

**THE KING OF COMMANDMENTS**  
**October 16, 2016 morning service**  
**Mark 12:28-34**

This morning we are in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Mark in a few minutes and we're looking at questions that religious people ask the Lord. When they finished asking, He asked some questions that we'll look at next week and then He finished this chapter by sitting down opposite the treasury. He began observing how people were putting money into the treasury and many rich people were putting in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two copper coins which amount to a cent. Calling His disciples to Him, He said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury and they all put in out of their surplus but she out of her poverty, all she owned, and all she had to live on." In one of the other gospels it tells us that this lady will be known to the end of time by giving a little but giving all.

I want to encourage you to be a giver today as God directs you to give. You know, everything you have came from the hand of God. I was reminded of that with a cute tale this week out of our own home. My son-in-law was watching television and his first born child jumped up in his lap and wanted to watch her show. He said, "I'm watching something." She said, "Well I want to watch." He said, "Well did you pay for this house?" All of our daddies asked us that, didn't they? "No." "Did you pay for this furniture?" "No." "Did you pay for the food we eat?" "No." "Did you pay for that TV?" to which my first grandchild paused and said, "I think Papa gave us that TV." And he handed over the remote control.

Everything you have came from the hand of our Lord. Don't forget it that the Father has given unto us. Amen? So let's be found a faithful people as we give back unto Him. Church, I just want to tell you, you are ever faithful. You are. You're just pressing through and doing great but I'm telling you, we'd all, if we'd all just step up to that tithe bar, I'm telling you, we could go and do all that God wants us to do. So I encourage you to be found faithful, maybe with two copper coins or whatever God directs in your life.

I want to pray for us. Then we're going to sing and then we're going to look at a hard question that Jesus was asked. Father God, thank you. Lord, you've been so good to us as individuals. Everything we've got. Lord, you've been good to us collectively here at Olive. Lord, we stand in this building today. You've been good. Lord, we do ministry here and around the world. You've been good. Lord, we're able to broadcast and live stream and send out from here. You've been good. Lord, these singers and players, glorious music. You've been good. Lord, we're able out of our closets to find stuff that we've even forgot about to bring next week and help that ministry. Lord, you've been good. Father, we'll volunteer for this Fall Festival. Lord, I pray that we'll have all the workers we need because this place is filled with faithful people. Lord, you've been good. Thank you, thank you, thank you a thousand times. Lord, we have needs before us and I pray, God, we'll be a faithful people with our tithe

and our offering today. We give it all to you individually and we combine it collectively and together we're going to do something powerfully. Have Your way in my heart and every heart and teach us how to be generous, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Anybody going? The way you're looking at me this morning is like you're already gone. So somebody's going to need to say Amen while I'm preaching today, alright? If I say something you like, say Amen. If you don't like it, say it loud, okay?

The law. We all deal with the law but the law's really not our problem. When I say law I don't mean police. I mean the corpus of the written law. The law's not our issue. Now the interpretation of the law is another thing. That's why we have attorneys and judges, courts made up of our peers and people have to decide, this is what the law says. This is what the law means. We deal with it. We're dealing with it in our nation right now. You don't have to look past the first amendment and we say, "What does it mean?"

You know, there are five pillars in the first amendment. There's religion, speech, the press, the right of assembly, and the right to make a petition for your grievances but the law that really presses to us out of that is the first part that says that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. We have to decide, "What's that mean?" Because it does not mean in 2016 what it meant in 1816 because people are interpreting law differently. That first amendment goes on to say, "Or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." In our culture, people are saying, "Well they wrote that but it meant this. It meant that then but it's a living document and it's alive and it's changing." The law.

Friend, there is nothing different today than was in the day of Jesus Christ. They dealt with the law in the days of Jesus and there were people known as scribes and the scribes dealt with the law, with Jewish law. These scribes, as we find them in Mark 12 in a moment beginning in verse 28, one of these scribes came to Jesus. Now there were a lot of laws that they dealt with in the day of our Lord. It is said that in the precepts that Moses penned there were 613 varied precepts. Different laws, different commandments, 613, and they were always asking out of those over 600 laws, "Which is the most important law? Which one carries the greatest weight?" People were always boiling those down.

David did it in Psalm 15. He gave us eleven precepts. When you read the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Psalms you'll find eleven precepts and David said, "Here are the things that God requires," but when you get to Isaiah 33, Isaiah boiled it down to six. He said, "Here are the six biggies that God requires." When you get into Micah, Micah brought it down to three in Micah 6:8. What does God require of you? He gave three precepts. He said, "You bring the law down and here it is." Well that's what they're asking Jesus. Out of all the Law of Moses, what's the king of all the commandments? Jesus gives an answer.

In Mark 12:28 we find recorded in this second gospel one of the scribes. Now if you want to know about scribes you just go on down a few more verses and you'll find that the scribes in verse 38, he said to beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes and they like respectful greetings in the marketplace. They said, "Watch the scribe now." He's going to have that long, flowing robe. It sounds kind of like a judge, doesn't it? You don't see the judge sitting in the back of the courtroom. He sits at the front and you look up. You don't look down because he's up here and he's wearing his robe or she is. I'm not saying all judges are bad. I'm just saying in Jesus' day He said, "Beware of these scribes." They weren't all wicked. He said, "But watch them because they like that elevated seat because they're going to put things above you." This is one of these folks, the scribes. Ezra was a scribe. There were great scribes. You find them in the Old Testament. They dealt with the law, some right and some wrong.

*One of the scribes came and heard them arguing [Who was arguing? The Sadducees were still arguing with Jesus that we saw last week], and recognizing that He had answered them well, [this scribe] asked Him, [Jesus] "What commandment is the foremost of all?" [Which is the king of all the commandments? Which is first?] Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; and 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.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." The scribe said to Him [Jesus], "Right, Teacher; You have truly stated that He is One, and there is no one else besides Him; and to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as himself, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." [Of all the religious stuff you could do, these are more important.] When Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him [Now don't miss this. Dear scribe], "You are not far from the kingdom of God." [Listen to me, friend, some of you this morning are close but you're not in. You're not far.] After that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions.<sup>1</sup>*

You're here today and you're not far. You're getting close and today's the day you ought to come over on the other side. You ought to come to Jesus. You ought to stop being close and get in. Stop being religious and come to the righteousness of Christ. Oh, dear scribe, you're close, not far. Come on in. What do you do to keep the commandments of God? Well He boils it down and it's pretty simple. Jesus said to love God who is one. Now He takes this right out of the shema of Deuteronomy in chapter 6 and verse number 4. Listen to me. If you've got children in your house, they should be made to memorize Deuteronomy, those first verses of chapter 6. It's called the shema, S-H-E-M-A, shema. That's a Hebrew word and it means hear. Do you hear me? Shema. Hear.

That's what Jesus said right here in Deuteronomy 6:4. He's quoting it in verse 29. Shema, O Israel, listen, hear. The Lord our God is one Lord. There's not a bunch of gods. Get that out of your brain. There's not a bunch of gods and you pick between

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them. There's just one God. The Lord is our God. The Lord is one and that God, that God of creation. You should love the Lord your God with all that you are and secondly you are to love your neighbor like you love yourself.

Jesus said, "Here's the great commandment." It's right there in Deuteronomy 6. There's just one God and you ought to love Him. So this morning I just want to exhort you for a moment and then give the invitation. I'm going to ask some of you that are close to come on. You're close to being saved. Come. You're close to trusting Jesus. Come. You're close to joining this church. Come. You're close to being baptized. Come. You're close to making a commitment to Christ to be a disciple. Come. Don't just be close. Get aboard. Come into Christ. Come knowing.

How do you do that? Two things. Number one, you love God. That's what Jesus says right here. You shall love the Lord your God. Agape is the word. You're to love Him like God loves us and how are we to love Him? We're to love Him with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, and all of our strength. How do you love God? Five ways that you love God.

Number one. You love God heartily. With all of your heart, with all of your desire, with all of your passion, with all of your feelings. You don't love him like a dead fish, stinkin' and cold and stiff. You love Him with all your heart. Your heart is filled with passion and feeling and it's effervescent and it overflows and it smiles and it says Amen. When God blesses you, say glory. You see, you're supposed to love your spouse with all your heart. You love your boyfriend or girlfriend with all your heart.

I watch these kids now. They date and it'll get prom time and they'll put on a dress. These boys will go rent them a suit and have to get them a tie because they don't own one and have to get somebody to tie it for them because they don't know how to put it on. So they get all dressed up and, thank God somebody, they'll go find their great granddaddy that knows how to tie a tie. They put it on them. They dress them up and send them out. That old boy's palms sweat and he gets ready to take that girl home. He's never kissed a girl in his life. He can't decide if he's going to or not. Is he going to come in for a landing or back up? Hey, you've been there, haven't you? Your old heart gets beating, you know. You see, you put all of yourself in that. Then you come to church and sit there like a dead fish.

You're to love Him with all your heart. Love Him heartily with all your passion, with all your love, with feeling and desire. Amen. Love Him heartily. Secondly, you love Him supremely. That is you love Him with all your soul. That's your spirit. That's your breath. That's down in your gut, that you love God with all that you are. When you love Him, there's some times there's nervousness. It's not just, "Well I'm going to church today. They're going to read two or three verses." No. God moves you. The old King James says in the bowels of compassion. If your bowels ever begin to get to churning you know what I'm talking about.

I had an uncle one time. I said, "Uncle Don, are you sick?" He said, "Yeah, my bowels are locked." I said, "Oh that's bad." He said, "They're locked wide open. I'm about to die." I knew what he was talking about. He had the bug. He was churning. That's this word right here. It's a soul. It's in us. It's our breath. It's all that we are and yet we just sit there like a dead fish. Friend, you can't love God with all your soul and be a dead fish. You love Him heartily. You love Him supremely. Thirdly, you love Him mentally. You engage in your mind, in your imagination, in your thoughts. You take every thought captive to Jesus. Amen. Whatsoever things are pure and honest and loving, think on these things. Dear God, help a Baptist think one time. Use their mind to love the Lord our God, to come to read the scriptures and intelligently approach the throne of grace. You've got to engage your mind. Think on the things of God.

You love Him heartily. You love Him supremely. You love Him mentally. Number four, you love Him actively. That is, with all of your strength. You throw your back into it. You get your hands into loving God. This is the force and the ability. This is the might. This is when we have Fall Festival, you come to work and you hug kids and give out candy and you lead ponies and you do all those things. This is when you're going on mission you build a house and you dig a ditch and you dig a well and you go. This is when you visit the hospital. You hold a hand. You hug a neck. With all of your action.

One of my dear friends – when I go to Texas I have two families in Dallas and it's according to what I'm doing, which side of the Metroplex I'm on, who I stay with. Mr. Don's been with me to Romania. He and his sweet wife, Linda, I love them. They've helped us so much in Romania. He's an insurance broker and has gone way up in the insurance. He sits on the board of a bank and has done extremely well. His wife got the cancer. Last week they found three spots on her brain. Because I love the Lord and love him, love her, I called yesterday. Here's this guy, personal friends of Mickey Mantle. He played ball. Loves baseball, loves it. He has season tickets to everything in Dallas. He's a good man to know. There's pictures on the wall signed by all these old Hall of Fame baseballers. I said, "Don, how's she doing?" He kept a stiff upper lip and told me. I said, "I want you to hug her and tell her I love her." He broke. That old man starting weeping on the phone. He thanked me for calling.

You see, you love God and you do it with strength and ability and you use your hands, you use your mind, you do something when you love God. You don't just sit like a dead fish. You move, you think, you engage. You love Him heartily. You love Him supremely. You love Him mentally. You love Him actively. Number five, you love Him entirely because in this text it says He's one and you love Him with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and all your strength. You see, you love Him entirely. He's the Lord. He's preeminent. There's nothing above God.

You have to have a heart that is perfect toward God. Now listen to me. Listen. Are you listening? Look right here. Listen. I did not say – the Bible doesn't say you have to have a perfect heart but you have to have a heart that is perfect toward God. There is a difference. You can't have a perfect heart. Nobody in here has a perfect

heart. Everyone in here has a heart that is less than perfect because we are sinners but we can have a heart that is perfect toward God, that is given entirely to God. Not halfway, not quarter way, not three quarter way, not 90%. 100% God. You're not perfect. You still have sin. You still blow it but you have a heart that is perfect toward Him. You give your heart.

Now listen to me. Listen to this. Sharon, put that phrase up there that I'm going to use. A saved person is a disciple. Listen to me. A saved person is a disciple living in intimate union and daily contact with Jesus. That's what a disciple is. You live in intimate union. I live in intimate union with my wife. I hold her hand. I kiss her. I hug her. I thank her. She made chicken pot pie this weekend. I kissed her twice Friday. I am in intimate union and I am in daily contact. If I'm out of town I send a text. I call. I stay in touch.

Let me tell you, friend, if you're going to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are in intimate union with Him. You talk to Him. He talks to you. You speak to Him. He speaks to you. You are in daily contact. You are in intimate union. You are not a dead fish. It's alive.

Those of you that go to church here all the time, you know that eight years ago we bought a little house over here and it's got a pond on it. This time of year the bugs get on the water. I walk out there early in the morning and that old fish is just a flopping and trying to get something and jumping up and falling in that water. They're not dead fish. They're alive. I saw them jump this morning. I said, "Dear God, help some Baptists jump." I said, "God, I'm going to try to throw something out on the water. God, help somebody say Amen when I'm preaching and help somebody love you with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, with all their strength." That's the first commandment. Jesus said the most important thing you'll do is know there's but one God and love Him entirely. With your entire being, love God.

Then Jesus said – and there's a second one and it's this. You love your neighbor as yourself. You ought to go home and look up the word neighbor in your dictionary and look at the Latin, two words that bring it together. Your neighbor. You're supposed to love your neighbor. I love my neighbor until I get some hard ones. Sometimes you get a neighbor that's got a different religion than you've got. You're supposed to love your neighbor. Muslim, Hindu, Mormon. Love your neighbor even when they've got a different religion. Love your neighbor even when they've got different values. Living together, not married. A man married to a man. That's the law that we argue about. It's the law. It's not my value, but my neighbor. Different value. Work every Sunday, different value. Never go to church, different value. Love your neighbor. Love God. Love your neighbor. Different religion, different values. Jesus said, "There's only two people you've got to love. Your neighbors and your enemies." After that it's a piece of cake. That's what He said in Matthew 5:44 over in the Sermon on the Mount.

Let me tell you, if you want to know how to love your neighbors you read the Sermon on the Mount and ask God to make the Sermon on the Mount real in your life. Just start with the beatitudes. If you'll just get the beatitudes in you, you'll be alright but if you'll read chapter 5, 6, and 7 of Matthew's gospel, the Sermon on the Mount, the Sermon on the Mount is all about loving your neighbor, those with different religions, those with different values, even your enemies. You say, "Pastor, how in the world do you love people with different religions and different values, your enemies?" Well there's three or four ways you love them. You love them with deeds. That includes food, cutting grass, picking up trash, keeping your dog out of their yard. You love your neighbor with deeds. You do good.

Number two. You speak to them. It's amazing how you get to know your neighbor if you talk. You've got to go across the fence and say hello. Talk. Attitude. Oh Lord. You've got to have the right attitude. You can't be saying one thing and doing another because that won't work. Jesus told you how right here. How do you love your neighbor? A lot like you love yourself. What do you think about you? You take care of you, don't you? Well take care of them.

I read Spurgeon on this text this week. I said, "I would, O God, that women in my church would love their neighbor like they love their lap dog." Now I didn't say that, Spurgeon said that, alright? That old cigar-smoking Baptist preacher said, "O I would that those women would love their neighbors like they love their little lap dog that they feed their food with their fingers to them." Love your neighbor like you love yourself. Take care of yourself. Take care of your neighbor.

Then, not in this text but in John 13:34 Jesus tells us another way to love our neighbors. Not just like we love ourselves but he says to love them as Christ loved you. Oh hallelujah. Dear friend, non-Christian in this room today, do you know that the gospel is that God loves you and doesn't care who you are or what you've done but God loves you? We ought to love our neighbors like Jesus loved us. When you insulted Him, Jesus loved you. Some of you sit in this room and you insult the Lord. You take His name in vain. You use it as a curse word. I'm telling you, God loves you when you insult Him. Some of you insult God and some of you, your neighbors insult you. You've got to love them even when they insult you because you love them like God loves you.

Dear lost friend in this room today, I want you to know, the gospel says that God loves you even when you despise Him. When you can't stand God, He stands for you. When you despise what the Lord's truth is, part of that truth is God loves you and when your neighbors despise you, you're supposed to love them. When you insult God, He loves you. When you despise God, He loves you. When you rebel on God, when you turn your back on Holy God, He never turns His back on you. Some of you have got your back to God right now. You're walking away from Him. You wouldn't dare curse Him because you're afraid He'd send you to hell but He's going to do it anyway because you're going to walk off the precipice without Him. I'm here to tell you that when you turn your back on God, He never turns His back on you. God loves you. He comes

after you. He approaches you. He reaches out to you. The gospel says that God loved the world enough that He died for you even when you insult Him, when you rebel on Him, when you despise Him. Thank God He loves us. Amen.

Dear friend, the way that He loves us is the way we're supposed to love our neighbors. Glory to God. When we despise Him, when we insult Him, when we rebel, when you disobey God. A direct command, when you disobey and God says, "You do this," and you say, "I'm not going to do it."

In the offertory today I told you about little Kathryn and the fun time with her daddy. Her little sister is just putting all these words together. Boy, her number one word, it doesn't matter what you ask her. "Would you like me to give you chocolate?" "No." "Would you like to stay up all night and not go to bed?" "No." It doesn't matter what the question is. She doesn't understand the question. She just knows the answer. "No. No." You see, some of you, anytime God asks you a question, "No. No." When God gives you a direct order, "No." Hear me. When you say no to God, He still says yes to you. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him would not perish and go to hell but have eternal life and go to heaven. How are we supposed to love our neighbors? Like we love ourselves and the same way that God loves us, we're to love Him.

Monday night, Dr. Lewis and I went out knocking on doors. We wound up over on the back side of Milton, Florida. It was not an upscale neighborhood, let me just say it that way. There were two little fires burning out in the area of a subdivision apartment complex and some guy was sitting over there. I'm not sure if he was sober or not, playing the guitar. We finally found the door and knocked. Somebody had visited our church we thought but they'd filled out the card with the wrong address where they used to live and they just sent us by there. There was a guy that opened the door and looked out, who was just inches short of being as tall as Goliath in the Old Testament and he was not of my color. I'm not sure what his ethnic background was but as Johnny Hunt, who often turns the King's English as an American Indian from North Carolina would say, "He weren't from Alabama." At least he weren't from the mountain where I'm from.

What do we do with that? I'm telling you, I whipped out a church card as fast as I could whip it out. I'm just telling you what I did. It was dark. We just told him we were trying to find somebody. He said, "There's nobody here by that name." Well I guess the Lord sent us by here. So we gave him some information about the church and tried to share a little bit with him. Do you know what that guy said to us? He may be in this room, I don't know. He said, "That's across the road from that Dirt Cheap place, isn't it?" I said, "That's where we meet, yeah. That's us right across there." He said, "I've heard about that church. I haven't been to church in a long time." He said, "I might come to your church." I said, "Sir, I want you to know that you'd be welcome and we love you in Jesus' name." In the definition of the word neighbor, he's mine. He's my neighbor. I pray "O God, that he'd come and hear the gospel and be saved." I don't know if he's here but I know you're here. I'm praying today that you'd come and receive the Lord Jesus.

You say, "Preacher, what do I have to do?" Two things. Love God and love your neighbor. That's what God calls us to do. He calls us to love God, to love Him. You say, "What do I do? How do you love Him?" You confess your sins and say, "O God, I love you." You've got to tell Him.

I'd been married two years. I walked in. Liz asked me this question. She said, "Why don't you love me anymore?" I said, "Time out." I did this right here. I said, "Time out. What are you talking about?" She said, "Well you don't ever say it." Well I grew up in a home where you didn't hear that. My father and mother have been married 64 years and I think it's going to work. For the first 40 years my father was a man who said, "You know, I told you I loved you when we got married and if I change my mind, I'll let you know." That was kind of the deal. He just didn't verbalize and I didn't think you needed to verbalize. I quickly learned if I was going to be married to this this lady that I wanted to stay married to, I needed to tell her.

Let me tell you, friend, if you want to get saved you just need to tell God you love Him. Tell Him that you've been wrong. The Bible says if you'll confess His name He'll confess yours before the Father. If you'll tell Him that you love Him, He'll tell the Father. He's coming on your behalf and He'll step into – He'll save you today.

"Hey, teacher, what's the foremost of the laws of everything Moses said?" The Lord our God is one and 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 and the second one is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. Dear friend, God loves you and if He has saved you and if you are living as a disciple in intimate union and daily contact with Him, then you continue to love God and tell Him and you love your neighbors and you tell them.

Now look right here at me. Jamie's coming and he's going to sing a song. Look right here. Look at me right here. If you're in this room today and you've never professed Jesus as your Savior, when he sings this song I want you to get out of your seat and walk down here, walk down one of these aisles and just tell me that. You're not going to have to make a speech. You don't have to give money. You're not going to have to sing a song. We're going to get somebody just to sit down in a quiet place with you. I want to help you know the Lord Jesus today. If you're here and you've never joined this church, you say, "Preacher, I know the Lord but I need to be a part of this family," then I want you to get up out of your seat, out of that balcony around, on this ground floor. Maybe a whole family, maybe a momma and a daddy and children, family, then you come, maybe a couple, or maybe just you. Just one somebody you. By yourself. You come.

You say, "I'm kind of scared." Just reach over and ask the person next to you. You say, "I don't even know them." Just ask them. Say, "Would you walk down there with me?" I guarantee you they'll do it. If they won't come, maybe they need to come too. Wouldn't it be amazing if you they looked over and said, "I'm scared too," and you just come together.

I know it's a big room and a big crowd but we serve a big God and He loves you and you. If you're going to keep His law, you need to love Him and love your neighbor. God's calling you today. Just you. Maybe you're sitting next to somebody and you just need to say in a moment when we stand up, "Would you like me to go with you?" Just lean over and whisper to them. Don't make a big scene. Just say, "I'll go with you." Or just reach over and grab them by the forearm and they'll know by that pressure that you're saying, "I'll go with you if you need to go."

If this is your day, then you come and we'll be waiting right here for you to come and say, "Yes, yes, yes unto the Lord God." We're on our feet all over this room. Dear Jamie is singing. The Spirit of God is wooing you, calling you. Then you're coming right now. Come on. Even before we sing a note, come on unto the Lord, unto His church. That's it. God loves you. You come today.