

Sermons
New Testament
Matthew
22:34-40

1

Date written: August 4, 1946

Scripture & Text: Matthew 22:34-40

Theme: The necessity of love

Proposition: Love is a prime necessity
to worthwhile living.

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Tennant, Wyo., 11 a.m. }

James M. Smith
1840

Scripture & Text: Matt. 22:34-40

But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence then they which were gatered together.

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, saying,

Master, which is the great commandment in law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Introduction:

1. Definition of love: a feeling of strong, personal attachement.

2. Definition of "worthwhile living": sufficient to repay the effort; worth the time spent.

I. Love to God first.

1. Love to others usually thought easier than love to God.

2. Jesus taught love to God first.

Sermons
New Testament
Matthew
22:34-40

3. Without it first, no motivation for love to others.

a. Moral, right, kind living does not always "pay" in this life.

b. When it ceases to pay, then deeper, less external support and reason for such living is needed.

c. The only satisfactory motivation is personal attachment to God (love)

II. Yet love to God is not enough.

1. Jesus said "the second is like unto it," showing that he realized the necessity of consciously exercising love to others.

2. Many hold that to love God is enough, for it will automatically ensue in love of others.

3. This is a dangerous attitude (or position), for it is easy to deceive ourselves into thinking we are loving God and our neighbors too by acts that are actually harmful to our neighbors. i.e. the inquisition, witch hunting, John Brown.

3

III. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" also commanded.

1. This second commandment has 2 parts:

- a. Love thy neighbor
- b. As thyself

2. The emphasis on the first part is usually followed, and very, very often the connotation of the word

Sermons
New Testament
Matthew
22:34-40

Sermons
New Testament
Matthew
22:34-40

4

"neighbor" limits such love only to the few who one knows rather intimately i.e. soldiers who are nice, generous to their families, to their buddies; but cruel, rude and vengerul to those in occupied countries; yet think themselves fundamentally religious even though admitting they "do things they shouldn't."

3. The followers of Christ can accept the term "neighbor" only in its world-wide sense.

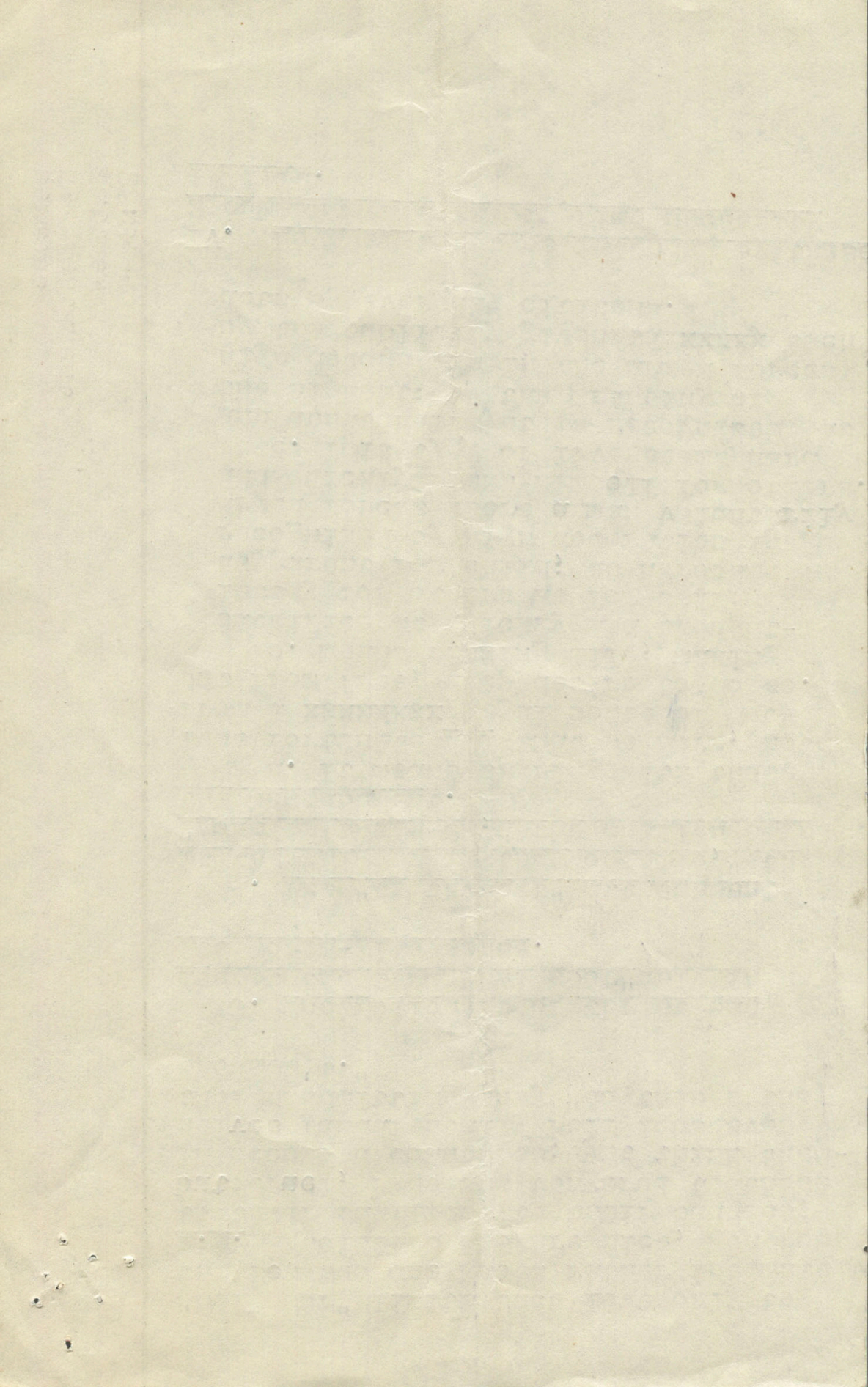
4. The "as thyself" attachement is the "nigger in the woodpile," the "joker in the deck," the challenge in the commandment.

a. It means sharing with those less fortunate all that we have, not from a ~~xxxxxxx~~ legal sense of duty but from free, deep desire to do so.

b. Means risking life, making sacrifice as quickly and thoughtlessly for others as for self; as parent for child; as heroism recognized by high decoration in armed forces where ~~an~~ man voluntarily and quickly risks himself for others.

c. This type of love seems hard and unnatural, yet is recognized as the highest: by the granting of high decoration in the armed forces; by the publicity given to ~~xxxxx~~ such acts by everyday citizens.

IV. Love of the type intended by these 2 commandments is of prime necessity in life.



1. Love of neighbor.

- a. In enjoyment of relations with others.
- b. In freeing self from attachment to material things.
- c. In preparation for life after death, regardless of conception as to what that might be.

2. Love of God remains the great commandment.

a. Gives motivation for love to neighbor.

b. Gives purpose to life.

(1) Without purpose life is worthless. Better a wrong purpose, or a wrong way of achieving a good purpose, than none.

Illustration: Kiel tower memorial
Land's End lighthouse

Conclusion: Love is a prime necessity to worthwhile living.

1. It provides definite great causes and objects to which one ~~xxxxx~~ voluntarily is **attached** irrevocably in life.

2. It brings about the realization that living is "worth the time spent."

Life

Life! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we meet
I own to me's a secret yet.

Life! we've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy
weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear-
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not good night-- but in some bright
clime
Bid me good morning.

Anna Letitia Barbauld.

