

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Because of Your Love, The Love of God, And Can It Be, How Deep The Father's Love

WELCOME

Can you define LOVE in one sentence? What do you think is the greatest measurement of love?

WORD

MATTHEW 22:34-38

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. ³⁵ One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." ³⁸ This is the great and foremost commandment".

When a Pharisee asked Jesus, what is the greatest commandment, Jesus immediately answered, "Love God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind." For us to understand where Jesus came up with this answer, we must go back and understand the context of the verse. God gave us the Ten Commandments to follow, but the Jewish leaders made it so complicated. They became so legalistic that they expanded it to 613 laws, broken down to 365 "do not do" negative commands and 248 "do" positive commands.

Jesus, in His answer, gave us His ONE thing: that is to love God! If you love God, then you are to love your neighbor — you are to obey the whole Bible.

Romans 13:9 says, "For this, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Why is this so important? Because love is the fulfillment of the Law. Jesus is saying that if we love God and others, then we will obey all of God's commands as **Romans 13:10** tells us, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law." God wants a relationship with us based on love, and not simply a religion based on doing good or obeying commands.

To love God with all our heart, soul and mind, we must understand that love is from God: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love (**1 John 4:7-8**). Real love is from God, for God is love! The key to understand real love is to know and experience God. When you experience God, you will experience love because everything starts with God. Some of us experience

religion but have not yet experienced love because we have not known God in a real sense.

1 John 4:20-21 reminds us that if we say we love God but hate our brother, we are liars, for how can a person love God who is unseen, yet hate his brother who is seen? As Christians, we should love one another as God loves us!

People will know that we love God by our obedience to His commands, as said in **John 14:15**: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments". We are told that if we love God, we will obey His commandments, and we must love Jesus and our neighbor.

LOVING GOD IS FOR OUR OWN GOOD

Jesus quoted the Old Testament law (**Deuteronomy 6:1-8**) which declares that the command to love God and our neighbor is for our own good. **Deuteronomy 6:2** reminds us that this command is there to protect us, and that if you love God your days will be prolonged. It also says that we will also experience well-being throughout your days, "O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey" (**v.3**).

LOVING GOD IS FOR OUR PROTECTION

Loving God with all our heart, soul and mind, means we should love God 100% — we should give our all. When you love anything more than you love God, that thing or object becomes your idol. Only loving God above all will protect you from idolatry. Anything you love can begin to control you, and sometimes will destroy you. When you learn to love God the most, you will learn to love others better too.

WORD (cont'd)

LOVE IS A COMMITMENT

John 13:34-35 is a picture that shows how we love God when we are loving towards others. People will know that we are from God if we love others. Love is more than a feeling; it is a commitment — a command of God. How did Jesus show us His love? Jesus died for us. Love is not just a commitment, but also a commitment to love imperfect people. True love also means seeking the highest good of others, which often requires sacrifice on our part. *“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for*

us” (Romans 5:8). While we were yet sinners, He died for us! Why? For our highest good!

Ephesians 3:18-19 is Paul's prayer for the Ephesians — that they *“may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God”*. Indeed, the love of God is beyond our understanding, and yet we can know that He loves us in the most amazing way! This is the love of Christ that transforms us, and if we know that we are loved by God, we can love others with the love that we have experienced from Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Do your family members, officemates, or schoolmates know that you love God? How is this made known to them?
2. Do you find it easier to love God than people? Or the other way around? Why is that so?
3. In what ways do you demonstrate your love for God and to others (family, churchmates, friends, workmates, classmates) on an “ordinary day”? How can you improve?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those that you do not normally show love to — maybe some members in your family, at work, your neighborhood, or our government leaders and officials. Pray for their obvious and not-so-obvious needs like their spiritual needs. Do one thing this week that show you love God - by showing love to the people you are praying for (it may only be towards one or two individuals). Take the opportunity to proclaim Christ to them, by sharing the love of God to them in words (the gospel) and deeds (doing good towards them).

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends