

Jesus Answers and Asks a Difficult Question

Mark 12:28-37

by David Servant

Jesus teaches that loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loving our neighbor as ourselves are the two most important commandments.

Scripture: Psalm 110:1, Mark 12:30, Mark 12:34, 1 Corinthians 13:13

Topics: "Loving God", "Great Commandments"

Description

David Servant preaches about the importance of focusing on the two greatest commandments given by Jesus - loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. He highlights how some Christians tend to emphasize other biblical concepts to the neglect of these core commandments, inadvertently undermining Jesus' judgment. Jesus, being both a descendant of David and God Himself, challenged the religious leaders of His time to understand His divine nature through a thought-provoking question about David addressing the Messiah as his Lord.

Transcript

Because Jesus was God in the form of a human being, He had a right to judge which commandments were the most important. No one else has this right, yet even Christians sometimes seem to think they have that right. They take one commandment, verse, subject, or principle in the Bible and emphasize it above everything else in God's Word. In so doing, they unknowingly are saying that Jesus' judgment is wrong. Although He clearly stated which commandments were the most important, they've supposedly found more important ones.

There is nothing more important than loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. These are the two things on which we ought to be focused. It is sad indeed when Christians greatly emphasize other biblical concepts to the point of neglecting or even violating the greatest commandments. For example, some Christians emphasize a certain Bible translation, a certain dress code, or a favorite doctrine, and refuse to fellowship with those who don't agree with them. They are, in effect, saying to Jesus, "What You said is most important is not most important." Everything that God says is important, but God Himself said that part of what He said is the most important.

Having been asked a series of questions, Jesus decided to ask a question of His own. He, of course, knew the answer to His question, but He wanted to provoke people to think about God's Word and what it

said about Him. The religious teachers of His day correctly believed and taught that, according to the Old Testament, the Messiah would be a descendant of David, which, of course, Jesus was through His mother Mary. However, neglecting or not understanding other messianic prophecies, the religious leaders were anticipating a Messiah who would be only a human being, and not God Himself. Hoping to help them realize that the Messiah would not only be David's descendant, but also God, Jesus posed a question about David addressing the Messiah as his Lord. How could the Messiah be David's descendant if David himself called Him his Lord? The only way that would be possible was if God became a man through the agency of one of David's descendants, and that is what Jesus wanted everyone to understand about Himself. He was more than a descendant of David, He was the Lord Himself!

Q. Jesus told the teacher who asked Him what the greatest commandment was, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God" (Mark 12:34). This indicates the teacher, although close to God's kingdom, was not actually in it yet. What did he need to do to enter?

A. Although he recognized what the two most important commandments were, he needed to realize how much he had broken those two commandments. Then, he needed to repent and believe in Jesus, recognizing that Jesus was the only One who could save him from his sins.

Q. Some Christians emphasize faith and how it works in a believer's life more than anything else. How do you suppose God feels about that?

A. He considers it unbalanced. Taking his cue from Jesus, Paul wrote that love is greater than faith (see 1 Corinthians 13:13).

Application: Because Jesus told us what are the most important commandments, it would be a good thing to ask ourselves this question all the time: "Am I loving God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and loving my neighbor as myself?" If we are, it will be reflected in how we live our lives.

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