

Modern Family Part 1

Small Groups Leader Guide

Mark 12:28-34

Connect

Since we're talking about family over the next few weeks let's kick it off by talking a little about the family with which we grew up!

Which of the following best describes your mom or dad?

Cordell Walker, Texas Ranger	Celine Dion, Pop Diva
Monica Geller, Best Friend to Rachel	John Cena, WWE Wrestler
Danny Taylor, Full House Dad	Major Payne, USMC Drill Sergeant
Michael Scott, Regional Manager	Mary Poppins, Fantastical Adventurer

What was a rule, guideline, or instruction from your childhood that you can distinctly remember? Is that a rule in your household today or have you abandoned it?

The way we engaged our parents, including the rules, guidelines, and instructions, have a strong effect on the person whom we have become. How has the structure of your childhood home affected your point of view as an adult?

If spouses present, ask if they see affects in their spouse from the way that person was raised.

Context of Scripture

We're about to dive into a passage of scripture where Jesus deals with the guidelines and rules of His people and His times. It is important to understand what was happening just before Jesus weighs in on the rules of His day.

Jesus was in the midst of his ministry. He had healed people and taught people. He started to scare the Jewish leaders that were fighting for control of their people and their destiny. You see, Jesus was an unknown quantity. They knew he was smart... like really smart. And he was a good debater. Maybe he could be an ally in their goals for control.

So they began to test him. *What did he think of this philosophy or that belief?* Well... they found out He wasn't there to impress them. The Chief Priests had written him off as a trouble maker and looked for a way to arrest him. The Pharisees questioned him but didn't find what they were looking for, he made them look foolish. The same with the Sadducees. So then, one of the teachers of the law, the guy that had taught the priests, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, steps up...

Read Mark 12:28-34 (Popcorn Style!)

Discuss

What was the first rule, instruction, or commandment ever given?

(Gen. 2:15 "... you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...")

Why do you think that this was the only rule given in the Garden of Eden?

(This was a perfect place, there was trust, Adam and Eve loved God, etc.)

When the initial rule was broken and sin entered the world, rules became more prevalent. By the time Jesus arrived on Earth, the 10 commandments had developed into more than 600 laws as man continued to sin and break God's trust, seek forgiveness, sin again and the cycle would continue. Even better, the religious leaders of that time wanted to argue about which one of those laws was most important while they failed to follow the underlying principles. Jesus redirected their attention to what was most important. Ultimately, it all boils down to our relationship with God. God loves us, He wants to be in relationship with us. So Jesus reminds the people, "The Lord our God is the one and only Lord." LOVE HIM... with everything, with your whole body, and everything inside it, and everything you think, and all of your ability.

If we were to love God with everything, give Him everything, would there be any rules of His that we would be disobeying?

Likewise, if we were to love our closest neighbor (our spouse, kids, or actual neighbor) with the same passion, what conflict or rules of theirs would we be breaking?

Apply

How can you practically love your closest neighbor, your family, better this week (just one or two ways)?

Would you be willing to commit to doing that this week? Why or why not?

How can we love God better this week? What is the next step for you in your relationship with Him?

Prayer Requests, Prayer, and Closing

Write down any prayer requests from the group. If you would like to share them with the Pastoral team for us to pray over as well, email Pastor Clayton at Clayton@gracehillchurch.com.