

Theme: The Kingdom of God is a relationship of love – first with God and then with our neighbor. This relationship is based on God's love that He has shown us in sending His Son, and it is His love that then overflows to those around us. Love is the fulfillment of the law, and the basis for our praise, thanksgiving, tithes and offerings, and joyful generosity.

Getting Started:

- 1. Does your Thanksgiving meal look like, and whom do you share it with?
- 2. Have you bought any Christmas presents for people yet? If not, when do you plan to do that?

In the Word: Malachi 3:8-12

- 3. This passage is not simply addressing the issue of tithing, but a bigger part of Israel's relationship to the Lord. Look at the prior verse, Malachi 3:7 what is the real issue that God wants to address?
- 4. What was the purpose of bringing tithes and offerings to the temple?

If you need some clues, look up:

Leviticus 5:17-6:7 Numbers 18:21-29 Deuteronomy 12:5-7 Deuteronomy 26:12-13 2 Chronicles 31:3-8 Psalm 54:6-7

5. Going back to the passage in Malachi 3 – what is God's promise for those who bring the full tithe to the Lord?

Read Mark 12:28-34

- 6. When asked about the greatest Commandment, Jesus quotes a passage from the Old Testament (Torah). What OT verse is he quoting in verse 29-30? Which passage does He quote when citing the second greatest commandment? (check the footnotes in your Bible to find them)
- 7. We are to love the Lord our God completely. Write down the four ways we are to love the Lord our God (in verse 30) and describe how we love God in each area of our life.
 - a. ______ b. ______ c. ______ d. _____
- 8. If God commanded burnt offerings and sacrifices in the Old Testament, then why does Jesus affirm the man's statement that these two commandments are better than all the sacrifices and offerings?

Putting it all Together

- 9. How do we show God that we love Him?
- 10. How do we show others around us that we love them?
- 11. How might our church and school together show God's love in the Thanksgiving/Advent/Christmas seasons?

Prayer: Ask God to forgive us for the times when we do not show Him love. Ask God to place His love in our hearts that we can then return to Him and demonstrate to others. Ask God to bless our Thanksgiving baskets, our Thanksgiving gatherings and worship, and to bless us with all that we need.

Next Week: Christ the King Sunday concludes the church year, with a focus on how Jesus reigns on high, and how He will return as the King of Kings! Crown Him with Many Crowns!