

## **Far More Important**

### **Ready:**

"This is the most important,' Jesus answered: 'Listen, Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is One. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.'

"Then the scribe said to Him, 'You are right, Teacher! You have correctly said that He is One, and there is no one else except Him. And to love Him with all your heart, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself, is far more important than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices.'"

-Mark 12:29-33

### **Set**

As a young athlete, I thought winning was everything. The competitive juices would always flow through me. I wanted to win every time I competed. Whether it was a big high school game against our rivals or just a pick-up basketball game against my brothers, I wanted to win. For me, there was nothing more important than a good win! One of the greatest NFL coaches of all time, Vincent Lombardi, once said, "Winning isn't everything. Wanting to win is." As an athlete, I had a lot of wanting, even though I didn't win every time.

In Mark 12:33, a scribe (religious teacher) summarizes Jesus' words when he says (my translation), "What could be more important than to love God with all your heart?" At that time, burnt offerings and sacrifices were important. But this man realized that loving God was top notch, and that nothing was more important.

What could possibly be more important than loving God? Maybe it's not burnt offerings for you, but it could be your sport, your friends, your family, school work, the future or maybe even winning. Usually there is something in our lives that tries to crowd out Jesus. Today, examine your heart and ask God to show you what is keeping you from loving Him above all else.

### **Go**

1. Is there anything in your life more important than Jesus? What would your best friend say? What would Jesus say?
2. Vince Lombardi has his own perception of winning. What would be your personal definition of winning?

### **Workout**

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

### **Overtime**

"Lord, I want nothing in my life to be more important than You. So many things try to crowd You out. Pour out Your wisdom and help me to see what those things are. You are the first in my life. You are far more important than anything." (Take this opportunity to tell God that He is more important than whatever has been crowding Him out of your life.)

### **Bible Reference:**

Mark 12



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