



Jesus Creed #1 :: Everyday Neighbors {Scot McKnight}

INTRODUCTION

“Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love God. Love your neighbor.” Based on the Shema, the central Hebrew prayer from the pages of the Old Testament, this is the fundamental message for all Christians. In response to the question, “What is the greatest commandment?” Jesus responds with this call to love God and to love your neighbor—the *Jesus Creed*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the most difficult type of person for you to love (kids, older people, whiners, eternal optimists)?
2. Read Deuteronomy 6:4. Orthodox Jews recite this line at least twice daily. It’s built into their routines. Have you ever incorporated a mantra, slogan, or creed into your life? What are some things you consistently remind yourself about?
3. Read Mark 12:29-31. This is the Jesus Creed. What is the difference between seeing those around you as “neighbors” instead of simply as “people”? How would that change your interactions with them?
4. Why would Jesus call this idea of “love God, love your neighbor” the *greatest* commandment? How does this radical idea reverberate in your life?
5. What danger lies in deciding to live out the Jesus Creed?
6. Is there a “neighbor” that God has been prompting you to love? In this upcoming week, what “creative opportunity” can you include in your weekly pattern to practice the Jesus Creed with this person?

MOVING FORWARD

Most scientists believe that effectively forming new habits requires 21 days—practice anything regularly for 21 days and it becomes a habit. That’s the challenge we’ll take as we move forward in observing the Jesus Creed. And instead of 21 days, let’s stretch it out to 30 days, an even month. For 30 days, let’s say the Jesus Creed every morning and every night and whenever we need to in-between and see if it starts to change our lives, change how we see the everyday people around us become everyday neighbors.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

“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 . . . Love your neighbor as yourself.”
Mark 12:29-31