

Living Lent | Saturday, March 8

Brooks Hanson

The Proper Order

Today's Reading: Mark 12:28-34

“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.”

Mark 12:28-31 NIV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

I love simplicity. Lots of rules, demands, and tasks can often feel confusing and distracting. The result of this confusion is that little work gets done. Think about your own life. When are you most productive and the most excited to work hard? Often, this is when the goal is clearly stated and clearly understood. So many great businesses and movements have never gotten off the ground, not because of bad leaders or bad products, but because their mission lacked the simplicity required to understand the mission and know how others can fit into it.

Jesus knew that people required a simple and compelling mission for them to follow and inspire others

to follow too. When a religious leader asked Jesus, “What is the most important commandment of them all?” It was not a hard answer for Jesus. He simply said, “...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.” All the Jewish boys of the day knew the Shema, the Jewish confession of faith beginning in Deuteronomy 6. The knowing of this was not surprising, it was ingrained in the mind of their nation. It was the way Jesus lived it out that was miraculous.

Without fail and without compromise, Jesus loved The Lord our God with all of his heart, all of his soul, all of mind, and all of his strength. He did this, even

unto death. In part, Jesus died for us because he loves us, but it seems that his life was fueled by his love for God rather than his love for the people around him. This may seem like a contradiction and love for our neighbor is of great importance, but it cannot replace what Jesus has called the “most important” commandment. Life will not be perfect or easy when we live this out, but I believe it will be far simpler and far more fulfilling when everything we do is fueled by loving God with everything we have. We will love our neighbors better, serve our families better, and lead our communities better when our loves are properly ordered just as Jesus’s was.

Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ:

Brooks Hanson is husband to Caroline and father to their daughter, Isla. Brooks and Caroline have lived in the Golden Isles for three years and welcomed Isla into their family last May. Brooks serves as the Director of the Coastal Wesley Foundation.; a campus ministry serving the College of Coastal Georgia students since 2016. Coastal Wesley exists to awaken CCGA to the love of God. They do this by highlighting the values of Love, Holiness, Humility, and Joy. This mission and these values can be seen at worship each Wednesday at 7:30 and weekly student-led discipleship groups. Wesley believes that the best way to reach more students is through students being activated to live on a mission to their community. Brooks asks, “Please pray for our students as they long to see a great move of God on the campus of CCGA!”