

The Greatest Commandment

Mark 12:28-34

6/13/04

Intro

As we continue in Mark, we now find Jesus after He has come into Jerusalem, after the triumphant entry, after he has cleansed the temple, and is now spending His days teaching the people in the temple.

The Jewish leaders, however, were intent on trapping Him in His own words and sent people to question Him. He answered so well that one of the righteous scribes asked Him a sincere question, “Which is the greatest commandment of all?”

That answer Jesus gives has become some of the most significant words we have received from the Lord. We need to understand these words to understand the importance of why Jesus came to earth.

These verses give us some of the greatest insights in the scriptures. Here we look for lessons of loving God with all our hearts.

I. Love God First

A. With all your heart

- “We love Him because he first loved us.”
- To love Him with all your heart is to love Him with all your passions, affections, and intentions.
- The heart is the center of our affections and passions.

- This is so important that God tells us to write these words on our heart.

Deuteronomy 6:5-7, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.”

Deuteronomy 6:7-9, “You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

B. With all your soul

- The soul is the life-breath of a man.
- The Hebrew is **nephesh**, the Greek is **psche**.
- In the soul there is a God-shaped place that only God can satisfy.

Psalm 103:1-5 Bless the Lord, O my soul

Illus – When King Josiah’s men found the Word of God, he brought a great reformation, and the greatest Passover the nation had ever seen. But though he loved God, the people didn’t.

2 Kings 23:25, “Before him there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his

soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.”

C. With all you might

- Might is a good summary of Jesus’ words, mind and strength and is how it reads in Deut 6:5.
- To love God with all your might is to do whatever you do in His behalf.
- Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “The love of Christ controls us...”

Illus – When I going to OHSU and ran into a old woman crossing the street, and the later a woman and her son needing help...I helped in Jesus’ name.

Colossians 3:17, “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.”

Romans 12:1-2, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

II. Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

A. It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit

- Jesus is referring more than just to neighborliness, but actions which come because of the Holy Spirit within us.
- Love is the first and foremost results of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- It means that out of our love for God comes our love for our neighbor.

1 John 4:11, “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

Illus – But someone was confused and asked Jesus just who then is our neighbor.

Luke 10:25-37 – who then is my neighbor?

B. We know it as the Golden Rule

- Some have wondered how to love someone as they would love themselves.
- But Jesus answers the question beautifully in the book of Matthew...

Matthew 7:12, "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

Luke 6:32-36 - If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?

III. Results of Loving God with All Your Heart

A. Victory over sin

- We are promised power over sin, but many do not understand how to understand such victory.

Nehemiah 8:10, “Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

Romans 8:2, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”

- God’s love is what brings change in our lives.
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- Jesus made it possible for us to love God completely.

B. A satisfied soul

- A satisfied soul is what is missing in many people’s lives.

Psalms 107:8-9, “Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, and for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.”

Illus – Talking with Pro-golfer Bob Gilder: “Professional athletes need the Lord,” he said, because they soon find that what the world offers does not satisfy.”

- There is a longing inside of each of us that needs to be fulfilled.

- This is the need for acceptance, for approval, for love, etc.
- We often look to have this fulfilled by others, and so many look longingly for new relationships, but they will be disappointed.

C. Confidence in faith

- If we are convinced in our hearts that God loves us... that He is committed to us with all His heart and His soul...
- That we are abiding in Him and he abides in us...
- Then we can have confidence in faith that is completely for us and will work all things together for our good.

Romans 8:28, “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”

Conclusion

Loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength is in fact the main thing; and the main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing.

John 15:8-11 Let your joy be made full