

Sermon Notes – September 13, 2015
“The Most Important Thing”
Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Matthew 22:34-40
Pastor Bill Hoffman

For someone as committed to the Law as this Pharisee to ask: “Which is the greatest of all the commandments?” is like asking: “What is the most important thing in life?”

- How would you answer that question?

Jesus answers by quoting from two parts of the Law:

- Deuteronomy 6:4-6 and Leviticus 19:18
- Read these passages in their immediate contexts.
- What does this tell you about how a person was expected to love God and neighbor?
- In *The Jesus Creed*, Scot McKnight argues that by inviting people to follow him as a rabbi, Jesus implies that one loves God and neighbor by following him.

“All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (verse 40)

- Experiment reading the Bible through the lens of it being a specific commentary on how to live out the commands to love God and neighbor.

From childhood, observant Jews would repeat the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4-5 several times per day.

- Try doing this yourself: for a period of at least several weeks repeat to yourself Jesus’ expanded version of the Shema in Matthew 22:37-39 at least twice daily.
- Look for ways in which doing so may better orient you to the Christian’s primary vocation of loving God and loving others as you go through your day.