

## CHAPTER 1: THE JESUS CREED

[Recommended video: "Shema - Listen" <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/shema-listen/>]

Read aloud the Shema: "Hear (*shema*), O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

1. What central truth of spirituality has been your "code"? In other words, if you think through your understanding of Christian faith (yours or the faith you hope to profess), what word(s) or phrase motivates you to believe and act?
2. How does the Shema teach God's people what is important in one's beliefs?

Read Mark 12:28-33

3. The creed of Jesus gets radically personal for his listeners. How are these two commands radically personal for you?

Dallas Willard: "To understand Jesus' teachings, we must realize that deep in our orientations of our spirit we cannot have one posture toward God and a different one towards other people. We are a whole being, and our true character pervades everything we do."

4. Does my response to people, events, and circumstance, know I love God?
5. How am I being spiritually formed?
  - a. What "stuff" forms my spiritual life? (experiences, possessions, desires, etc?)
  - b. Who forms me?
  - c. How does the spirit of Christ form me?

In the book foreword, John Ortberg wrote of two gaps that this book study would hopefully shrink: first, the gap between you and Jesus; second, the gap between you and the person you want to be.

6. Where do you want to be in your relationship with Christ?
7. Reflect (and share) one way that you want to become the person you are meant to be?

Next week: Chapter 2, Praying the Jesus Creed