

**Introduction:**

- Mk 12:28-34
- This passage marks the movement from discipling a nation to discipling a people for the Kingdom of God.

**I. Of All The Commands**

- A. *"Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"* (Mark 12:28, NLT)
1. This is a question of foundation. important = Gr. protos - meaning first in time, number, or sequence; first in rank.
  2. Which is the most important command? Love God!
    - a) A command is direction given by authority, an order issued by authority. It does not have an option. Jesus declares that the command that is foundational is... the Schema! Dt 6:4.
    - b) It is the Schema! **Love** the Lord your God. Of the many commands, the one that sums them up is love. And if you love God you will already be doing the commands.
    - c) *"The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."* (Matthew 22:40, NLT)
- B. When God began discipling a nation this is the first command He started with. "LOVE GOD!"
1. Jesus answers that the most important command is loving God.
  2. So our question has to be, "How am I doing at loving God?" How do you measure how well you are loving God?
    - a) By how well you are walking in the revelation that you have received.
    - b) By the amount of time you spend with Him
    - c) By the measure of how much your heart is given to Him.
    - d) By how often you think about God in a given day.
  3. How can I improve on loving God?
    - a) By letting His Word shape my life.
    - b) By listening more rather than doing all the talking.
    - c) By thinking like a Hebrew: "How can I live this Word?"
- C. The other thing that Jesus declares in His answer is *"The Lord is One."*
1. Since there is only ONE God, love him.
  2. One God eliminates many gods that an individual could put their trust in...including self.
  3. This is foundational to being a good disciple...a good follower of Christ.

**II. What Was Jesus Thinking?**

- A. "For Jesus, the whole Law is summarized in the will of God which calls for the love which is a whole-hearted response to God and to the neighbor." Lane, W. L. (1974). MARK (p. 432). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Love is the principle of the law. Jesus understood the question to be about the principle of the law...the foundation...that which first.
- B. We are to love God with completeness of devotion: heart, soul, mind, strength. Because the whole man is the object of God's covenant love, the whole man is commanded to love Him back.

1. heart - cardia - the seat of feelings, desire, passion, vitality
  2. soul - psyche - life bound up with flesh and blood.
  3. mind - dianoia - to directs ones thoughts, or understanding.
  4. strength - to be strong with your human physical ability.
- C. Jesus demands a decision and a readiness for God and for God alone in an unconditional manner. This approach keeps one free from the entanglements of the law. This kind of love reflects sonship!
- D. When Jesus call the disciple to fish for men his demonstration of how that was to be done was through love.

**III. You Are Not Far From the Kingdom**

- A. *"Love your neighbor as yourself."* Lev 19:18 "A whole-hearted love for God necessarily finds its expression in a selfless concern for another man which decides and acts in a manner consistent with itself." Lane, W. L. (1974). Mark (p. 433). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- B. When you understand loving God and loving your neighbor, you are not far from the Kingdom.

**Conclusion:**

- What God begins in Deut 6:4 Jesus picks up on and continues in the Gospels.
- What Jesus initiates in the Gospels is our road way to preparation for Kingdom...here and there.