

3 Crucial Lessons Mark 12 Teaches Us About Love

“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities nor powers, neither things present nor things to come, neither height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:37-39).

If someone told you to name the most important thing someone could do, what would your answer be? Jesus’ answer in Mark 12 is to first love God and then love your neighbor. His emphasis on love tells us three things. First, we need to know who God is. Second, we need to know God loves us. Third, we need to know God’s love for us is a gift to both be enjoyed and shared with God and others.

Not only is God loving, but God loves you! Apart from your performance, God loves you and accepts you as you are. God loves you so much that through His Son Jesus Christ, He gladly forgives all your past, resides within you for hope, help and healing in your present, and will walk with you hand in hand like a loving parent for the rest of your life and into eternity. God’s love is mind-bending, heart-changing and destiny-altering. God loves you. God cannot love you more. God will not love you less.

God and His love for you are gifts for you to enjoy and share with others. Jesus talks about this, and His best friend John (nicknamed “the one Jesus loved”) echoes it in 1 John 4:11, “Beloved, if God so loved us, we must also love one another.”

Love—undoubtedly one of the most significant words in the Bible—appears roughly 800 times.

Simply put, when the Bible says God is love, it means He is relational. God wants a relationship with each one of us. This is why He speaks to us through Scripture and listens to us through prayer. Furthermore, God made us like Him, in a limited sense, to be in loving relationship with Him and others, starting with what Jesus calls our “neighbor.” Therefore, our loving relationships are supposed to start at home with our family members sleeping in the rooms next to ours.

It’s important to remember that our God is *all about* loving relationships. This is not merely what God does; this is how God is.

Our God is a loving and relational God, and He made us to be loving and relational people. We are handmade and hard-wired for loving relationships. Today, in our sin-infected and corrupted world, we have an even greater need for loving relationships. {eoa}

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