

Fr. John's Gospel Reflection ...

Today, as a school boy, Jesus, the Master of the Law is asked a quiz concerning the law from a scholar of the law: *"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?"*

The scholar of the law was expecting one answer, but Jesus gives him two.

Logically, Jesus should get nothing or zero. But Jesus is right. As God, Jesus couldn't be wrong. Let us look at his answer:

The greatest and the first commandment is: *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."* The second is like the first: *"You shall love your neighbor like yourself."* He concludes: *"The whole law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments."*

To understand Jesus' answer, let us check briefly the meaning of the word law and commandment. By definition the law is "a binding custom or practice of a community" while the commandment is "something that is commanded: one of the biblical Ten Commandments."

Here, the law is a whole while the commandment is a part. It is the commandments that make the law.

Take look on the Ten Commandments of God:

1. You are to have no other gods before God
2. You are not to make any graven images.
3. Don't use the Lord's name in vain
4. Keep the Sabbath holy
5. Honor your mother and father
6. Do not kill
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Don't steal
9. Don't bear false witness.
10. Don't covet the neighbor's house.

The Ten Commandments are very famous examples of Biblical rules, but it is amazing how few people know what's included in them. You will notice that the first four Commandments concern God: love your God, while the last six Commandments concern man: love your neighbor. That is to say, the love of God is the love of neighbor and the love of neighbor is the love of God. There is no way for loving God without loving neighbor and vice versa. Therefore, if you love God and if you love your neighbor as yourself, you won't harm him, wrong him, or extort him by demanding interest from him, or take his cloak as pledge. You will treat him just as you treat yourself. To show your love of God, we must try to love your family, your Church community, people you encounter at work, school, and your recreation areas as yourself. You will then accomplish the whole law and your salvation is near.

Let's meditate this week on these powerful and true words from Saint John: *"Those who say I love God and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen"* (1 Jn 4:20-21).