

Mark, The End and the Beginning (Week 11): The Greatest Commandment

Committed to the Mission of Jesus

- Define love. What is love? What did Jesus mean when He said, “As I have loved you, so love one another?”

We are going to work from the same definition of love—a biblical definition. 1 Corinthians 13 gives us a very accurate and measurable definition of love. What it is, what it isn’t, what it doesn’t do, and what it does.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (ESV) ⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸Love never fails.

The Greatest Commandment

Mark 12:28-31 (ESV) ²⁸And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” ²⁹Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’ ³⁰And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

1. Love God

- You and I must get to know God. He is not a task.

Proverbs 3:32 (ESV) For the LORD detests the perverse but takes the upright into his confidence.

Romans 8:14 (ESV) The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”

2. Definitions (from Strong’s Concordance)

- o *Heart* - heart, mind, character, inner self, will, intention, center
- o *Soul* - the vital breath of life. The seat of affections and will
- o *Mind* - understanding, intellect, insight, mind
- o *Strength* - power, might, force, ability

3. Love Your Neighbor

- Who is my neighbor? Who is near?

Galatians 5:14 (ESV) For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your **neighbor** as yourself.”

4. Love Yourself

Psalms 139:13-15 (ESV) ¹³For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

- Do I love what God loves? Do I value what God values? Me?

Romans 12:1 (ESV) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Jesus' life on Earth was a living demonstration of love for us to follow.

John 13:34-35 (ESV) ³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Questions for your devotional time and conversations with others:

- From the sermon, what was challenging or insightful for you?
- How does it encourage you to follow Jesus in specific areas and ways?

*As you read/listen to: **Mark 13:1-37**, be thinking about:*

1. Jesus responds to four of His disciples asking Him about the coming end of the age. What does Jesus describe? What does He repeatedly say as He describes what is to come?
2. What stands out to you in this chapter? What questions do you have?
3. Think about the span of your life; what have you seen change? How have you seen God work? Where do you long for Him to work?
4. Where is He asking you to join Him as time and history move toward this end?
5. With whom will you share what you are discovering?

The Book of Mark Reading Plan

July 22–July 28: **Mark 13:1-37**

July 29–Aug 4: **Mark 14:1-42**

Aug 5–Aug 11: **Mark 14:53-15:47**