



Gospel of Mark Bible Study

Session #16 February 9th –14th Mark 12:28 - 44

Tuesday 6am @LW – Tuesday 5:15pm @AV

Wednesday 10am & 6:15pm @LW

Sunday 10:30am @AV

The Greatest Commandment - Mark 12:28-34 Life Application Notes

12:28 By Jesus' time, the Jews had accumulated hundreds of laws-613 by one historian's count. Some religious leaders tried to distinguish between major and minor laws, and some taught that all laws were equally binding and that it was dangerous to make any distinctions. This teacher's question could have provoked controversy among these groups, but Jesus' answer summarized all of God's laws.

12:29-31 God's laws are not burdensome. They can be reduced to two simple principles: love God and love others. These commands are from the Old Testament (Deut. 6:5; Leviticus 19:18). When you love God completely and care for others as you care for yourself, then you have fulfilled the intent of the Ten Commandments and the other Old Testament laws. According to Jesus, these two commandments summarize all God's laws. Let them rule your thoughts, decisions, and actions. When you are uncertain about what to do, ask yourself which course of action best demonstrates love for God and love for others.

12:32-34 This man had caught the intent of God's law as it is so often stressed in the Old Testament-that true obedience comes from the heart. Because all the Old Testament commands lead to Christ, his next step was faith in Jesus himself. This, however, was the most difficult step to take.

Study Questions:

1. What do you remember about your very first next-door neighbor?
2. What significant question did the teacher of the law pose to Jesus? (12:28)
3. How did Jesus respond to the man's question? (12:29-31)
4. How did the man speaking with Jesus show that He understood God's heart? (12:32-34)
5. What do "offerings and sacrifices" have to do with the greatest commandment?
6. What does it mean to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?
7. Who is one neighbor to whom you can show your love in a practical way this week? How?

Whose Son Is the Christ? - Mark 12:35-40 Life Application Notes

12:35-37 Jesus quoted Psalm 110:1 to show that David considered the Messiah to be his Lord, not just his son. The religious leaders did not understand that the Messiah would be far more than a human descendant of David; he would be God himself in human form.

12:38-40 Jesus again exposed the religious leaders' impure motives. The teachers of the law received no pay, so they depended on the hospitality extended by devout Jews. Some of them used this custom to exploit people, cheating the poor out of everything they had and taking advantage of the rich. Through their pious actions they hoped to gain status, recognition, and respect.

12:38-40 Jesus warned against trying to make a good impression. These teachers of the law were religious hypocrites who had no love for God. True followers of Christ are not distinguished by showy spirituality. Reading the Bible, praying in public, or following church rituals can be phony if the motive for doing them is to be noticed or honored. Let your actions be consistent with your beliefs. Live for Christ, even when no one is looking.

12:40 The punishment for these teachers of the law would be especially severe because as teachers they were responsible for shaping the faith of the people. But they saddled people with petty rules while they lived greedily and deceitfully. Their behavior oppressed and misled the very people they were supposed to lead.

Study Questions:

1. If you wanted to be noticed for being an especially good worker at your job, how would you go about doing it?
2. Why did Jesus condemn the teachers of the law? (12:38-39)
3. What did the teachers of the law betray about themselves through their actions? (12:38-39)
4. What did Jesus say would happen to the teachers of the law? (12:40)
5. What do Christians do that is like the actions of the teachers of the law described in this passage (such as walking around in flowing robes, being greeted in the marketplace, having the most important seats at the synagogues and places of honor at banquets)?
6. What can we do to avoid being showy about our faith?
7. What step can you take this week to pray, go to church, and do other spiritual devotions only out of a desire to please God?

The Widow's Offering - Mark 12:41-44 Life Application Notes

12:41 There were several boxes in the temple where money could be placed. Some were for collecting the temple tax from Jewish males; the others were for freewill offerings. These particular collection boxes were probably in the court of the women.

12:41-44 In the Lord's eyes, this poor widow gave more than all the others put together, though her gift was by far the smallest. The value of a gift is not determined by its amount, but by the spirit in which it is given. A gift given grudgingly or for recognition loses its value. When you give, remember-gifts of any size are pleasing to God when they are given out of gratitude and a spirit of generosity.

Study Questions:

1. What does it mean to be poor?
2. What did the "poor widow" give to the treasury? (12:42)
3. Why did Jesus call His disciples when He saw the widow put in her offering? (12:43)
4. How did Jesus compare the actions of the wealthy people to the actions of the poor woman? (12:43-44)
5. How does God evaluate a person's giving?
6. In what ways can we give to God?
7. How can you ensure that your attitude and motivation is right when you give to the Lord this week?

Bible Memory Verses: "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 neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31

*Next week is Ash Wednesday – No Bible Studies this next week.
Please come to the Ash Wednesday Services (Feb. 13th):*

*10:30am at LW
7pm both LW and AV campuses*