



**Kingdom Preparation**

*The Heart of the Law*

Matthew 22:34-46

How to Prepare

Begin preparing by reading the full passage a few times. Then answer the questions for yourself. Then think about how your Small Group might answer them. Try re-wording the questions to fit you and your Small Group. Don't feel tied down to the discussion guide, just be sure to discuss the main point of the text in your conversations.

Resources-

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-Christian-legalism.html>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/why-the-law-was-given>

<https://learn.ligonier.org/articles/delighting-our-duty>

Sermon Outline:

Matthew 22:34-46

1. Legalism Misunderstands the Law. Vv. 34-36
2. Love Motivates the Law. Vv. 37-40
3. The Lord Fulfills the Law. Vv. 41-46

**Matthew 22:34-46**

**Jesus Answers the Sadducees**

34 But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together.

35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him,

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

37 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.'

38 This is the great and foremost commandment.

39 The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

40 On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question:

42 "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" They said to Him, "The son of David."

43 He said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying,

44 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet"'?

45 If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?"

46 No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question.

# Discussion Questions

**Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 22:34-46.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Here is a question or two to help introduce the topic and jump-start discussion.

**1. If someone were to watch a time-lapse video of your entire week, what would they guess is the number one thing that you love or value the most? How does the phrase, "actions speak louder than words" apply to our love for God and others?**

## **UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION**

These questions should help your Small Group dig deeper into the text and then apply it to your lives today.

### **I. Legalism Misunderstands the Law. Vv. 34-36**

**2. Why were the Pharisees questioning Jesus again, and who did they choose to question Him? What does this interaction show us about their view of the Law?**

**3. What is legalism, and how did the Pharisees display legalism? What does legalism misunderstand about what the Law is and its purpose in our lives?**

**4. How can individuals, as well as the church community, maintain high biblical standards without slipping into a culture of legalism? What does that balance look like in everyday life?**

### **II. Love Motivates the Law. Vv. 37-40**

**5. What are the two most important commandments in scripture, and what is significant about the priority given to each one? Why is it of paramount importance to keep these two in their proper order?**

**6. What does it mean that all of the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments, and what does this teach us about the nature and purpose of the Law? How is love for God and love for others the motivation for each of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20?**

**7. Jesus inextricably connects loving God with loving our neighbor. Why is it impossible to truly do one without the other? What happens when we try to separate them?**

### **III. The Lord Fulfills the Law. Vv. 41-46**

**8. Jesus stumps the Pharisees by pointing out that David calls his own descendant "Lord" (Psalm 110). Why is it vital to our faith that Jesus is both fully human (David's son) and fully God (David's Lord)?**

**9. If Jesus, as the Son of God and Son of Man, is the only one who ever perfectly loved God and perfectly loved His neighbor, how does His perfect record rescue us from the impossible task of "measuring up"? What do we need to do to receive His perfect record?**

**10. How does knowing that the Lord has already secured the victory and fulfilled the law empower us to serve and love God and others out of gratitude rather than a desire to earn God's favor?**

## Commentary (from ESV Study Bible)

**Matt. 22:35** A lawyer is an expert in the law; this is another expression for “scribes of the Pharisees” (Mark 2:16; cf. Acts 23:9; and Jewish Groups at the Time of the New Testament).

**Matt. 22:36** the great commandment. The rabbis engaged in an ongoing debate to determine which commandments were “light” and which were “weighty” (cf. 23:23; and note on 5:19). The Law refers here to the entire OT.

**Matt. 22:37–38** love the Lord your God . . . heart . . . soul . . . mind. This command from Deut. 6:5, repeated twice daily by faithful Jews, encapsulates the idea of total devotion to God and includes the duty to obey the rest of God’s commandments (cf. Matt. 5:16–20). “Heart,” “soul,” and “mind” do not represent rigid compartments of human existence but rather together refer to the whole person.

**Matt. 22:39** You shall love your neighbor as yourself. See Lev. 19:18, 34. Love signifies a concrete responsibility to seek the greatest good of one’s neighbors, both Jew and Gentile.

**Matt. 22:40** The kingdom life that Jesus initiated—summarized in these two commandments—fulfills the deepest longings of human beings created in the image of God to display his glory. the Law and the Prophets. See note on 5:17.

**Matt. 22:41–46** Having dealt with malicious questions from his adversaries, Jesus now asked them, concerning the long-awaited Messiah (the Christ), Whose son is he? Their reply, “The son of David,” reflected the common understanding that the Messiah would be a royal descendant of David (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12–14; Ps. 89:4; Isa. 11:1, 10; Jer. 23:5). Jesus then quotes from Ps. 110:1, one of the most important messianic texts in the OT and the one most quoted in the NT. The Pharisees would have recognized this psalm of David as a divinely inspired messianic prophecy. In the psalm, David said that the coming Messiah (i.e., David’s “son”) will not be just a special human descended from David; he will be David’s Lord. Because the Pharisees acknowledged the messianic import of the psalm, they did not dare to ask Jesus any more questions. The fact that David’s descendant (Jesus) would have a more prominent role and title than the ancestor (David) further indicates the uniqueness of the Messiah and the greater honor that is due him as the Son of God. Matthew does not say how exalted a person Jesus was claiming to be in his use of Ps. 110:1; but the psalm itself may well imply the deity of the Messiah (see note on Ps. 110:5), i.e., that the Messiah is to be Yahweh incarnate (cf. John 1:14).