



“How Did I Miss This?”

Mark 12

Small Group Plan

*Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.*

— Isaiah 40:28 —

This quote from Isaiah 40 sounds a lot like Jesus answer to a lawyer who asked him what is the greatest commandment. Jesus answered: *“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.’”* (Mark 12:19-30)

And the following quote by D. L. Moody captures the meaning of the rest of Jesus words, *“The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”* (Mark 12:31)

*Out of 100 men,
one will read the Bible,
the other 99 will read the Christian.*

— D. L. Moody —

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- What do you think D. L. Moody meant in the above quote?
- What is the connection between the first and second commandments?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

“THE MOST IMPORTANT”

Mark 12:29

The first Hebrew word in Deuteronomy 6:4 is **Shema**, which means, “hear.” The word **Shema** came to be used as the title for the entire statement of faith, which pious Jews recite three times daily:

*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 strength.
— Deuteronomy 6:4-5 —*

- There were 615 commandments. How difficult would it be to prioritize them?
- What does it mean to love God with my heart? With my soul? With my mind?
- Using four different languages of our time ...
 - ✓ **SOCIAL LANGUAGE** ... my friends, my group, my family
 - ✓ **PERSONAL LANGUAGE** ... my space, my thoughts, my values
 - ✓ **FINANCIAL LANGUAGE** ... my money, my stuff, my things
 - ✓ **TIME MANAGEMENT LANGUAGE** ... my schedule, my down time, my free time

Describe what it means to love someone as I love myself.

“THE SECOND IS THIS”

Mark 12:31

His answer regarding the “most important command” was expected. No one was surprised by his answer. He gave the most commonly held answer. But his second command came as a complete surprise. No one had even asked about the number two spot. It was as if he was saying, “You have asked only one question, but I cannot give you just one answer. I cannot talk about God without talking about people. They go together.” And his second answer came from a rather obscure part of the law and was surrounded by lesser known commands:

*Love your neighbor as yourself.
I am the Lord. Keep my decrees.
Do not mate different kinds of animals.
Do not plant your field with two kinds of seed.
Do not wear clothing woven of two kinds of material.
— Leviticus 19:18-19 —*

- Since Jesus is only asked for the single greatest commandment, why does he go further and volunteer a second command?
- How does the second flow from the first?
- What is the difference between the right way to “love ... yourself” and the wrong way to “love ... yourself”?

- Why does a “neighboring ministry” need the energy and the direction that comes from our relationship with God?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- will “hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:40)?
- What is your greatest obstacle to loving God fully — with all your heart, soul, mind and strength?
- What is the most difficult part of loving your neighbors?
- Close by asking God for a clearer picture of his love (1st commandment) to overflow from our lives into the lives of our neighbors (2nd commandment) living around us.