

The Greatest Commandment
Mark 12:18-43

"If I were to ask you, 'What is the most serious sin of all?' what would you say? Murder? Adultery? Idolatry? Unbelief? It seems to me that if the Great Commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, the great transgression is the failure to keep this commandment. That scares me, because I have not kept the Great Commandment for five minutes in my life. I have never loved God with my whole heart. My soul has never overflowed with affection for God. My mind has been lazy with respect to understanding God's Word, and I am often more interested in learning the things of this world. Finally, I have used only a portion of my strength in my affection for God. Were it not for Jesus, I would perish because of this sin.

But Consider Jesus. Was there any portion of the Lord's heart that was not completely in love with the Father?... The Lord Jesus kept the Great Commandment perfectly. Every second of His life He loved the Father with all of His heart, all of His soul, all of His mind, and all of His strength. Had He not done that, He would not have fulfilled the law of God and would not have been worthy to save Himself, let alone save us." Sproul

- I. One of the ways we show Jesus that we love him is by obeying his commands (Jn. 14:23). In fact, it is a prime indicator of how serious we take our salvation. The commandment to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength challenges us to think seriously about what it means to be in relationship with him. In the physical world, relationships can mean many things depending on the person and situation. In the spiritual world, the only relationship we are in is the one we entered into upon salvation, and it is with the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is based on love, and it's the type of relationship that must be fueled by love.

Mark 12:28-30

Micah 6:8

Habakkuk 2:4b

Deut. 6:4-8

1 John 4:10 *This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

Eph. 3:17b-19 *And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know His love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fulness of God.*

- II. The transformation that takes place in our hearts because of the love of the Father is most readily seen in how we treat others. Our indwelling by the Holy Spirit means that he desires to express himself through us by means of his fruit. To be salt and light means that his love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are used by him as a means of expressing the love of God toward those he puts in our lives. It is fruit that ripens in our hearts as our love for God grows. *"No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us (1 Jn. 4:12).*

Mark 12:31-34

Lev. 19:18

1 Jn. 4:19-21 *19 We love because he first loved us. 20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot[a] love God whom he has not seen. 21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

1 John 4:7-8 *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

- III. Upon the salvation of the elect Almighty God (*'el Shadday*) begins to instill in his children, the children of the resurrection, an understanding of what it means to live under the sovereign rule of the King of Kings, his Son the Lord Jesus Christ. The sooner we grasp the magnitude of his reign over our lives, the better we'll be able to surrender our wills to his. Submission to his Kingship means having a teachable spirit that is willing to let him guide and direct every aspect of our lives as we stay humble and repentant before him.

Mark 12:35-43

Isa. 9:6-7

Luke 1:26-27

Matthew 1:1

Ps. 110

Rev. 22:16

John 8:32

Rev. 20:12

Ps. 25:1-9

Psalm 25:4-5 *Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.*