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WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN TEMPTED TO BUY INTO AN EASY APPROACH TO GROWTH?

The Greatest Command

The POINT ➤

Our obedience to God is seen in our love for Him and others.

➤ MARK 12:28-34

²⁸ And 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?” ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ 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.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” ³² And the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. ³³ 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 oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” ³⁴ And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

Although raspberries aren't a secret, one-thing diet food, they are pretty healthy. Also, raspberries are a member of the rose family and have thorns just like a rose plant.¹



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // PEOPLE

Our response to God's love is to remain pure in all aspects of life—with our bodies, thoughts, attitudes, actions, and speech—and He empowers us to obey His commands as we live by the Spirit.

What's the "one thing"? Many people at the top of their game, whether in business, sports, or music, are asked how they got to where they are. They may be asked questions like, "What's the one piece of advice you could share to help others be successful?" or, "What's a trap you see others fall into that keeps them stuck?"

People want a one-thing, secret-sauce answer to finding success. They try a new diet, thinking that the next one will surely have the one thing that will help them lose weight. They read another self-help book, thinking it will have the one piece of advice to relieve their anxiety. However, growing and thriving is never a one-thing issue. Instead, being healthy involves commitment, discipline, and making good choices in all areas of our lives.

Jesus was asked a one-thing question. A scribe, an expert in the law, observed Jesus engaging with the religious leaders. Impressed with how Jesus handled His accusers and their questions, He asked Jesus a question of his own: Which of the commandments is the most important? (Mark 12:28). Jesus gave the man a clear answer, and what Jesus said has fascinated philosophers and everyday people ever since.

MARK 12:28-30

1 In your own words, what is the heart behind the Shema in Deuteronomy 6?

2 What does it mean to love God with your heart, soul, mind, and strength?



*We can't separate
love for others and
love for God. They
are essentially
and inseparably
connected.
#BSFLTheGOAT*

MARK 12:31

- 3** What is the connection between loving God and loving others?
- 4** How do we love ourselves in a healthy and balanced way?
- 5** What was the difference between the scribes' and Jesus's definitions of neighbor?

MARK 12:32-34

- 6** How did this scribe show humility and understanding not often seen among the Pharisees?
- 7** Why did Jesus say the scribe was "not far from the kingdom of God"?
- 8** According to the standards in this passage, why are you confident that you're part of Jesus's kingdom?



LIVE IT OUT



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // PEOPLE

Our response to God's love is to remain pure in all aspects of life—with our bodies, thoughts, attitudes, actions, and speech—and He empowers us to obey His commands as we live by the Spirit.

Jesus said the greatest commands are to love God with all we are and to love others as ourselves. Love isn't simply a feeling of fondness, romance, passion, or affection. The fullest expression of love is shown in an all-of-life way, with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. The only appropriate response to God's love is to give Him all of ourselves.

> CHRIST

In John 14:15, Jesus said we will keep His commands if we love Him.

9 Look up and memorize John 14:15 this week.

10 According to this verse, how do the ways you live show that you truly love Jesus?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD

> COMMUNITY

Jesus said that whatever we do for “the least of these” brothers and sisters, we do for Jesus Himself (Matt. 25:40). Simply put, we love Jesus through loving the people around us, particularly our Christian brothers and sisters. We are called, above all else, to love God with all we are and to love others as ourselves.

11 This week, how will you show love for Jesus through serving the people around you?



12 Commit to living this out.

> CULTURE

We are called to serve not only people in our church family but those outside the church as well. Choose to reflect the kindness and generosity of God through serving a neighbor in a real way. Consider doing some yard work, offering to take the trash to the curb, delivering a meal, or doing something else you think might be meaningful.

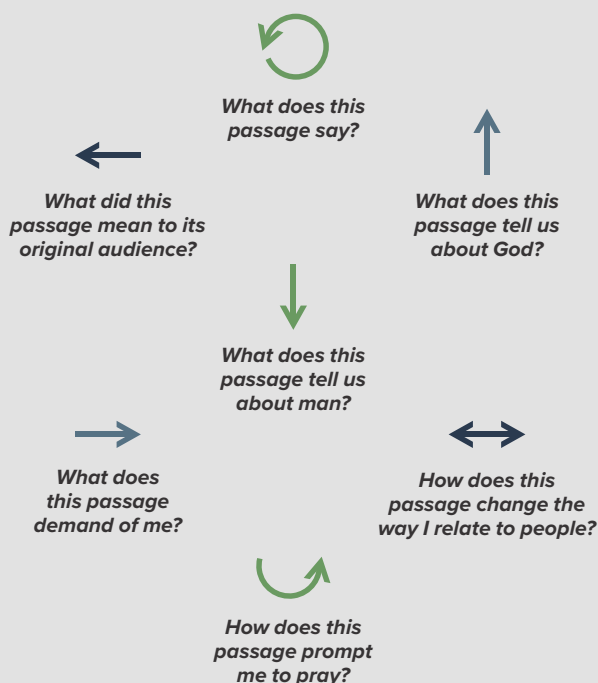
13 How will you serve this week?

14 We serve to reflect the kindness of God. Share this reason with the person you’re serving.

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One

DEUTERONOMY 6:1

Deuteronomy was written to the people of Israel as they prepared to enter the promised land. The generation that came out of Egypt had died in the wilderness, and those who would enter the land hadn't seen God's power demonstrated through the plagues or the parting of the Red Sea. They hadn't been present when God gave the Israelites the law at Sinai. As they entered the land, there would be many temptations and dangers, and Moses wrote Deuteronomy as a reminder of God's law and power and of the importance of obedience. The statutes and ordinances of the law weren't simply a list of rules—they also taught the Israelites how to live set apart from pagan nations by following God's purpose for His people. Further, the law revealed the character of God and showed them how to reflect His goodness. Obedience to the law was essential.

➤ **Why was Deuteronomy written?**

➤ **Why was obedience to the law so important for the Israelites?**

Day Two

DEUTERONOMY 6:2-3



In this passage, we are taught to fear the Lord (an awe and reverence of who He is) and do what He commands. This may lead us to earthly blessings, but more than that, it leads us to closer fellowship with God. God had given the commands to His people so that they would know how to live to please God, which put them in a unique position out of all the people of the world. In Romans 3:1-2, Paul asked what advantage the Old Testament Israelites had. Then he answered his own question: Their advantage was that they had God's law. If they wanted God's blessings, not only for themselves but as an inheritance for future generations, all they had to do was to be careful to fear the Lord and follow His commands.

- **Why was Israel in a position of advantage compared to other nations?**
- **How do we put ourselves in the position to experience God's blessings today?**

Day Three

DEUTERONOMY 6:4

This verse is the beginning of what is known as the Shema, which means “listen” or “hear.” God was saying to His people, “Pay attention, because what you’re about to hear is absolutely foundational.” When God gave the law at Sinai, the first of the ten commands taught the people they were to have no other gods besides the Lord (Ex. 20:3). All the other laws would flow from the truth that there is one true and living God. The idols of the nations are nothing, and God alone deserves our devotion. The Israelites were to give their undivided attention to the truth in the Shema that “the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.” Living continually in light of this truth was central to experiencing blessings.

- **What is the point of the Shema?**
- **Why is the truth that “the Lord is one” foundational to all the law?**

Day Four

DEUTERONOMY 6:5-6

Earlier in verses 1-3, God had emphasized the importance of obeying the law. If we paid close attention, we might have noticed that God mentioned not only obedience, but also fear of the Lord. The people were to obey in the spirit of proper reverence. However, God provided even further qualification for the obedience of His people. At times, we might think that the New Testament teaches grace and love, but that the Old Testament lifted up a faith based on legalistic standards. However, this simply isn't the case, and these are the verses (among others) that make this truth perfectly clear. Yes, God had clearly communicated the importance of obeying the law. But He also emphasized the essential nature of obeying from a heart of love for God. The people weren't to obey in an effort to earn God's favor. Instead, they were first to love God with every part of themselves and to obey simply as an expression of that love. The law had been written on tablets of stone, but God's people both then and now have always been responsible to see those laws transferred onto our hearts.

- **Why is obeying in order to earn God's favor a misunderstanding of the law?**
- **Why is it essential to obey from a heart of love for God?**

Day Five

DEUTERONOMY 6:7-9



The Shema emphasizes the importance of believing in the one true God, obeying the law, and loving God with all we are. Finally, the Shema emphasizes the importance of passing down an inheritance of faithfulness to future generations. At creation, God called people who were made in His image to lives of fruitfulness and multiplication. This applies not only in a physical sense but also spiritually. This multiplication of faith happens when we set our hearts and minds on the truth of God over and over again every day and when we speak repeatedly of God's truth with the people in our lives. God's Word is to be a permanent fixture in our lives and those closest to us. And it's not just a matter of knowing the truth but of living it.

- **Why is it important to pass down an inheritance of faithfulness?**
- **How can we be involved in multiplying disciples?**