

4Ws TRUE LOVE WINS

LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART

MARCH 13, 2022

WORSHIP

King Jesus, Mighty To Save, Christ Be Magnified, The Love of God, Think About His Love

WELCOME

How would you describe the state of your “love life” these days?

WORD

MARK 12:28-31

²⁸ One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, “What commandment is the foremost of all?” ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; ³⁰ and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

If you could ask Jesus one question, what will it be? In **Mark 12:28**, a lawyer (an expert on Jewish laws) asked Jesus what commandment is foremost of all – and Jesus answered that it is to “**love God**” and “**love others**” (**vv.30-31**). In other words, Jesus is commanding us to love God with everything we have. It starts with our hearts, our will, our soul, our minds, and to give Him our best. If we do that, we will also be able to love other people around us. The context of this command is **Deuteronomy 6:3, 5**, and it was given for our good --“**that it may be well with you**”. God’s commands are always for our good, in accordance with the kindness and grace of God. Loving God with all that we have increases our capacity to love others – as parents to children, children to parents, singles, and young people – if we just apply the greatest commandment, obeying God will not be a problem!

We are told to “**LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART**”, and we can learn important life lessons from King Solomon, David’s son.

He had the privilege of receiving instructions and warnings from his father (**1 Kings 2:3 onwards**). Solomon also had a personal, real encounter with God where God asked him in a dream about what he requests (**1 Kings 3:5**). God blessed Solomon with wisdom and was described as wiser than all men (**1 Kings 4:29-31**), along with many other blessings like power, riches, and honor to help him reign (**2 Chron. 1:9, 10, 12**). Solomon also acknowledged there was no God like the God of Israel (**1 Kings 8:23**).

He truly loved the Lord, but his life eventually reached an unbelievable decline. **1 Kings 11:4** tells us that his heart was turned away after other gods, and he was not wholly devoted to God, unlike David who loved God with all his heart.

The only safeguard for us to remain faithful to the Lord is to guard our hearts. How?

1. GO TO GOD

To love God with all our hearts begins with meditating on GOD – His love for us. **1 John 4:19** tells us that we love because He first loved us. You and I cannot love God unless we first experience His love for us. In **v.10**, John defined love as “not that we love God but that He loved us”.

Revelation 2:4-5 addressed the believers at Ephesus – a commendable, doctrinally-sound, and a very persevering church. The only issue Jesus raised was that they have “**left**” their “**first love**” – the Greek word used here, **Gk. Aphiemi**, is similar to divorce or separation. This is a serious warning. Do you recall when you first came to know Jesus? You loved Him so much and prioritized Him in your life. But the busyness of life has clouded some of us who have forgotten our first love. Make sure you go to God and meditate on His love every day!

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WORD

2. RECOGNIZE IDOLS

The Bible reminds us to watch over our hearts with all diligence (**Proverbs 4:23**). The direction of your life is directed by the love of your heart. Solomon did not guard his heart. He loved many foreign women, and along with it, accepted and loved foreign gods (**1 Kings 11:1-8**). The moment you are willing to compromise God's truth, you will know that whatever it is causing the compromise is your idol. The root sin, the sin behind every sin, is when you love something more than God. As early as **1 Kings 3**, the Bible says that Solomon loved the Lord and was obedient to Him, EXCEPT that he also practiced pagan worship in "high places", showing that he did not love God with all his heart. Solomon justified his disobedience by making his marriages into military alliances. He went after the gods of foreign nations (**1 Kings 11:5-8**). **Ezekiel 14:3** tells us to be careful not to have "idols in our hearts". Idols, according to **Martin Luther**, is "whatever thy heart clings and relies upon". If that is the object of your happiness or security, that is your idol-- anything or anyone that takes the place of God in your life. Every human being must live for something, and we all depend on something. If we do so on objects, people, or opportunities rather than on God, they will surely fail because idols can't deliver what we need. Put yourself to the test – if anything becomes more important than God, that thing becomes an idol for you.

3. OBEY

Our greatest motivation to obey God must be LOVE. **John 14:15** reminds us to obey God's commandments because of our love for Him. We see that disobedience, in the lives of the kings succeeding Solomon, brought adversity to them and their kingdom – resulting to the fall of Israel and Judah. David wrote in **Psalms 40:8** how he delights to do God's will – and that is the attitude we must all have. In **Acts 13:22**, we are reminded of God's favor upon David because he was "a man after" God's "own heart". We should ask ourselves what are we running after – are we for God's delight and pleasure? Or are we just going for things that we can gain or benefit from? The Bible consistently shows that obedience shows our love for God.

4. WORSHIP

Love for God is best captured in our worship for Him. We may not be perfect – but even in times of failure, we should be driven to continue loving God and worshipping Him with all our heart. David, upon receiving Nathan's rebuke regarding his sin with Bathsheba (**2 Samuel 12**), prayed a prayer of confession and worship (**Psalms 51**). Worship is the overflow of our love for God; it is responding to the goodness of God, and it shows our gratitude and thankfulness to Him. Are we truly loving God with all of our hearts? May our worship reflect that love in our daily lives!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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

1. Self-Check.

Assess your love for God on a scale of 1-10. Do you love God with all your heart?

2. Setting It Right.

How do you know you love God? What is the evidence? Correct what needs to be corrected.

3. Living It Out.

What is competing with your love for God and what will you do about it? How will you encourage others to follow suit?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for the hearts of your family, friends, co-workers to turn to the Lord and away from "idols" in their lives. Demonstrate God's sacrificial love to them in whatever opportunity you may have to do so this week. It may be helping meet a physical need, giving emotional support or providing spiritual truth from God's Word appropriate for their need. Share the gospel to them so that they may be given the privilege of experiencing God's love and may learn to love Him with all their heart!

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; their repentance and salvation
- For the Russian invasion of Ukraine to stop; peace and order be restored, lives spared. Russian and Ukrainian soldiers, families, leaders to turn to Christ; refugees be given safe passage into surrounding nations.

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

MEMORY VERSE

MARK 12:30-31

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