

Matthew 22.34–46

When the Pharisees heard how he had bested the Sadducees, they gathered their forces for an assault. One of their religion scholars spoke for them, posing a question they hoped would show him up: “Teacher, which command in God’s Law is the most important?”

Jesus said, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.’ This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: ‘Love others as well as you love yourself.’ These two commands are pegs; everything in God’s Law and the Prophets hangs from them.”

As the Pharisees were regrouping, Jesus caught them off balance with his own test question:

“What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said, “David’s son.”

Jesus replied, “Well, if the Christ is David’s son, how do you explain that David, under inspiration, named Christ his ‘Master’?”

God said to my Master,

“Sit here at my right hand
until I make your enemies your footstool.”

“Now if David calls him ‘Master,’ how can he at the same time be his son?”

That stumped them, literalists that they were. Unwilling to risk losing face again in one of these public verbal exchanges, they quit asking questions for good.