

Father's Expectations— Matthew 22:36–40

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I have been talking to my friends about our Heavenly Father’s expectations for us—because He is a God of mercy.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread (Thursday, April 9), I gave a Bible study titled “What Are the Father’s Expectations?” The purpose of the presentation was twofold.

- I wanted to remind friends that a God of grace has expectations for His children.

- I wanted to remind friends that the Bible contains many, many examples of the Father’s expectations.

I plan to conclude this short series (that began on April 11) with a brief discussion about the Ten Commandments as organized in Matthew 22:36-40.

On these two commandments

A lawyer asked: “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” (verse 36).

The Son of God mentioned two concepts.

- You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind (Matthew 22:37-38).

- You shall love your neighbor as yourself (verse 39).

Then, the Son of God said: “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (verse 40).

But that’s not 10

Someone could ask: How do Bible students find the Ten Commandments in those two statements by the Son of God?

The answer is found in Matthew 19:16-19 and Romans 13:9.

A young man came to the Son of God and asked Him about having eternal life (verse 16). Part of the Son of God’s answer was: “Keep the commandments” (verse 17). The young man asked: “Which ones?” (verse 18).

The Son of God mentioned Commandments Five through Nine of the Ten Commandments—and He added the phrase: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (verses 18-19).

It is interesting to notice that Matthew mentioned Commandments Five through Nine as loving the neighbor, while Paul mentioned Commandments Six through Ten (Romans 13:9) as loving the neighbor.

Matthew 19:18-19—“He said to Him, ‘Which ones?’ Jesus said, ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

Romans 13:9—“For the commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ‘You shall not covet,’ and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

- Therefore, many Bible students have come to view the last six Commandments as loving their neighbor.
- Many Bible students have come to view the first four Commandments as loving God with their entire being.

Beautiful guidelines

Disciples in my circle of life strongly believe that they are saved by grace. However, they use the Bible to discern the expectations of their Heavenly Father.

- John 10:27-30
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9
- Titus 1:16
- Mark 2:27-28
- Ephesians 6:1-3
- Matthew 5:21-26
- Matthew 5:27-30
- Ephesians 4:28
- Matthew 5:33-37
- James 1:14-15