



Key Scripture:

Matthew 22:36–40 (ESV)

³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷And 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 great and first commandment.** ³⁹**And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.** ⁴⁰**On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”**

Ephesians 3:14–19 (ESV)

¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

1 Peter 4:10–11 (ESV)

¹⁰As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: ¹¹whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Discussion Questions:

On Sunday, Mark began with an illustration comparing the complex controls of a jet aircraft to that of the simple controls of an old biplane: *“up, down, left & right.”* **Do you think sometimes that we overcomplicate our Christian walk?**

Jesus sums up this simplicity in Matthew 22:36-40. **How does this compare to the simplicity of the “up, down, left & right” controls of the biplane?**

Paul in Ephesians 3:14-19 speaks about our vertical relationship with God. **In verse 16 what does it mean to be “strengthened...in your inner being”?** **What has this strengthening enabled you to get through in your life?**

Mark pointed out that husband & wives tend to start taking on each other’s traits as they spend such a large amount of years together. **Is this the same with us and Christ?** Sometimes we can get good at formally spending time with God, but that’s not how intimate relationships mature. **Can you pursue a friendship with God similarly to how it happens in a marriage?**

As we draw closer in connection to God, what should be the outcome regarding our horizontal relationships with those around us? Is it possible to have a healthy relationship with God but not with man?

What happens emotionally to a Christian that spends too much time serving man at the expense of spending time with God? Has this ever been you? Why is this sometimes called spiritual burnout?

Alternately, Mark said that “when we only focus on the vertical relationship with God we can become very introspective, everything becomes about ‘me and my stuff’”. **Have you ever seen this? What does spending more time with God without also focusing on serving each other produce?**

How can you bring the needs of the community that God has placed you in into your time with God?

Regarding this subject, how can you see this “up, down, left & right” balanced relationship at play during Jesus’ time on earth?

Mark, at the end of his preach, asked people to put up their hands if they felt unbalanced in these two relationships. **Do you feel this may be you? As a group, what can be done to bring it back in to steadiness?**