

read that love of neighbor is really the love for those who are in need: the hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the naked and those in prison. The idea of loving these people may seem challenging. Sure, we can feed the hungry and thirsting and donate clothing, but have you ever visited someone in prison? How often do you have the opportunity to interact with strangers? What do you think loving our neighbors should look like? Does that idea mean only people like you? How much of a challenge does love of neighbor seem to you? Contemplate these thoughts and questions and write your reflections here.

Thursday, October 23

Read Mark 12:28-34. Love of God, as discussed in the message, involves worship of God. It involves the transformation of our lives. This means, to return to our football analogy, moving forward in our understanding of God and living in response to our relationship with God. How had worshiping and knowing God changed (transformed) your life? How is life different because of your worship of God? How has worshipping God helped you understand God and furthered your understanding of yourself? Write your thoughts here praying for God's wisdom.

Friday, October 24

Read Mark 12:28-34. Pastor Jack used the membership vows of the UMC to give shape to how we move forward in our expression of our love for neighbors. Those expressions of faith and love include our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. How do these concepts relate to your sharing of God's love? Do you pray for others? Give toward the ministries of our church? Do you share your faith in God with others? How do you pass on the love of God to others? Contemplate these ideas and write your response here.

*We Gather...To Celebrate Life**

- I. This is the first NFL Season where we are not relying on the _____ to determine whether or not a team has achieved a first down.
 - A. The technology that is going to be used to determine first downs was developed by SONY: _____ cameras.
 - B. The _____ will still be on the sidelines as a _____.
 - C. Sometimes the "_____ " way is the best way to measure, whether it's on the football field or in the game of life.
- II. Jesus is asked about the criteria for measuring the _____ of a person's life.
 - A. For his answer, Jesus reaches back to an _____ rule book.
 - B. A "scribe" hears the argument going on and he sees that Jesus is holding his own against the _____ leaders.
 - C. This scribe asked Jesus to name the number-one rule: "Which _____ is the first of all?"
 1. In response, Jesus breaks out the old-school _____ -- two of them.
 2. Jesus spots the first and greatest commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your _____, and with all your soul, and with all your _____, and with all your _____." (vv. 29-30)
 3. The starting point for everything, according to Jesus, is _____.
- III. The scribe asked only about the _____ commandment; let's call it the _____ marker of where the football is placed on the _____ down.

Message Notes October 19, 2025

*Mark 12:28-34

- A. Jesus added the other end of the chain and stick marker as the line to gain that helps move _____ forward toward God's _____.
 - B. In the stadium, you know your team is doing well when it consistently moves the chains and drives _____ toward the end zone.
 - C. If we're following Christ, our success is measured not only by how our love for God _____ us but by how that love finds its way through _____ to someone else.
- IV. So how about _____? How about _____? How about _____?
- A. We gather to celebrate the _____ we've received from God, and so we should ask ourselves, can we see _____ in each other?
 - B. Can the _____ see Jesus and the love of God when they see our _____?
 - 1. The basic question is, "What _____ is it?"
 - 2. Hopefully the answer is "It's _____ to move the _____!"

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, October 20

Read Mark 12:28-34. Jesus in answering the question from the scribe about what is the greatest commandment went way back into the ancient writings of his people. The two "laws" that Jesus responded with are truly "Old School." They were written approximately 1400 years before Jesus was born. When Mathew wrote about this encounter, he added that Jesus said that all the laws depend on these two laws (Matthew 22:40). What do you think of when you hear the words "Old School" to describe Jesus' response with these two laws? Do you think they have outlived their purpose? Do you consider them time tested and still very

useful? Are that as valid today as they were 3400 years ago from today? Meditate on these questions and write your response here.

Tuesday, October 21

Read Mark 12:28-34. The wonderful presentation of Jesus' encounter with the scribe is that Jesus doesn't hesitate at all to answer the scribe's question. He is quite certain that the Greatest Commandment is the *Shema* which is still read at each Jewish worship service today. Many observant Jews have this passage of scripture in a small box on their doorway. Jesus is certain that the beginning of all that matters begins with the love, and therefore worship, of God. What does it mean to you to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength? Write a few words for each of these attributes of our human existence in the space provided below. Think about how each of these attributes relates to our worship of God.

Heart:

Soul:

Mind:

Strength:

Wednesday, October 22

Read Matthew 25:31-46. In our Gospel lesson from Mark, Jesus said, "The second greatest law is 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" The question we need to consider is what does love for our neighbor look like? In the Matthew passage you just read we