

# I Am Third

“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.”  
Matthew 22:37-40

## **Introduction:**

1. Today's sermons will be among the simplest to preach and to hear, but they are not the easiest to practice.
2. Last Sunday I warned you with the fear of Gal 6:5-8 and gave you the hope of Gal 6:4; but we also saw the instruction of Gal 6:1-3 and 6:9-10. Let us study this doctrine, which is the law of perfectness in Christ.
3. The high commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ and the surest evidence of His religion is love (I Jn 3-4).
4. So important are these commands that Jesus Christ hung all the law and the prophets on them (Matt 22:40).
5. Gale Sayers, one of the greatest running backs in NFL history, entitled his autobiography, “I Am Third.”
6. My wife and I were raised in a church, where as children, we attended a JOY club: Jesus, Others, and You.

## **I. GOD IS FIRST**

- A. The first commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your being (Matt 22:37-38).
- B. What does our Creator require? To fear, love, and serve Him (Deut 10:12; Eccl 12:13-14).
- C. Our life is hid with Christ in God; we are dead to self; we must love Heaven (Col 3:1-11).
- D. Our greatest example of loving and serving God is Jesus (Luk 4:1-13; 22:41-44; Heb 4:15).
- E. Other examples of loving and serving God are David and Paul (II Sam 7:1-2; Phil 3:7-14).
- F. Do you put first reading, praying, meditating, thanksgiving, singing, praising, attendance?
- G. Are all decisions in your life measured against the will of God without any compromise?

## **II. OTHERS ARE SECOND**

- A. The second commandment, the royal law, is to love your neighbor as yourself (Matt 22:39).
- B. We have no evidence we love God until we love His children (I Jn 3:23; 4:7-13,20-21; 5:1).
- C. We must consider others and their things more important than us (Phil 2:3-4; Rom 12:10).
- D. We must reject pride and any conceit and condescend to men of low estate (Rom 12:16).
- E. We must practice the second commandment by loving service to others (Galatians 5:13-14).
- F. Our greatest example of serving others is Jesus (Matt 20:25-28; Phil 2:5-12; John 15:13).
- G. A great example of serving others is the apostle Paul (II Cor 12:14-15; I Thess 2:8; 3:12).
- H. Empathetic and sincere desire for others' welfare is rare and contrary to nature (Tit 3:3).
- I. Our duty is to reject our own pleasure and bear others' burdens (Romans 15:1-3; Gal 6:2).
- J. Do your thoughts, words, and actions show clearly others are more important (I John 3:18).

## **III. I AM THIRD**

- A. Self-love, selfishness, is the curse of our flesh and the panacea of the world (II Tim 3:1-2).
- B. Paul repeated our Lord's teaching that it is more blessed to give than receive (Acts 20:35).
- C. Our flesh craves attention and respect from others, so we treat others this way (Matt 7:12).
- D. Communication is not talking about yourself; it is listening, analyzing, and helping another.
- E. Saints do not ask what their church can do for them, but what they can do for their church.

## **Conclusion:**

1. What hinders you in these priorities? Time? Redeem it. Selfishness? Confess it. Habits? Kill them. Bitterness? Repudiate it. Carnality? Replace it. Cold? Pray (II Cor 8:16). No conscience? Unsear it.
2. True Christian joy, peace, and contentment only result from ordering your life by these simple priorities.
3. See the outlines “Love Is the Greatest,” “Miscellaneous Thoughts on Love, and “The Definition of Love.”
4. My parents gave me a consistent example of these priorities all their lives. What example are you leaving?
5. You have been given the law of Jesus Christ today. Every man shall bear his own burden (Gal 6:1-10).