



Daily Verse and Comment

Matthew 22:37-40

(37) 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. (38) This is the first and great commandment. (39) And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (40) On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Isaiah 58:13

(13) If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

King James Version

The Ten Commandments can be summarized in two overall principles: [love](#) toward [God](#) ([Deuteronomy 6:5](#)) and love toward neighbor ([Leviticus 19:18](#)). The first four commandments deal with our relationship with God, and the last six commandments expound on our relationship with fellow man.

What does it mean to have a relationship with God? An analogy is frequently used to describe the relationship between Christ and the church is that of a groom and a bride ([Revelation 21:1-4](#)). Likewise, Paul writes in [II Corinthians 11:2](#): "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." The word "betrothed" seems somewhat archaic; today, we would say the church is "engaged" to Christ. By making the New Covenant with Him, we have agreed to spend all eternity with Him, but at present, we are within the period preceding the marriage described in [Revelation 19:7-9](#). Following the analogy, we are to be preparing ourselves for this future relationship.

During this preparation time, the parties involved are getting to know each other. God the Father has handpicked us for this relationship, and now is the time we need to make ourselves ready.

How does this fit into the [Sabbath](#) and the concept of ownership? God has already established a regular meeting time with us—a "date," as it were. Every week, that part of our schedule is already determined. [Amos 3:3](#) asks, "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" In other words, can a person meet with another if they have not determined a meeting time?

Sabbath time has been specially designated as the Bride's time with [Jesus Christ](#). This does not mean that we should restrict our interaction with Him to this day; on the contrary, part of *each* day should be devoted to prayer and Bible study. Nevertheless, this is a primary reason the seventh day has been set apart and made holy.

What does this mean practically? Imagine a couple planning to marry. Being devoted to one another, they have set their wedding date and have agreed to meet on a weekly basis. It is easy to see that, if the young man shows up at the designated time, but the young woman suddenly decides that there is a more convenient time, a rift is going to develop in the relationship. Obviously, *the correct day* is vitally important. God has already established that day.

Suppose the couple gets the day right, and they meet and spend time together. What if the young lady, in the midst of this quality time she is supposed to be spending with the one she loves, pulls out a cellphone and begins talking to her friends, as if her fiancé does not even exist? What if the topic of conversation, either between her and her friends or between her and her fiancé, is little more than [gossip](#) or what she is planning on doing as soon as her weekly date with her alleged beloved is over? Or, what if their date, which her betrothed had made special for them, has become a mere ceremony to her? What if she just goes through the motions, doing the things required of her, showing little or no feeling about what this relationship really means to her?

On a spiritual level, we are *commanded* to assemble, if possible, and part of our Sabbath is intended to be for fellowshiping. What are the topics of our

conversation? Do sports, entertainment, shopping, or business advance our relationship with God? Is catching up on the latest gossip and social news appropriate for this time that does not belong to us? During this weekly appointment, where do our thoughts wander? Do we think about our business interests or financial concerns? Do we think about or make plans for what we are going to do as soon as the sun sets? Do we esteem Saturday night more than the time God has set apart for us to meet with Him? Are our Sabbath services mere ceremonies? Are we demonstrating to God by our actions on this day that we are eagerly looking forward to spending eternity with Him?

These are points to ponder.

— David C. Grabbe

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