

The Great Mitzvah

“Case For Christ”, part 41, Insights from Mark 12:28-34
Guest Rabbi, Barney Kasdan, November 6th, 2022, GPC

I. The All Important Question (12:28)

- **Rabbis arguing**
- **Which is first?**
- **Moses 613 / David 11 / Isaiah 6 / Micah 3 / Habakkuk 1 (Talmud Makkot 23b)**

II. The Prioritized Answer (12:29-31)

- **Shema Yisrael! Deut. 6:4**
- **Love God Deut. 6:5**
- **Love your neighbor Lev. 19:18**

III. A Rabbi’s Response (12:32-33)

- **Well said!**
- **God is Echad**
- **Love better than sacrifices**

IV. Yeshua’s Commendation (12:34)

- **Wise answer**
- **Not far from the Kingdom**

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This Week's Discussion Guide

Welcome to our eleventh week of our Fall Small Group Season at GPC! Our study and discussion this fall will be based on our current Sunday series at GPC called, "Case For Christ". Next week will be our last meeting before we take a holiday break :).

In this series, we are slowly unpacking the Gospel of Mark. Each week we are reading and reflecting on a passage from Mark's gospel and discuss ways we can apply what we reflect on to our daily lives.

It is our prayer at GPC for our Sundays and small groups to provide the encouragement we all need to support each other as we desire to grow closer to God and build friendships as part of our vision at GPC to raise up committed Christ followers in a healthy church community.

Getting Started:

Each week, we typically start out with a few lighter questions to get us warmed up :).

In Mark 12:28-34, Jesus answered a question regarding which commandment is the most important of all? Speaking of what is 'most' of something ... what are a few things that you enjoy doing ... most? (Try not to sound too spiritual :)

In this passage, Jesus emphasized the priorities of loving God and loving your neighbor. Speaking of being loved or shown kindness to, have you ever been on the receiving end of a random act of kindness or a 'pay it forward' moment? What was that experience like?

In Mark 12:34, Jesus told the one asking him a question, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." Speaking of not being far from something, what is something you are looking forward to that is not too far off? What are you looking forward to that is a bit farther off?

Loving people is best practiced through action. One tangible way to better understand love in action is through a concept/tool developed by Gary Chapman called, "Love Languages".

The 5 Love Languages are:

- acts of service (kind or thoughtful deeds done for someone)
- words of affirmation (words to appreciate or uplift people)
- quality time (receiving another person's undivided attention)
- receiving gifts (receiving tangible gifts)
- physical touch (appropriate touch, i.e. holding hands, hugging, fist bump)

Of the list above, are there one or two that seem to fit you the best?

Reviewing and Reflecting on last Sunday's Passage:

Let's read the main passage from last Sunday. (Mark 12:28-34)

After reading this passage and looking back on our notes from Sunday, was there a particular thought, verse or comment that caught your attention, challenged you or raised a question for you?

Digging Deeper:

1. In Rabbi Barney's message last Sunday, we were reminded that Jesus is calling us to love differently by going above and beyond cultural norms.

Our current culture often has a different perspective on the meaning of love.

How does 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 challenge the version of love we see in culture today?

What could it look like to love your neighbor, co-worker, family member or friend the way the above passage describes?

2. For many of us the idea of loving God can seem confusing or vague.

The good news is there are several passages that help clarify how we can do that well.

How might the passages below help us grow in our our understanding of what it looks like to love God?

1 John 2:3-6, 9-11

1 John 3:14-18, 23-24

1 John 4:7-12

After reading the verses above, why do you think loving God is so closely tied to loving people?

3. In the last two Sundays, we read and reflected on several conversations Jesus had with the religious leaders where Jesus tells them they do not know the Scriptures.

How could James 1:19-25 have helped these religious leaders see the importance of God's Word and also help us grow as followers of Jesus today?

When it comes to knowing and understanding the Scriptures as James 1:19-25 describes, what is one method or practice that has been helpful to you?

Wrapping Up:

What is an application from what we read or discussed together that you would like to practice in the coming days?

Is there anything that came up from this week's sermon or discussion that you would like prayer for?

Is there anything else on your heart that you would like to express prayer for?