says...

Within the Pentateuch, Moses gave the Israelites 613 commandments to help guide them in the way they should live their lives.

King David summarized these commandments down to 11 statements in **Psalms 15.2~5**

¹ Matt 22.37 + Mark 12.30

² **John 17:3** (NIV2011) *Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

³ **John 6:47** (NIV2011)

Isaiah further reduces that list to 6 in **Isaiah 33.15** & Micah gives us just 3 commandments in **Micah 6.8**... we are **To act justly, to love mercy & to walk humbly with your God.**⁴

So how is this Scribe going to summarise the Law? & we have his answer in **v27** - but he didn't come up with this on his own, he's actually quoting 2 txts from the Torah⁵...

The 1st is part of the Shema from **Deuteronomy 6.5**...

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

Love the LORD your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your strength...

Fundamentally this statement was a pledge of allegiance to God & a pious Jew would recite this 1st thing in the morning & again last thing @ night before they went 2 sleep. It was the 1st prayer that a Hebrew child was taught & ideally, it is the last words a Jew would utter as they pass away.

It's a declaration that Yahweh is the one true God & as God's people, they are to love Him with their whole being - they were are to be a people fully devoted to God

& the 2nd statement is the last part of **Leviticus 19:18 (NIV2011)**. that in light of our love for God, we are to **love our neighbour as ourselves...** & of course @ the end of this discourse with Jesus the scribe asks who is my neighbour & we have that great illustration with the good Samaritan.

You could call these 2 statements - the law of Love. That as the people of God, we are to place God @ the very centre of our lives & we are respond to one another in love...

But what does it mean 2 Love the Lord your God???

I love Sandra... I love my family - is it that sort of love???

I love pineapple lumps - maybe it's that sort of love...

I'd love a new mustang- Maybe it's that sort of love...

What does it mean to love God?

Any biblical definition of love must start with God - never with us, **because God is love**⁶... it is his character that defines love. It was because of his love towards us that he sent Jesus to save us from our sins & enables us to be reconciled back to him - **But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!**⁷

Therefore - our response to God is to be one of love - **We love because he first loved us**⁸... & this is shown by how we live our lives... **If you love me, you will obey what I command**⁹.... & just as God loves us completely we are to love him

⁴ Micah 6.8

⁵ The law as given 2 Moses – 1st 5 books of the OT.

⁶ **1 John 4:8 (NIV2011)**

⁷ **Romans 5:8 (HCSB)**

⁸ **1JN 4:19**

with all our heart,
with all our soul,
with all our strength &
with all our mind

But what does that look like - what does it mean to **Love the Lord your God with all your heart**

Within scripture the heart covers a whole range of attributes of our inner self - it doesn't refer just to an organ that pumps blood around our body - it was considered the center of our feelings, our emotions, our desires, our passions - *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also¹⁰....*

We experience our emotions in our hearts don't we. As David wrote in **Ps 28.7**... *My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song*. But our heart is more than just our emotions it is also the centre of our spiritual life - As Christian we talk about giving our hearts to the Lord - not our heads. *If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved¹¹*. & yet so often it is in our hearts that the spiritual battle takes place - it is in our hearts where we are tempted – **John 13.2¹²**.... & in **Romans 1:24 (HCSB)** we read how because of the people's unrepentant hearts *God delivered them over in the cravings of their hearts...*

But **V27** reminds us that there is only one God & we are to love him with all our heart - not part of it. It's when we have a divided heart we begin to come unstuck - that's what **Matthew 6:24 (NIV2011)** was warning us about. *No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.*

So this morning - take a moment & consider where is my heart @- can I honestly state that I *Love the Lord my God with all my heart....*

What about loving the **Lord your God with all your soul...**

within Hebrew thought the soul was considered the seat of life. it isn't so much that a person has a soul but rather a human is a soul. It has links right back in **Genesis 2:7 (NIV2011)** *Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being....* or became a *living soul*. When the soul leaves the body the body loses its life. When we get that it begins to make sense of vs like **Matthew 6:25 (HCSB)** *This is why I tell you: Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?*

Mark 8:36 (HCSB) *For what does it benefit a man to gain the whole world yet lose his life?*

⁹ **JN 14:15**

¹⁰ **Luke 12:34 (HCSB)**

¹¹ **Romans 10:9 (HCSB)**

¹² **John 13:2 (HCSB)** *Now by the time of supper, the Devil had already put it into the heart of Judas, Simon Iscariot's son, to betray Him.*

Within these VVs we have the same Greek word translated 4 *soul & life*. It encapsulates all that we are - I am not just a physical body, my soul is who I am - my personality - My personhood & we are called to love God with our very being - the very essence of who we are - it implies an intimate relationship with the Father...

The 3rd attribute mentioned here is that we are to **Love the Lord your God with all your Strength...**

The Greek here 4 **Strength** refers 2...

our ability....

our capacity .. or

our power 2 act....

& as **1 Peter 4:11** (HCSB) reminds us everything we do should be dependent on God's enabling - *If anyone speaks, it should be as one who speaks God's words; if anyone serves, it should be from the strength God provides*. There is that sense that everything we do is to be centred in the Love of the Father & his enabling - that aspect of **1 Corinthians 10:31** (HCSB) *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for God's glory*. We acknowledge that God has enabled us to do whatever he has called us to. That's what it means to **Love the Lord your God with all your Strength**

& finally we are to **Love the Lord your God with all your minds....**

our understanding, our intelligence, our thinking...

When I was @ Carey I went 2 a Physio about my back & we got talking about what I was doing etc & she told me that the biggest problem with you Christian is that you don't know what you believe. You send contradicting messages 2 society. She said she like Brian Tamaki because you know exactly what he believes & what he stands for. & she's right @ 1 level - because many of us don't know what we believe, so we are vulnerable to being

*tossed back and forth by the waves, and
blown here and there by every wind of teaching and
by the cunning and craftiness of people¹³*

because we don't really know what we believe...

So often it's come to Christ & lets kiss our brains away - but it's good to wrestle with scripture - It's Ok to ask those hard questions - to really think about what you believe. I'd encourage you to engage in some form of biblical study - Join a small grp...*As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another¹⁴*.

The Shema deals with our relationship with the Father... & we've got to get that sorted 1st...but our love & commitment to God is to be outworked in the way we conduct ourselves within our relationships & Jesus isn't promoting some form of abstract love here - rather he evokes a love that is useful & beneficial to others that we come across in the course of our daily lives - we R commanded to **Love our neighbour as yourself...**

¹³ **Ephesians 4:14** (NIV2011)

¹⁴ **Proverbs 27:17** (NIV2011)

We refer to this as the Golden rule don't we - but what is the significance of this -

How can we claim to love God who we cannot see & yet

not love our neighbour who we can see &

who is made in the image of God... (1 John 4.20)...

it's an oxymoron of what it means to be a Christian & follower of Jesus...

1 John 4 puts it like this...

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love....¹¹ since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another....²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.²¹ And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

John is telling us, that if we do not show love to one another - we can hardly claim to love God.... tough words.

In the parallel passage in Matthew Jesus declares that **All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.**¹⁵ & why is that - Because these 2 commandments go to the very heart of the KoH...

Kingdom living means living the way God intended us to live...

in relationship with our heavenly Father &

loving our neighbour as God Loves us...

there's an upward & outward focus to these vvs - it's what James¹⁶ was writing about in his letter about the outworking of our faith, but it is based in our relationship with the Father. Because that's where we experience love - that's where love originates - with God & as we love him with everything we are & love 1 another - we reflect the nature of the KoG. I believe as Christians, that is how we are to live our lives...

In relationship with God &

Loving one another...

People made in the image of God

¹⁵ Matthew 22.40

¹⁶ James 2.14-18