

Loving God With All I Am

UP: It All Starts With Loving God

Mark 12:28-34

I. A sad reality:

“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.” Matthew 15:8-9 (NIV)

II. God’s Great Commandment:

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, 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 mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:29-31 (NIV)

III. The Sources:

1. _____
2. _____

IV. Defining Love:

1. “Storge” = _____
2. “Philia” = _____
3. “Eros” = _____
4. “Agape” = _____

V. What living UP means:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Intro: If you wanted to start a very lively family debate over supper, what topic would introduce? Politics? Sports? Health Care? Education? Religion? Why does this topic generate so much discussion?

Read: Mark 12:28-34

1. What do you think is behind the teacher of the law’s question regarding the “most important” commandment? How is his attitude different from that of the many others who questioned Jesus (11:28; 12:13-14; 12:18-19)?

2. What is the significance of this commandment having two parts (loving God and loving others)? Why can these not be separated / why does Jesus say they constitute one command? What does this say about what love means to God?

3. Why is this commandment the “most important” one? And, how do the Ten Commandments relate to this “greatest commandment”?

4. What does Jesus’ response to this teacher of the law tell you about Jesus? What does it teach you about the Kingdom of God?

5. Why do you think Jesus’ answer silenced his enemies? What else might they have been thinking but didn’t have the courage to say at that time?

Putting it into practice

6. As you consider how you love God, how you love others and how you love yourself, in what area do you feel you are the strongest? Why? In what area are you the weakest? Why? What have you discovered that helps love grow in each of these areas?

7. When you consider loving God with ALL of your heart, ALL of your soul, ALL of your mind, and ALL of your strength, how do you feel you are doing? What one thing do you feel God’s Spirit is inviting you to do to express your love to God this week? Who does the Spirit bring to mind when it comes to loving your neighbor? What can you do specifically to reflect God’s love to them this week?