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DAILY DEVOTION THE JOURNEY OF FAITH: PART 2.

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Mark 12:28-31 (NIV)

“One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked Him, ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.’

As if the number of laws in the Old Testament were not enough, the religious rulers in Jesus' day had accumulated some 613 more laws that the people were supposed to follow to gain God's approval. With that many additions to the law, religious leaders debated among themselves as to the major and minor laws, while others taught that all the laws were equally binding and you couldn't make any distinctions. So, it was no surprise when one of the teachers of religious law came up to Jesus and asked Him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” Mark 12:28c (NLT).

Jesus' answer summed up the entire law and all the demands of the prophets in two basic statements: Love God and Love others. He said, “The most important commandment is this: ... you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.” Mark 12:29 – 31 (NLT).

Jesus just gave us the Cliff Notes on the whole Old Testament!

Christianity is not a religion; it is a love relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Love is the most important thing. Love is the priority. God not only loves, He is love, and when we love, the Bible says we are a child of God and know God.

“But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” 1 John 4:8 (NLT).

Love is the essence of genuine faith. Real faith isn't about rules as much as it is about relationships. Religion emphasizes rules.

Christianity emphasizes love. Imagine the pressure of living up to all those rules! You'll either live life under pressure or by your priorities. And the priority of our lives should be love – loving God and loving others. The Journey of Faith is to live life putting God first, loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loving others as ourselves. Love is not a feeling. Love is an action. You can feel loving feelings for someone, but it's not love until you act in love toward them. Jesus said that we demonstrate our love for Him when we obey His word and do it because we love and trust Him. You're loving Jesus right now by spending time with Him and growing closer to Him.

Ask Jesus to show you how you can love the people in your life in practical ways today. Remember that even small acts of love can make a big difference in people's lives. Serving in a ministry at church can make an eternal impact. Whether it's greeting people as they walk in or serving children. Unselfishly loving others always blesses you even more than it blesses them.

Prayer

Oh God help me to grow in faith to love God and other humans so as to obey God's commandments in Jesus name.