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Scripture

Matthew 22:34-46

³⁴ When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵ and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" ³⁷ He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ and a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: ⁴² "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." ⁴³ He said to them, "How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying, ⁴⁴ 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet"'? ⁴⁵ If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?" ⁴⁶ No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Devotional

Love. It is a simple word, and yet it is complex in its simplicity. As people of faith, and especially as persons who are called to serve in some kind of public ministry, we think we know how to love. Loving God appears to come as easily to us as breathing, and we have loving others down to a science. We pray with strangers, help the poor, feed the hungry, and visit those who are in prison. But how well do we love ourselves? How are we with self-care? What if we loved ourselves as we do our neighbors? How would that transform your ministry? Advent is often the busiest season, and it is easy to forget to love and take care of ourselves. Practice what you preach. Spend time in the Word and in prayer. Do something you love. Love yourself this season, and watch God transform you!

Prayer

Dear Lord, this Advent season is one of the most joyous and yet stressful times of the year. As we rush about getting everything ready for Christmas, let us not forget to prepare our hearts. Help us to keep our focus on you and not lose ourselves in the process. We ask all this in your precious, holy name. Amen.