

A banner with a light beige background and a dark green border. The text "Catechism: Foundations of the Faith" is written in a dark green, serif font. The banner is set against a background of a wooden desk with a typewriter and a notebook.

# Catechism: Foundations of the Faith

## The Summary of God's Law

### Key idea:

Can you summarize what God's law commands you to do? All the law is summarized in these two commandments: You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, and with all of your soul, and with all of your mind; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

### Key text:

Matthew 22:34–40

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. <sup>35</sup> One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: <sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" <sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

### Key points:

1. Jesus summarized the entire Law of God (and the Prophets) in two commands: love God with everything and love your neighbor as yourself.
2. These two commands are also a summary of the two halves of the Ten Commandments, in which the first four commands teach what we owe directly to God, and the final six commands teach what we owe to God in the way we treat our fellow humans.
3. The command to love God with everything in us is foundational to being able to truly love our neighbor.
4. True love for God will usher in loving our neighbor.
5. True love produces actions. Love for God always produces growing obedience to His commands, and love for our neighbor will prompt actions that care for them and their needs.

### **Questions for discussion/application:**

1. Note: this is BRCC Catechism Question 10. The catechism has many other verses, questions, and resources for further study related to this question.
2. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
3. Why are the commands to love God and our neighbor an accurate summary of all of the other commands in God's Law? Is it possible to really love God or neighbor and not keep the other commands? Why or why not?
4. Jesus was asked for the greatest commandment in the Law, but He responded with two laws. Why did He do this?
5. Why is the command to love God foundational for the command to love our neighbor? What is the relationship between loving God and loving my neighbor? Does it make any difference if God did not even exist? Why or why not?
6. Why is the command not just to love God, but rather to love God with all of my heart, all of my soul, and all of my mind? What does this entail? What will it look like in my life?
7. Why is the command not just to love my neighbor, but rather to love my neighbor as myself? What does this entail? What will it look like in my life?
8. According to the parable of the Good Samaritan, who is my neighbor? What does it mean to love my neighbor? How does this work in our modern world where I can see people in need all over the world?
9. Does anybody actually fulfill these two commandments? Do I ever love God with all of my heart, all of my soul, and all of my mind, or my neighbor as much as I love myself? What should this failure produce in me? Where is my hope if I fail at the two greatest commandments, and thus at the entire law?
10. How do these commands inform me of what the Holy Spirit is working to produce in my life as a Christian who has already been justified by grace alone through faith alone? What do these commands teach me about what sanctification (growing in holiness) will look like in my life?
11. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

### **Preview of next week: Can You Keep God's Law? [Question 11] (Romans 3:10-24)**