

Worship Material
How loving God compels us to love others
Materials from Roots Bible Study
Sunday 29th October

Begin with an opening prayer

Creator God, may we love, cherish and care for creation as you do. Jesus, servant, king, may we love and seek out those in need, those in danger – as you do. Holy Spirit, spirit of freedom, may we love and free people from all that robs them of purpose and confidence – just as you do.

To your glory. **Amen.**

Read Matthew 22.34-46

Bible notes

The question asked of Jesus was not a complicated one. Verse 37 is the Shema, the central prayer of Judaism, found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5. Verse 39 is a summary, taken from Leviticus 19.18, of the law of Moses. Together, they are all that God's people need to remember: Love God; love your neighbour as yourself. The other laws, of which there are traditionally 613, unpack how to do this – but these two are the essence. Not complicated, but Jesus' answer does, however, clarify to his hearers that he understands the written law to be important, more important than the later oral tradition. He is orthodox in his faith. As the people of God, loved by God, we are to love God, and to let this love overflow to others and ourselves. This is the choice we are to make.

Jesus' return question is a little more complicated. Living in occupied territory, the people looked forward to the time when God would send a leader, a second Moses, to set them free once again. This leader, the Messiah, would be a descendant of King David. Jesus demonstrates here that this understanding of the Messiah is too limited. Fathers were lords to their sons, not vice versa, so for David to refer to the Messiah as 'Lord' in this quote from Psalm 110 shows that there must be something more to the Messiah than Jesus' hearers have realised. In several places elsewhere in his Gospel, Matthew has the title 'Son of God' attributed to Jesus (4:3, 6; 8:29; 14:33). This demonstrates the Messiah to be one who receives authority directly from God and not simply through the family line. Jesus is orthodox in his faith – but this does not mean holding to traditional ways of understanding.

Prayer

A prayer of praise

God of all the world,
for the gift of love: **we praise you;**
for gentle love, for tough love: **we praise you;**
for hesitant love, for confident love: **we praise you;**
for human love, for love towards animals: **we praise you;**
for costly love, for joyful love: **we praise you;**
for all the shades of love, for all the colours of love: **we praise you;**
for the silence of love, for the music of love: **we praise you;**
for the now of love and for the eternity of love: **we praise you.**
In Jesus' name: **we praise you. Amen.**

A prayer to conclude

Go and be empowered by the commandment to love,
encouraged in your ability to love,
and blessed in your receiving and sharing of love, day by day.
In Jesus' name. **Amen.**