

**Rev. Thomas Emery**  
***“The Greatest Commandment” Matthew 22:34-40***  
**Salem Presbyterian Church**  
**Sunday, September 26, 2014**

In order to ask a good question you need to have noble motives behind the question. You have to want to know the truth. The Pharisees, by contrast, already had the answers to their questions. In a moment like this, they were not trying to learn; they were trying to injure. The Pharisees come to Jesus once again with a question designed to do damage to the reputation of Jesus. And once again, Jesus proves He is equal to the task. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”

### **TEACHING POINTS**

**Teaching Point One:** *There is something within us that wants to be told what to do, rather than how to be.*

**Teaching Point Two:** *There is a tragic separation between principle and practice.*

**Teaching Point Three:** *When we love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and love our neighbors as ourselves, we experience the risen Christ.*

### **THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE**

<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:37-40 NIV).

### **ACTION POINT**

Even though this question was used to test Jesus, it is nonetheless an important question. Perhaps in the life of Israel at that time it was the most important question. Now how in the world do you summarize such a collection of Old Testament laws? Can it really be done? Jesus seems to indicate that it can when he says, “All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments: first, love God with all you heart, soul, and mind; and secondly, love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no higher teaching in all of literature or human culture than these two commandments. Let us live them out!