

## **SO CLOSE, YET SO FAR AWAY** *(Mark 12:28-37)*

*How close are you to the Kingdom? What does it mean to be close but not close enough? How does one get into the Kingdom? We will look at this in today's text.*

### **I. A PERSON ALMOST THERE IS STILL NOT THERE**

1. The scribe, like the other two groups that challenged Jesus, had a religion of human achievement.
  - The scribes had a practiced custom of summarizing the Torah into one sentence or verse, so the scribe asked Jesus to do that.
  - He was asking, "What is the GOAT?" What is the Greatest Commandment of All Time that supersedes everything and is incumbent on all humanity including Gentiles?
2. Jesus first answered by quoting Deuteronomy 6:4-5.
  - This was called the *Shema*, which means "to hear," taken from the first word in the command.
  - All devout Jews repeated it twice a day, morning and evening.
    - It recognized the Lord God Yahweh as the one and only God who alone is worthy of our worship, love, devotion and allegiance.
    - To love God is to obey His commandments
  - God lays claim to every facet of our being. "All" requires a total response of love to God.
3. The second part of Jesus' response is a quote from Leviticus 19:18.
  - Together, they summarized the Ten Commandments.
    - Love of God cannot be separated from love for our neighbor.
    - Love of God is a prerequisite to love for our neighbor.
    - Love of God is expressed in love for our neighbor.
4. Jesus saw the scribe's intelligent response and complimented him.
5. Yet, though he was close, he was still not in.
  - Making it halfway is still not making it.

### **II. A PERSON CAN BE THERE**

1. Following these discussions, Jesus once again revealed the answer behind getting into the Kingdom. He quoted Psalm 110:1.
  - In this verse David acknowledged the Messiah is one with God.
  - Jesus was stating that He is Son of man and Son of God.
2. This is what the scribe lacked:
  - He needed to take the step of faith.
  - He needed to move from intellectual assent to a personal surrender to Jesus Christ for salvation.
  - It's not a question of the law but of the Lord.

*It's possible to put your trust in Jesus Christ and accept His salvation by faith. Come to the realization that your own spiritual achievements, good works or whatever aren't enough in God's eyes. Come to the realization that God provides for and secures your eternal home in heaven when you surrender your life to His Son.*