

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE GOD?

THE SIMPLE ANSWER IS FOLLOW THE ANSWER OF JESUS!!!

Matthew 22:34-40

v34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. v35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: v36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" v37 Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' v38 This is the first and greatest commandment. v39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' v40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Mark 12:28-34

v28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" v29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. v30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' v31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." v32 "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. v33 To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." v34 When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

Luke 10:25-28

v25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" v26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" v27 He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'" v28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

SUMMARY

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

Jesus is quoting the OT

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 v4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. v5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

v12 And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, v13 and to observe the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART?

This does not mean EMOTIONS from a Hebrew mindset. For the heart was not the seat of emotions in the Old Testament context. The heart referred to the seat of the WILL.

WHY IS THIS SO DIFFICULT?

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

Matthew 15:18 But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' Mat 15:19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

1. It begins with a decision to seek God.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

2. It develops with a decision to discover God

Psa 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding.

Pro 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,

Pro 2:5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

Pro 19:23 The fear of the LORD leads to life:

3. It culminates with a decision to know God

Ezekiel & Joel Then they will know that I am the LORD their God.' "

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Galatian 4:8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. Gal 4:9 But now that you know God - rather are known by God--

SEEK, DISCOVER, KNOW

GOD SAID IT, I BELIEVE IT, THAT SETTLES IT

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR SOUL?

Greek=Pseuche – Hebrew=Nephesh – Lord God breathed into them = Life or breath

TWO THINGS

1. WITH ALL YOUR LIFE

Deut 30:6 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

Deut 30:15 See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. Deut 30:16 For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

JESUS IS EITHER LORD OF ALL OR NOT AT ALL

Following a great victory, King Cyrus of Persia took as prisoners a noble prince, his wife, and their children. When they were brought into the leader's tent to stand before him, Cyrus said to the prince, "What will you give me if I set you free?" He replied, "I will give you half of all that I possess." "And what will you give me if I release your children?" continued Cyrus. "Your majesty, I will give you all that I possess." The king questioned him further, "But what will you give me if I set your wife at liberty?" Looking at the one he loved so dearly, the prince replied without hesitation, "If you will restore my wife to freedom, I will give you my life." Cyrus was so moved by his devotion that he released the entire family without asking recompense. That evening the prince said to his wife, "Did you not think Cyrus a very handsome man?" "I did not notice him," she answered, "Why, my dear, where were your eyes?" exclaimed her husband. She replied, "I had eyes only for the one who said he would lay down his life for me.")

2. WITH ALL YOUR EMOTIONS

We are not to love God with some kind of dry, antiseptic love, but we are to be emotional in our love for Him. That is, our love for God should touch us at our most intimate levels. We are to love the Lord with all our emotional self. That is, we should not be ashamed to

express our love with the emotions. Shouting, crying, testifying, etc. are all emotional manifestations of our love for the Lord.

Psalm 47:1 Clap your hand, all you peoples; shout to God with the voice of triumph

Psalm 68:32 Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises to the Lord. Selah.

Psalm 149:3 Let them praise His name in the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp.

OUR AFFECTIONS DETERMINE OUR DEVOTION

Our affections are deep currents that steer our life. Think of them as a rudder of a ship that literally directs it.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR MIND?

The word “mind” refers to the “intellect.” As we understand Who God is, as He revealed in His Word, we respond to that truth by focusing the power of the intellect to worship Him and to love Him. That is, we are to involve the intellect in our love for the Lord. This love is not mindless and empty-headed, but we are to love the Lord because we have considered Him, meditated on Him and therefore make a conscious decision to love the Lord. In other words, you shouldn't love God just because the preacher says so, but you should love Him because of who He is and what He has done for you.

Isa 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.

Rom 8:6 The mind of sinful man^[5] is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;

Rom 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Here are four unique ways to love the Lord with our minds.

1. Reason

Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:” To reason is to think, understand and form judgments by a process of logic. I believe that part of loving God with all our mind is loving him logically. For guys like me this is a relief. I enjoy strategic thinking and order. God has given this as a gift.

2. Knowledge

Heb. 10:16 “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”

To love God with all our mind involves taking time to fill our mind with God’s Word and to rightly agree with who He is. When we grow in truth we gain knowledge.

A. W. Tozer once said, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”

3. Memory

Isaiah 63:7 “I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the LORD has done for us.”

The Bible is filled with commands to remember. Memories lead to gratefulness and worship. When we use our minds to remember His kindness, faithfulness, patience, peace etc. we build a foundation of faith, hope and love. We are loving God with our remembrance.

4. Imagination

Psa. 8:3 “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have ordained;”

Is. 55:8 “My thoughts are completely different from yours,” says the LORD. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.”

God has given the mind the power to imagine. Some call it dreaming big dreams. Some say get a “picture” of your future. While others say if you can see it, you can be it. Imagination sees, creates and thinks outside the box.

Phil. 4:8 ”And now, dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.”

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH?

Hebrew=me'od (muchness) Greek= ischus (forcefulness)

intensity **with reckless abandon out of simple devotion**

1Pe 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it **with the strength** God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Php 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Psa 18:32 It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.

Psa 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Isa 40:28 Have you not known? Have you not heard, that the everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, does not grow weak nor weary? *There is no searching of His understanding.* **Isa 40:29** *He* gives power to the weary; and to him with no vigor; He increases strength. Isa 40:30 Even the young shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; Isa 40:31 but those who wait on Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up *with* wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Makata for God