



“The Trap: Challenge #3”

Mark 12:28-34 ♦ Pastor Jim Lennon
November 13, 2022

Introduction – Three separate groups within the Jewish Sanhedrin question Jesus in an effort to trap Him in what He says. The last group to challenge Jesus are the Scribes.

I. A Challenge From a Champion.

- A. The Scribes were the intellectual elite, professional teachers and lawyers in Israel.
- B. One Scribe stepped forward to challenge Jesus with a question that had never been settled.
- C. We can refer to it as “The Greatest Commandment Puzzle.”

II. The Greatest Commandment Puzzle.

- A. The Scribes loved to spend time categorizing God’s Laws.
- B. They had counted a total of 613 commands in the Torah.
- C. They also made a big point of classifying the commands into lighter and heavier commands.
- D. The great puzzle and debate centered on which commandment in the Law was the greatest (most important)?
- E. They also enjoyed the challenge of trying to summarize the whole Torah in a nutshell.

III. The Greatest Commandment Pinpointed.

- A. Jesus begins His answer by quoting the “Shema.” (Deut. 6:4-5)
- B. This describes the threefold response of complete devotion to God.
 - 1. Jesus adds a fourth “all.”
 - 2. And, Jesus adds another commandment.
- C. Love for God and love for our neighbor fulfills God’s Law entirely.
- D. The Scribe was impressed with Jesus’ response.
- E. Jesus was impressed by the Scribe’s response.

IV. Practical Applications.

- A. The Scripture is the basis for what we believe.
- B. God’s Law can be boiled down to one principle of love - Love God and love our neighbor.
- C. Love is more important than all our other religious exercises and activities.
- D. Loving God involves our whole being.
- E. Loving God is expressed in our love for our neighbor.

Conclusion