

ENGAGE

Like Jesus

GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 9
WEEK OF NOVEMBER 11TH

GROWTH GROUP FALL 2018

WEEK 9 – NOV. 11, 2018 - MARK 12:28-34 AND MATTHEW 28:16-20

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

- 1) Have you ever had someone ask you about your faith? How did you answer? Or if a stranger were to ask you about your faith, what would you say?

SETTING THE CONTEXT

Pastor Rick Warren has said, “A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church.” This week we want to consider what it looks like to live out and engage the great commandment and the great commission.

CONTEXT MARK 12:28-34

A scribe approaches Jesus and asks which is the most important commandment. The sense of his question is getting at which commandment is mandatory for all of humanity, including Gentiles. The Scribes were known for spending their lives interpreting the Hebrew Scriptures and they differentiated between “light” and “heavy” commandments. The scribe is trying to get some insight into how Jesus thinks about the weightiness of the commandments.

Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18 basically saying you are to love God and love your neighbor. What Jesus does here, which had not been done previously in Judaism, was combine the love of God and the love of neighbor. No other rabbi had taught that the center of the law was in loving God and loving neighbor.

Jesus implies that loving God is the prerequisite to loving neighbor. See 1 John 4:19-21. What is also interesting to note in this passage is that the scribe agrees with Jesus. There is no offering or sacrifice that is more important than loving God and loving neighbor.



EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read Mark 12:28-34

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" ²⁹ "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.' ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' [c] There is no commandment greater than these." ³² "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. ³³ To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

CONTEXT MATTHEW 28:16-20

In the Great Commission Jesus gathers his disciples one more time. They are back in Galilee and when the disciples see Jesus they worship him, even though some still doubted. This doubt has more to do with hesitation than an actual lack of belief.

Jesus lets them know that he will be with them as he calls them out to their future mission. What a great promise to know that Jesus is with us as we seek to share his good news with others. Making disciples is not just a once and for all thing. It is a process. It is baptizing people into a community of faith and then the ongoing process of instructing and teaching.

It is interesting to note how Matthew 28:18-20 links back to Matthew 1:23. In the beginning of the gospel of Matthew we are told that Immanuel means "God with us". Now, as the gospel of Matthew concludes, we are again reminded that Jesus will be with us. Jesus does not give the great commission and then abandon us. Instead, we are reminded that Jesus is with us both now and into eternity.

EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

- 2) Does Jesus put more importance on loving God or loving neighbor? Discuss the relationship between these two commandments.
- 3) What does it look like to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength? Which is easier: to love God or your neighbor?
- 4) Do you have a neighbor or family member you love as much as yourself? Do you find it easy or hard to love yourself? Why or why not?

- 5) On the mountain in Galilee, why do you think that some of the eleven disciples still doubted Jesus? What was their doubt about?
- 6) How do you think the eleven felt when Jesus told them to make disciples of all nations? How would the eleven feel about making disciples of their enemies, i.e., the Samaritans or the Romans?
- 7) How would you feel about leaving your home/church/nation to share the gospel and make disciples? Are there "Samaritans" or "Romans" you would have trouble sharing the gospel with?

BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) When Jesus said, "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age," how do you think that made the disciples feel? How do these words of Jesus make you feel?