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OUR NEED TO LOVE (Mk. 12:28-34)

3/23/25

TEXT—Mk. 12:28-34

MAIN IDEA—Our greatest need as humans made in the image of God, is to know and love God, for only then can we properly love others.

AN IMPORTANT REQUEST (Mk. 12:28)—Having heard the Pharisees, Herodians, and Saduccees questions and the Lord's wise answers, this scribe was impressed with Jesus' words. Being a teacher of the law, this scribe asked Jesus to identify the greatest commandment.

>Jewish law had 613 laws that were recognized and frequently debated among their religious experts. 248 of these laws were considered “lighter laws”, and the remaining 365 were categorized as “heavy laws”. The lighter laws were positive, the heavy laws were negative. By asking this question to Jesus, this Scribe and the other religious leaders attempted to get Jesus to speak negatively against the Law of Moses, Judaism's chief representative. Ps. 2:2-4

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AN ENLIGHTENING RESPONSE (Mk. 12:29-31)—The Lord gives an enlightening response by quoting two passages from the OT (**Deut. 6:4-5; Lev. 19:18**). Jesus sums up the essence of the entire OT law in a few words (loving God and loving our neighbors).

Verse 29, The Lord is one—This confession of faith about God's nature declares two primary things about the LORD: 1) the unity of God (*the Lord is one*) and 2) the covenant relationship of God to Israel (*the Lord our God*).

Num. 15:37-41

Verse 30, Loving God—God is to be loved completely and totally because He, and only He is God. Since He made a covenant of love with His people, God gives Himself totally in love to His people; so He expects His people to give themselves totally (heart, mind, strength etc.) in love to Him.

Rom. 5:1-5

***Meditating on God's glory (See Ps. 18:1-3). *Seeking fellowship with God (See Ps. 63:1-8). *Being sensitive to how God feels (Ps. 69:9). *Loving what God loves [Ps. 119:72, 97, 103]. *Loving God's Word [Ps. 119:165].**

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Verse 31, Loving Others—Though the teacher of the law asked Jesus for the most important commandment, the Lord gave him two. Loving God and Loving our neighbors. They are quoted together because the natural outworking of loving God is to one's neighbor. These truths are inseparable. **Lev. 19:18; Luke 10:27-37**

**The key to neighbor love isn't asking who is my neighbor, but what kind of neighbor am I (at home, in my family life, in the community etc.)? Am I more like the Priest & Levite or the Good Samaritan in my default setting?

Rom. 13:8-10

Mt. 7:12; Eph. 4:32; Jn. 13:34-35

1 John 4:7-21

AN INTERESTING REACTION (Mk. 12:32-34)—This expert in the law surprisingly commended the Lord for His answer. The Lord's words spoke volumes to the man's heart as He agreed with the Lord (V32). Jesus stated the man wasn't far from being in the Kingdom of God as He realized that 'offerings and sacrifices (outward law

LARGE PRINT

keeping) were not more important than one's inner character.

Hos. 6:6-7

Rom. 1:16-17; 2 Cor. 5:17-19

1 Cor. 13:1-3

Warren Wiersbe (1929-2019)—What does it mean when a person is 'not far from the kingdom of God'? It means he or she is facing the truth honestly and is not interested in defending a party line or even personal prejudices. It means the person is testing his or her faith by what the Word of God says and not by what some religious group demands. People close to the kingdom have the courage to stand up for what is true even if they lose some friends and make some new enemies.

Jn. 1:12

MEMORY VERSE [1 Cor. 16:14].