

Mark 12:28-34 – Boldness to Speak the Truth – Part 3

TSK, GreekLexicon, Gill, Robertson, JFB, Clarke, Poole, Barnes, Vincent, Geneva, Trapp, Rienecker, Handfuls, PNT, Henry, Calvin, INT, Brink Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The **Pharisees (法利赛人)** **used the Herodians (希律一党的人)** to try to trap and then destroy Jesus. Jesus, even though he knew their evil intent (意图), **proclaimed truth to them**. The Pharisees and the Herodians left, hating Jesus more than when they came.

Then **the Sadducees (撒都该人)** came and tried to trap Jesus, using, or rather, misusing the Bible. They badly wanted to embarrass Jesus so he would stop exposing the error of their doctrines. Jesus, even though he knew their evil intent, **proclaimed truth to them**.

You would think the Devil would be convinced that Jesus would always boldly speak the truth and stop trying to trap him. But no, he would not stop. Today you will see how, for a 3rd time, he entered his agent to try to destroy Jesus. The 3rd agent was a **Scribe (文士)**. You will see this under the following headings:

The Trap The Truth The Triumph

Our goals are: **That being saved and secured by Jesus, that you too will boldly speak the truth without fear, particularly the truth of God's love.**

The Trap

28 Then **one of the scribes came**, and having heard them **reasoning together (disputing)**, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

1. Let's first ask the question: Who were the scribes?

The scribes were scholars in Mosaic Law and historical Jewish religious writings. They were from the sect of the Pharisees. Many of them were enrolled as members of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council (委员会). Whenever there was something difficult to interpret, the leaders would call for the scribes. They were legal scholars. In fact, they were called "lawyers" in the Bible. The problem is that they **often reinterpreted things to suit their purposes or the purposes of their benefactors (捐助者)**. They were very hostile to Christians in the Book of Acts.

2. So, like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the scribe (representing other scribes) came to Jesus in order to trap him.

The scribe did not come with the intention of learning. He came because he felt like Jesus had won the arguments with the Pharisee and the Sadducees and he thought he should try to destroy Jesus. Matthew confirmed this. Some try to argue that this man was good and came with good intentions. But listen to Matthew.

Matthew 22:35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, **tempting Him, and saying...**

We further know that he was bent on evil because this account was in a **series of negative temptations of Jesus**. Remember, this was Passion Week (耶稣受难周). The Devil was doing his best to destroy Jesus.

3. So what was this trap?

The scribe wanted to **get Jesus to say that the Jewish ceremonies and traditions were not as important as the moral law**. Look at 2 examples of Jewish ceremonies and traditions that they held in higher esteem than the moral law: **The Pharisees taught that if one had a choice between making burnt offering (a ceremony) and saving a drowning person, he should make the burnt offering.** Or if one had a choice of **making a sacrifice (a ceremony) and feeding his parents, he should make the sacrifice.**

If Jesus condemned any of these traditions and ceremonies he could condemn 谴责, 定罪 Jesus.

4. Lesson:

a. The Devil will use anyone to try to trap you into thinking, talking, or doing something against God's law. He might use the one sleeping next to you, your brother or sister to do wrong, or even "religious" people. So be careful. Know God's Word well so you don't fall for the trap. The Devil's **goal is ultimately to destroy you**. Some false religions are like this. They seem innocuous 无恶意的, but they aren't. They are not your true friends. The Devil and his people have no good intentions to you.

b. Examples of modern traps: "If you are going to pass the test, you will have to cheat." Since marriage is an honorable institution, you should marry, even if the person is not a Christian.

The Truth

29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the **LORD our God**, the LORD is one.

1. Jesus started his response by repeating the beginning of the Decalog 摩西的十诫– the Keriath Shema, or Shema Israel: Hear, O

Israel, the Lord our God is One.

Why? Why didn't Jesus go straight for the law and answer the question? Jesus did not go straight for the law because it was important to identify the source of the law. The source was Jehovah, covenant God, who was also Elohim. (BTW, the Keriath Shema was so important that the Jews were required to repeat it twice every single day.) God is the One God with a plural name. Because he is the only God, no other laws, other than those based on Jehovah's law, are good. He governs the state and he governs the church. Any law to the contrary of God's law is sinful. Anyone who promotes any law to the contrary is sinful.

30 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

2. Jesus then repeated the summary of the 1st table of the Law- Law 1-4, and said that this was the 1st law.

This means you are to love Covenant God with a plural name with a renewed heart that has experienced the love of God.

1 John 4:19 We love Him because He first loved us.

To love with all your heart means you must love him in sincerity 真诚.

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

To love God with all your soul means you must love with a willing life. ("Soul" is best translated "life" here.)

To love God with all your mind, means you must know God. You have to know his character and perfections 完美, 完全.

To love God with all your strength means that this requires effort; it isn't natural. You have to pray for strength to love God.

31 "And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

3. Jesus then repeated the summary of the 2nd table of the Law – Law 5-10, and said that this was the 2nd law, or 2nd greatest law.

This means you must love men, women, and children from any religion, nationality, or race. And you love them in a way that honors God's law. You love them by keeping God's law regarding them – Law 5-10.

Leviticus 19:18 'You shall not take vengeance (报复), nor bear any grudge (怨恨) against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

The Lord used the standard of selfish love (which is indeed great) as a measure of how much you are to love your neighbor.

4. Jesus boldly spoke the truth! These 2 laws came in direct opposition to the things the Jewish leaders were holding as important, but Jesus did not hold back or soft-pedal his answer.

So the Jewish ceremonial laws (礼仪律), their additional Sabbaths (安息日), their circumcisions (割礼), their phylacteries 经文护符匣(cases in which they kept some written Scriptures), their fringes (穗子) on the borders of the clothes, were not as high on God's list of importance as the moral law. They were important to the Jews but not to God.

5. Lessons:

a. God is the only source of law. Whoever makes the law is God. No law must contradict与...矛盾 God's law. This is why you must reject false religions. You must never treat them as equally valid. But don't be boastful. You can't keep God's laws either.

b. Thank God that Jesus kept the 10 commands for you so that you get credit for keeping them perfectly. Thank God that Jesus took the punishment for you breaking the law.

c. Being restored to God in Jesus, ask God for grace to keep the whole law.

1John 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

1John 4:19 We love Him because He first loved us. 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

Because sin remains in you, this is lifelong battle to kill other "loves" of your life that are trying to take the throne of your soul.

d. Be bold enough to get this message to the world. Tell the world: "God expects you to keep the 10 commands perfectly, but you can't, so you need Christ's life and death." Lead them to your Covenant Keeper.

The Triumph

32 So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. 33 "And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings 燔祭 and sacrifices 献祭."

1. The scribe acknowledged that Jesus spoke the truth: There was one God.

2. The scribe acknowledged that the greatest command was to love God and the 2nd greatest command was to love one's neighbor.

3. The scribe acknowledged that true love of God and man were superior to all the religious traditions and ceremonies 仪典 that the Jews hailed as more important.

Love, seen in obedience to the law, was more important than the burnt, sin, peace, and transgression offerings 燔祭, 赎罪祭, 平安祭, 和赎愆祭.

Hosea 6:6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

4. The problem was the scribe merely gave mental assent 头脑上的认同 to the truth.

This is how Roman Catholics and Muslims describe faith...purely mental assent. But this is not faith. Faith is based on **knowledge** of who Christ is and what he has done, but faith is also **a heartfelt trust and confidence** in your soul in who Christ is and what he has done. The scribe lacked those things. And this was why Jesus **inserted the Shema Israel**. A man must first acknowledge covenant God, Jehovah, to be the only true God who saves, and that he **sent the Covenant Keeper, the Lord Jesus Christ** so keep the law for him. **Then, and only then, he can take up the commission of heaven to keep the law.**

34 Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "**You are not far from the kingdom of God.**" But after that no one dared question Him.

5. Jesus then answered that the scribe was wise and that wisdom had brought him near to the kingdom of God.

Did Jesus lose here since the man did not believe? No. **Victory is speaking the truth without fear or compromise 妥协!**

6. Lessons:

a. There is only one true God, Jehovah; all other gods are the work of demons or the figments of man's imagination.

b. Obey God's law, showing love to God and man.

1 Samuel 15:22 Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed 留心, 听从 than the fat of rams.

c. In order to love (obey) you must be saved. You can't merely think Jesus is your Savior, or merely say that Jesus is your Savior. **You have to believe with all your heart that Jesus is your Savior, you Covenant Keeper.**

d. Know that victory is not measured by the number of conversions 转变, 皈依.

Conclusion:

Even though Jesus knew that the scribe was setting a trap for him, he boldly proclaimed the truth: **The greatest laws were to love God and to love one's neighbor** – the 10 commands. Jesus **spoke the truth so he could lead the scribe to salvation.** He **wanted the scribe to call on Jehovah, Covenant God, and plead for Christ's obedience to God's laws to be credited to his account.** And he wanted the scribe to live a life of love, obeying all 10 laws.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Praise God that Jesus did not hide the truth from you. He confronted you in your sins, he made you ashamed, and he gave you the desire to turn from wickedness and accept Christ's righteousness (义) - his perfect obedience. This is true love. Praise God eternally.

2. Being redeemed, love your neighbor, starting with your brothers and sisters in Jesus. And remember, love is not a mere feeling. Love is an act of your will. Love is doing what is best for the other person based on God's law. No brother or sister should be abused or ignored by you.

3. Then let the world hear about the greatest law-love God and man. And let the world know that only Christ can give the ability to love and he can do so when he changes their hearts. Speak with boldness. Don't be afraid.

Finally: If you have no faith in Jesus, you are under eternal condemnation of God and will spend eternity in hell, in pain and with a guilty conscience 负罪感. But if you ask God to hold Christ accountable for your sins, he will, and he will set you free from sin and shame.