

# Follow the King

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

## Sermon Questions

Date: *March 5, 2023* | Scripture: *Mark 12:28-34*

1. Read the passage from the sermon together. What stands out to you on this reading? Are there any details you hadn't noticed before?
2. Think about your personal values and your upbringing. What is your default "greatest commandment"? What was the "greatest commandment" of your family?
3. How does Jesus' reply challenge or change your perspective on what the most important commandment is?
4. Jesus roots the greatest commandments in our relationship with God. Why does that matter for how we treat our neighbors?
5. How does the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus encourage us when we fail to live up to God's law?
6. How are you doing at loving your neighbors—both your literal neighbors on your street and those in your other circles? If asked, how would your neighbors say you love them?

*Inward Grace in Action (continued on back)*

After calling out the chief priests and scribes and elders as wicked tenants, confounding the Pharisees and Herodians in their hypocrisy, and rebuking the Sadducees in their error, Jesus now rightly articulates what they all say to be the heart of their law. Mark tells us that after Jesus gives his answer here in 12:28-34, the religious authorities stop questioning him. Why do you think that is?

Perhaps they were using this question as a sort of religious shibboleth: "Which commandment is the most important of all? Can Jesus give the right answer? Is he one of us?" Once Jesus offers the right answer, they realize they have nothing left to trap him with. Ironically, though, their silence in 12:34 reveals the depth of their hypocrisy. They were far more concerned about using the law as a measuring stick than following it. Nothing about their treatment of Jesus was loving. If anyone in Jesus' day should have excelled at obeying the law—at loving God and neighbor—it should have been the religious authorities. Love was not a lived experience, but a weapon to shame others and a fence to keep enemies out.

### WORSHIP THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

Here are some other ways you can meet with God throughout the week:

*Reflect* on these Scriptures:

- Lev 19:9-18; Deut 6:4-9
- Psalm 18
- Hosea 11:1-12
- Luke 10:25-37
- 1 Peter 4:1-11
- 1 John 4:7-21

*Serve*: there are lots of opportunities to serve in our church family. [Click Here](#) to serve as a volunteer.

*Pray* for our Missions staff as they prepare for our upcoming Missions Conference, that our church might be equipped to share the gospel with our neighbors in new ways.

*Reach out* if you need assistance:

- Call our church office at 703.821.0800
- Request aid from our Deacons' Fund at [deaconsfund@mcleanpres.org](mailto:deaconsfund@mcleanpres.org)

Many people today use love the same way. For all the “COEXIST” bumper stickers and calls for tolerance, secular culture keeps a vicious score of who they consider to be loving and who they consider to be hateful—and anyone who does not love others the way they define love is shunned. Whether it be hypocritical Christians or secular culture today, neither look like Jesus.

- How might you be guilty of using love (or God’s law) as a shibboleth? Where are you more concerned with people giving the right answer than with actually following the call to love? Who do you struggle to love?
- Where do you see people outside of the church using love as a weapon and/or a fence?
- What is Jesus’ definition of love? How does Jesus model true obedience to God’s law of love? How does that defy both hypocritical religious authorities and secular culture?

**ACTION:** Think carefully about what it really means to love God and to love your neighbor in the same way Jesus loves. Confess with your Community Group one way you have failed to love like Jesus and commit to following his example by his Spirit in that way this week.