



Foremost Commandment

Text: Mark 12:28-34

Context: We are at the end of the long section where Jesus has been questioned by the religious leaders (Mk 11:18-40) after entering Jerusalem and teaching and acting with authority (11:1-17). Jesus will have the final word in the next section warning people about these false leaders (12:38-40). Here at the end, Jesus finds an intelligent leader who understands the Scriptures. We will discover the foremost commandment of the 600+ mentioned in the Scriptures; and someone who is not far from God (12:34).

Read Mark 12:28-34

1) Jesus answered them well. (Mark 12:28)

Who has been “arguing” with Jesus? Why have they been arguing with Jesus? What can you infer from this verse about the motive of the scribe’s question?

2) Jesus teaches there is a foremost commandment. (Mark 12:28-31)

What does it mean that “THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD”? What does it mean to love God with your heart, soul, mind and strength? Why does Jesus go beyond providing one commandment and add a second commandment?

3) “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” (Mark 12:32-34)

How does the scribe’s answer to Jesus (vs 32-33) also refute the Pharisees and Sadducees in our previous text (vs 13-27)? How is the scribe’s answer intelligent? Why does Jesus tell the scribe, “You are not far from the kingdom of God”?

BIG IDEA: Jesus calls us to follow Him with all our being. (v30)

Following Jesus is different from religion or adhering to good moral standards. Going to church really doesn’t require your heart, soul, mind and strength – just your time. As the scribe said, loving God with all of you is “more important than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices” (v33). Following Jesus is about submitting all of your being to Him – loving Him with every piece of us.

What part of you struggles to love God fully: heart, mind, soul or strength?

What would it look like for you to love God with all of you?

How does loving God impact our love for neighbors?

Next Week’s Passage: Mark 12:35-44 / Teaching in the Temple*

**Next week is the last week of the Message-Based Curriculum for Spring 2017; Fellowship Groups will be on Summer Break from May 28 until August 2017.*