



Ducks in a Row: Week 1 First Things First

Bible Reading

Mark 12:28-34

[\[09:23\]](#)

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

[\[17:05\]](#)

Leviticus 19:18

[\[19:47\]](#)

Matthew 22:40

[\[20:37\]](#)

Observation questions

1. In Mark 12, what different groups had already come to Jesus before the teacher of the law asked his question, and what were those groups trying to do? [\[10:00\]](#)
2. When Jesus answered the question about the most important commandment, what two Old Testament commands did he join together? [\[19:38\]](#)
3. What did the teacher of the law say was greater than burnt offerings and sacrifices? [\[24:28\]](#)
4. What question helps expose the heart more clearly: “Is this sin or not?” or “Is this action loving or not?” What difference is described between those two questions? [\[22:57\]](#)

Interpretation questions

1. Jesus did not choose between loving God and loving neighbor, but held them together. Why might people be tempted to separate those two, and what happens when one is emphasized without the other? [\[17:21\]](#)
2. Matthew says that all the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. What does that suggest about the purpose of God's commands, and how should that shape the way they are used? [\[20:37\]](#)
3. The teacher of the law began to see that love is greater than burnt offerings and sacrifices. What does that reveal about the limits of religious activity by itself? [\[25:13\]](#)
4. Jesus told the man, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." What seems to be changing in this man's heart that makes Jesus say that? [\[28:11\]](#)

Application questions

1. When life feels busy or chaotic, what usually becomes the "top duck" in practice—work, comfort, family expectations, money, approval, control, or something else? What might that reveal about the current order of love in the heart? [\[04:22\]](#)
2. Disordered loves can make even good gifts become heavy and demanding. What is one good thing that may have started taking too central a place lately, and how has that affected joy, peace, or relationships? [\[06:51\]](#)
3. Love for God and love for people cannot be pulled apart. In this season, which side is easier to neglect: devotion to God or patient love toward people nearby? What would it look like to strengthen that weaker side this week? [\[17:57\]](#)
4. "Is this loving or not?" is often a clearer question than "Can this still count as acceptable?" Is there a current decision, conflict, or habit where that question brings uncomfortable clarity? [\[23:11\]](#)
5. Acceptance from God is given before obedience is offered back to him. Where is there a tendency to obey in order to earn approval—from God or from others—instead of responding to grace already given? [\[26:55\]](#)
6. It is possible to do outwardly loving things for the wrong reason. Where might there be a pattern of loving in order to get something back—appreciation, security, influence, or a clean conscience—instead of loving to give? [\[27:49\]](#)
7. Reordering love usually begins with honest prayer. What is one specific affection, fear, or desire that needs to be placed before God and asked to be reordered? [\[08:53\]](#)