

Two Greatest Commandments

Arthur Barry

We can try as hard as we like to make it more complicated, but Jesus boiled it down to these two simple truths. It was very normal, when a rabbi was around, to hear lengthy, involved discussion on all sorts of religious issues. You remember how they loved to posit questions to Jesus about such things as divorce (Mark 10:2) and paying taxes (Mark 12:14) and even about resurrection (Mark 12:18-27). He must have felt that this question was a breath of fresh air:

Which is the greatest commandment? (Mark 12:28). Jesus answers with two:

1. *And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord; And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. (Mark 12:29,30)*
2. *The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:31)*

The questioner is not disappointed with this answer and he joins Jesus in expounding on why these two commandments are so vital.

"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." (Mark 12:32, 33)

There is a positive and a negative expression of both commandments. The first commandment states that there is one God, and we are to love Him (positive). It also states that there is no other god; so by implication we should not love any other god (negative). The second commandment says we are to love our neighbor as ourselves (positive) and the negative expression is "all burnt offerings and sacrifices." These were not forbidden but they were not to be given as much weight as loving one's neighbor. Offerings could be made to the wrong god(s) or to the one Lord. In either case the offering could be no more than a gesture. In the case of false gods, that is absolutely all a worshiper had to do. But with the one Lord, they were merely signs, or evidence, that there was a relationship between this worshiper and this God. This covenant relationship with the one Eternal Lord promises much more than any of the gods of our day, but He also asks more of us than just a token. Going to church, contributing, even singing, and praying can be valid tokens to just about any god. The one Lord asks us to love one another.

Check your relationship with God and make sure that it is not consisting mainly of mere tokens.



That meets at 701 South Wilbur, Sayre, PA 18840
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April 11, 2021

WELCOME!

Sunday

Bible Class- 9:30 a.m.

Worship- 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 p.m.

All the churches of Christ greet you.

Romans 16:16

Today's Sermon **It Is Never Too Late**

Sermons are recorded and are available for listening on the church website.

Bulletins are archived on the website.

valleycitieschurchofchrist.org

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Headphones are available for the hearing impaired.

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 3:7-13

ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS...

- **Sunday Morning Bible Class:** Teachings from the Psalms with complementary songs.
- **Wednesday Evening Bible Class: March 14th at the building, 6:30pm- we started a study of the Gospel according to Matthew. Come at 6 and eat with us before the lesson.**
- **Sojourners: Mike and Nadine Huddleston, Larry and Kay Little, Doug and Sandy Zimmerman and Dave and Kristy Bell** hope to be here the last week in June and the first week in July.



NEWS

- We are hoping to resume our week three potluck dinners next week, on the 18th of this month. There is no theme, so bring whatever you like.



- **Lily Harper Cowles** was born on Wednesday weighing 6lbs, 15oz. Parents Nate and Paula are doing well. Congratulations to Grandpa Paul and Nana Dawn!
- **Arthur visited with Dan Rowe at Elderwood Assisted Living** on Thursday and will see him again on Tuesday. He was grateful for the time spent with him, although visits are limited to 20 minutes.

Arthur will be preaching today.

PRAYERS

- **Arthur's older brother Chris** who lives in Yorkshire, England has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. Pray that he will open his heart to Christ soon.
- **Pat Guthrie** has had lung cancer reoccur in his left lung. Pray for another remission.
- **Jackie** has tested positive for Covid19 and was taken to the ER yesterday for difficulty breathing. She was placed on oxygen and admitted to the hospital.
- Pray for **Jeff Forrest**, Dara's boyfriend, as he is in the hospital with severe Covid19 symptoms. He will be there for several days and is on oxygen. Dara also tested positive.
- **Gail Westerhold** is having a biopsy on one kidney to see if she has cancer. Please pray for her.
- Pray for **Don Myers** of Elmore, AL. Doctors now suspect he has Parkinson's Disease. He, Judy and grandson Jordon plan to move closer to Don's daughter and family within the month.
- **José Rivera** has been cleared to return to work but has yet to receive a bus route to drive. He still needs to lower his sugar levels but is doing much better.
- Pray for **Linnett Short, a former coworker of Paul's**. She has stage 3 lung cancer.
- **Arthur's sister, Sue**, has breast cancer for the third time, this time on the chest wall. She will be treating it with chemo and hormone suppressing medicine for the foreseeable future. Please pray for her.
- **Winnie Carlisle, one of our sojourners in 2019, has breast cancer**. She has just recovered from a bad case of Covid. Please pray for her.

If you have any PRAYERS or NEWS that you would like included in the bulletin, please contact Sandy at barncat7237@gmail.com or text or call (607) 261-0911.