
The Greatest Commandment

Children's Sermon from Mark 12:28-34

First things first...all things in life require a solid foundation before work or building can be accomplished. This message reminds students of the importance of this basic principle, using the alphabet as an analogy. We need letters to communicate through language, just as we need rules or

guidelines to do anything. What is the most important foundational rule? We are reminded several times in the Bible of the true "Greatest Commandment": Love God with all of who we are, and love others as ourselves.

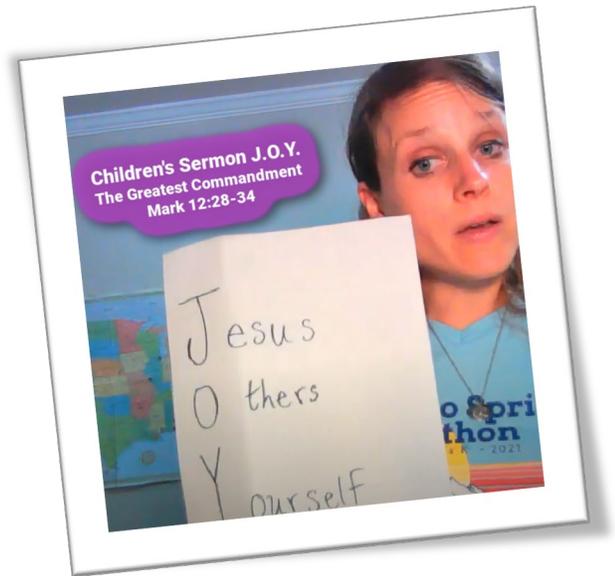
Law/Gospel Theme: The Old Testament leaders questioning Christ were certainly focused on the law. They wanted to trick Jesus, in a way, but they also wanted to know which rules were the most important to follow. Jesus brings things all back to the most foundational principles, reminding us that the first and foremost priority in our lives should be loving the Lord. We also have the blessing of knowing that God loved us first, and always will.

Optional Materials: None required; optional: books, pen and paper, alphabet pictures, stickers, or blocks.

Don't miss our complete [Sunday School lesson on the Greatest Commandment](#) for more ideas.

Bible Passage: Mark 12:28-34

Message Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. You might choose a different "foundation platform" rather than this literary one, but the alphabet allows for a simple example with minimal materials required. Use your judgment and ideas to best serve students.



Children's Sermon (Mark 12:28-34) The Greatest Commandment

Greet children, and introduce your topic...

Hello, children of God! Do you know the alphabet? Can you say it for me? Or maybe you can sing it! *Allow some time for students to sing/say the alphabet.* Wow, great work! I'm glad you know those letters. Why is the alphabet important? Well, these letters serve as the foundation for our language. You have to have letters to make sounds, and then when we put those letters and sounds together, we can make words. When we put words together, we can create sentences and communicate ideas. We can read whole books (*hold up book if using*), and we can write things for one another. We can read the most important book, God's Word, the Bible!

But we have to start with the alphabet! We have to have that as our foundation before we can do anything else with language. You know, there are a lot of things in our lives that require some sort of first-step foundation. For instance, if you're building something, you need to put a foundation down first before you build the rest. If you're making a pizza, you start with the dough, and then put on the toppings. What about in our lives as Christians? What do you think might be the most important first and foremost principle we should follow before we do anything else?

This is something we see described often in the Bible. Jesus was once asked what the most important commandment is. The people asking Him actually wanted to trick Him, as they had hundreds of rules and commandments they had devised to make themselves look good. However, the response Jesus provided was to quote the Old Testament, saying that the most important thing we can do is to love God with all of who we are. We should love God with our heart, soul, mind and strength. Jesus said this is the greatest commandment. The second-greatest is to love our neighbor. Love God, and love one another. It's not too complicated. Jesus said all of the laws could be summed up by those simple elements. The most essential law is love!

This reminds me of another little letter trick... *Write out the words as you describe, or have the "JOY" acronym already written on paper, white board, or cardstock.* We can have true joy when we follow what Christ says here. We should put Jesus first above all things (*write "Jesus" on the paper*), loving Him with all of who we are and seeking to serve Him in everything we do. Then, we put Others (*write "others" vertically*) next. Finally, we care for ourselves, but put Yourself (*write "yourself"*) last... *Turn*

paper to display. This is how we can have “JOY”! It’s not always easy. Sometimes we might not want to put God first. We might not want to love those around us, especially if they aren’t our favorite people or they aren’t even very nice! But God can help us to do that.

God wants us to love Him, because He knows that will bless our lives. And God loves US! He loved us before we were even born, and He will always love us no matter what we do. He wants what is best for us and promises to provide for us. What more can we do than give Him our heart, soul, mind, and strength? Love God, and love one another! Let’s pray and thank God for His love, asking for His help in loving others.

Prayer:

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us firm foundations

Help us to love you with all of who we are

And help us love one another

Thank you for your blessings

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Bible Verses/story to Reference:

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?” 29 “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” 32 “Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. 33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” 34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions. -[Mark 12:28-34 ESV](#)



Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



[Reader donations](#) and your support at [The Sunday School Store](#) fund these free materials. Please keep us in mind when you are choosing your next children's ministry curriculum.

If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

Tony Kummer