

Sunday October 25, 2020 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Matthew 22:34-46
“On These Two Commandments”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes). In pairs or groups of three, have participants share the most helpful life instructions they have received. Who gave those instructions to them? What was the advice or instruction

Matthew 22:34-36 Context: After Jesus had sidestepped the issue of paying taxes to Caesar that was put to him by the Pharisees, he trumped the Sadducees, the other major religious group of the day, on the issue of the resurrection, making the case for the truth of the resurrection from the Torah itself (the Sadducees rejected the notion of resurrection). The controversy continued with yet another question from the Pharisees who often maintained that there was no such thing as a “greatest commandment,” each commandment being equally important. Jesus’ response points to not one but two commandments which Jesus understands as “two sides of the same coin,” so to speak. Then finally, before his adversaries could ask anything more, Jesus asked them a question about the Son of David that they could not answer. We hear no more from Jesus’ enemies until he is brought before them on trial later that same week.

Read Matthew 22:34-46

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read Matthew 22:34-46 again

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- The Israelites believed the Law was a gift from God that provided guidance to them on being the unique people of God. Unfortunately, we tend to perceive laws as rules that bring punishment if broken or as rules meant to be broken. But as we see from the Old Testament, religious laws were designed as God’s guidance for living a life pleasing to God. How does it change your perception of the law or commandments, if the word “instruction” is used instead?
- What might the motive have been of the lawyer’s question to Jesus (v. 36)?
- How do Jesus’ instructions of loving God and loving neighbor provide a summary for how Christians should live?

- What happens if one of these two instructions is left out as an instruction for living?
- What are some specific ways you might grow in love for God? For family? For needy people? For neighbors? For yourself? How can this group help you grow in love?

Read Matthew 22:34-46 again

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Each person prays sharing their answer the following statements:

I ask God for....

I thank God for.....

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

Loving God, we continue to marvel at the depth of your love. In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we clearly see that your love is committed, compassionate, sacrificial, and tangible. So, fill us with your love and grace, so that our actions and words will overflow with gentleness, compassion, and tangible expressions of love for others. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord's Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven

hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.