



Love God

Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:35-40

We all love things/people

We all love some things naturally and easily

We all love other things with commitment through difficulties

God calls us to a higher, better, and often more difficult love

Deuteronomy 6:5

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

God tells this group of former slaves to love him first and most

They're freed from slavery but still attracted to the culture of their slavery
the natural heart has:

They've forgotten the horrors and death of slavery

They're convinced that the culture of their slavery is better than God or anything he has for them

They craved the "other food from Egypt" instead of the manna God gave them

When we love something other than God, our cravings begin to control us
they show in our words, our actions and our plans

When our hearts are stuck in the natural, we will have:

unhealthy loves

divided loves

unregulated loves

inappropriate loves

God tells this group of struggling former slaves to love Him more than anything else

Faith and love are not the same thing
We are called to trust God no matter what
We are also called to love God - why does God care about our love?

A strong definition of love is a decision, to choose to love someone regardless of feelings or circumstances

Deuteronomy 6:5 uses the generic word for love
in Genesis, it's almost always parental love or spousal love
God loves us and wants a relationship with us
You can trust God without loving, but you cannot love without trusting God

God wants us to have a trust of him that springs from a love for him because:

- we become like what we love
- we are most motivated by what we love
- we are most fulfilled when we are most fulfilled with God

Nothing fulfills our souls the way God can
How much does God love us?
enough to save us from Egypt/slavery to sin and death
enough to save us from our lesser loves

Matthew 22:35-40

35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" 37 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Moses says to love God with all of your:
heart- emotions; will; desires; passions; joy
soul- the core of who you are
Jesus adds to love God with all of your:
mind- understanding; thinking (sloppy thinking leads to sloppy loving)

It's the first and greatest commandment
rules second, relationship first

Our love for God cannot be merely internal or devotional
“Love is willing self-sacrifice for the good of another that does not require reciprocation or that the person being loved is deserving” Paul Tripp

willing- a chosen decision; an act of volition
self-sacrifice- beyond your wants and needs; investment; submission; lay down life and resources
good of others- this will make them better; how can I serve them to bring them the best for them?
reciprocation- not a negotiation; you are better & that makes me happy
deserving- this is the crux of Christian love

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