

**Are We Preaching “Another” Gospel: A 31-Day Journey toward
Rediscovering the Gospel of the Grace of God**
by C. D. Hildebrand, 24-7-365 Version 2026

Day 23

TWO GREAT COMMANDS

In his insightful book, Love Revolution: Rediscovering the Lost Command of Jesus, Gaylord Enns catalogs his discovery of a mixture of covenants that few have pointed out before him. So radical was his realization that some have rejected it out of hand. Yet, understanding this revelation is core to comprehending how great the accomplishments of the cross truly are.

Before reading his book, my understanding of Matthew 22:37-40 was that loving God with our entire being and loving our neighbor as ourselves would cover all of God’s will, and the doing of them would be to please God. Having read the gospels at a very young age, I was also very keenly aware of Christ’s command to love one another as He loved us. Seeing no conflict, I simply merged the three together as the core commands of the Christian life.

One afternoon, as we were leaving an out-of-town store we’d visited to purchase items for our daughter’s engagement party, someone called out to me from a car window. I didn’t recognize our former pastor and his wife at first, but when I did, I went to our car to get David. Patti and Gaylord were visiting in a nearby town where he had gone to get away to work on the aforementioned book. They were looking for a certain shopping center, which Gaylord assured Patti he could locate. Finally realizing that they were lost, he told her that he would ask for directions from the next person he saw. Imagine their surprise when the next person they saw was me. Understanding the amazing “coincidence” of us all meeting this way after so many years of not seeing each other, we decided to sit down in a nearby café.

We thought, of course, that this might be an opportunity for *us* to share with them about what God was teaching us about grace. Yet it was Gaylord who began first asking us, “What are the two great commands of the New Covenant?” My husband’s first reaction was to buckle. He didn’t believe we were under any laws. Not knowing how to answer the question, David gave the answer he thought Gaylord wanted to hear, and that was, of course, to love God completely and our neighbor as ourselves. Then Gaylord began to speak of the command of Christ to love one another as He loved us as being the core command of the New Covenant.

To fully understand the import of Matthew 22:37-40, we need only apply

basic hermeneutics. To whom was Jesus speaking and about what?

Matthew 22:34-40

*But when the **Pharisees** heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment **in the law?**”*

*³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang **all the Law and the Prophets.**”*

Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees specifically about the greatest commandments in the **law**, the Old Covenant.¹ On these commandments depend all of the law and the Prophets. Beloved, the question is specific to the Old Covenant, and the Old Covenant, as we know, is obsolete.

The necessity of these Old Covenant commandments point to two undeniable facts: One, the Israelites *needed* to be **commanded** to love God and to love their neighbor as themselves, because two, it was not in their unredeemed natures to do so. Consider this also, that even though the Israelites were commanded to love God and their neighbors, we read time and time again of their failure to do either.

Romans 8:2-4

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³ **For what the law could not do in that it was weak** through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

The command to love God was an Old Covenant command necessary for a stiff-necked people who were still dead in their sin. The law could not change the heart, only demand the commanded behavior and reveal man's depravity.

We, however, are new creations in Christ Jesus; those who love God because we are loved by Him (1 John 4:19). No one has to command believers to love God. We do. He is our Father, and we are His beloved children. For those who have been born again, it is our new nature to love

¹ Again, allow me to point out the obvious, that even Jesus considered the law to include the moral law.

God.

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Believers are “the called according to His purpose”. We are “those who love God”.

On the night of His betrayal, when Jesus spoke of the New Covenant in His blood, He gave them a “new commandment” which He called His own. It was on this commandment to “love one another as I have loved you” (Jn. 13:34-35) and the Father’s commandment to believe in the Son (Jn. 6:29), that the entire New Covenant is based. The best scripture to verify this understanding is this one.

John 3:23

*And this is His commandment: that we should **believe** on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and **love one another**, as He gave us commandment.*

Believe in Jesus, and love each other as He loved us. When we do these two things, we will be keeping His commandments. It’s really not that complicated.

Those who love God will love each other. (Please note: I am not telling you to prove that you love God by loving each other. I’m saying that if you are a believer—one who loves God, you *will* love each other.)

1 John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 Thessalonians 4:9

But concerning brotherly love, you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.

Even more stunning is the understanding that when we love each other, God receives it as love for Himself.

Matthew 25:40

“And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”

John 21:17

He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."

Have you ever considered just how much love a pastor demonstrates for God when he shows kindness toward his sheep? Every sermon taught, every act of kindness shown is an act of love toward God. This is *God's* perspective. He receives our love toward each other as love toward Him.

Recently, I took my granddaughter, Emma, on a clothing shopping spree to celebrate with her that she had been accepted into the school of her choice. She and I had such a great time picking out a mini wardrobe, and my daughter told me that when she got home, Emma laid out her clothes across her bed to show her mom. I was so happy to do this for her, and she was so happy to receive, but there was another person who was in on this love, and that was my daughter, Christina. She received my love for my granddaughter as love for her. I believe this is a snapshot of how God views our love for His children. When we lavish grace on each other, it brings Him joy.

It's so easy for those who are trying to love God with all of their being to see loving each other as something less important than "loving God", but we need to recognize that **Jesus commands** us to love each other as He loved us. By believing in His Son and loving each other, we bring pleasure to the Father's heart. Can the Christian life really be this restful?

Yes!