

# Love God

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

## FCF – We prioritize the wrong things.

What is it that you want for your life? What is it that you want for your children's lives?

- Education, profession
- Safety, security
- Fame, fortune
- Health, wealth, prosperity, prestige

We want the things that do not come naturally to this life or this world because of the Fall. There is nothing wrong with wanting all of these things. There is nothing wrong with having goals.

What is wrong and what causes problems for us is when we turn these good desires into primary goals.

**Illustration:** Out of balance.

When our lives begin to rotate around the wrong priorities, we suffer and those around us suffer as well. God knows this which is why he commanded the Israelites through his servant Moses to...

## Love him first and love him most.

**READ:** Deuteronomy 6:4-9

**Context:** Before the Israelites enter the land, the final recitation of the Lord's expectations for his people and their conduct when they finally come to the promised land. He has just reiterated the 10 Commandments in chapter 5 and is going to continue to expound on the laws and commandments of the Lord, but first he summarizes it all in these few verses.

### Shema

"Hear" – listen and obey. Real listening is not about just hearing what is said, but about taking it into ourselves and allowing it to affect us.

The uniqueness of the Lord – God is to be our only God. There is debate on this interpretation, but the immediate context is clear that God wants the people and us to know the unique nature of the Lord. The people of Israel are not to be like the Canaanites with many gods and they are not to place the Canaanite gods beside the Lord.

You shall love the Lord – love is the affection that one person has for another. The Israelites' love is always grounded and flows from the love that the Lord has for them. God's love is not conditional upon their behavior but flows from who he is. His love for them is a redemptive love that is not in word only but shown forth in his deeds. **vv. 21-22**, they are commanded to relate to their children what the Lord did for them in bringing them out of Egypt.

In the same way, the people of God are commanded to respond to God's love for them with a love of their own for him. A love that encompasses all that they are.

### **With:**

All your heart – according the OT the heart is the human personality, intellect, memory, emotions, conscience, and will.

All your soul – the root of this word means "life." This is not the same concept that we have of our soul as being the eternal part of who we are trapped inside the temporal part of who we are. Such a concept is foreign to the Bible, but that is a concept for another day. Instead, living beings are called "souls." Every being that is alive and breathing is a soul. Therefore, we are to love the Lord with our lives, our physical existence from beginning to the end.

All your strength – the word that is used here is usually an adverb that is translated "very" or "much" but here is clearly used as a noun. It has been translated in many different ways. The Greek translation is "strength." The Aramaic was "money." Jesus used two words to unpack it, "mind and power" when he quoted this verse. Bible Project: muchness. We are to love the Lord with all of our muchness or may better, "we are to love the Lord with all of our capacity." Everything that we have, our finances, our power, our knowledge, our strength. It does not mean less, it means more than what we typically think.

This all-encompassing love is not just with word and affection but with deed.

*Love of the creature toward the Creator must include obedience or it is meaningless.*  
(Francis August Schaeffer)

The biblical definition of love is that it shows up in our lives. When our lives are driven by our love for the Lord then that will show up in our lives.

### **Love for the Lord must define our hearts.**

*These words that I command shall be on you heart.*

This is the center of our existence. These commands and words are not supposed to merely be words on a page or what the pastor preaches.

These are the very words of life, the words of love from the greatest love in existence. We are not just supposed to understand them but we are to take them into our hearts. Imagine the Bible as the love letter of God to you and to me.

When we define the very center of our existence on the words of the Lord to us then we know that our center of rotation, gravity, balance is in the right place.

Do you center your heart, your life on the love of God for you and your love for him? Do you hide his word in your heart? Do you take the word of God and what we study on Sundays and throughout the week and chew on it, meditate on it, allow it to sink into your heart or do you let it go in one ear and out the other? Are you running the word of God with as much frequency and passion as you are to the latest update on the coronavirus?

### **Love for the Lord must define our homes.**

*You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in our house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

Moses tells the Israelites that it is their responsibility to pass these commands and this love for the Lord on to their children. The word that he uses for "teach diligently" is a word that invokes the idea of engraving a message into stone.

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***Proverbs 22:6 (ESV)** Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

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This is a process that takes time, it takes effort, it takes intentionality. Therefore Moses uses the sets of actions to define when and where a parent is to be teaching their child to love the Lord. At your table in your homes, when you're travelling on the road, when you wake up, and when you go to sleep. In other words, this is a 24/7 responsibility of the parent to disciple and to train their children. This is not something that we have the ability or the right to outsource to others.

NOTE the presence of "talk." We are to talk of them. We often fall into the trap of thinking that "actions speak louder than words." This is true, but it is also important to realize that our words often shape our actions. When we are talking about the Lord, about his love, about what he expects of us then we are actually inviting our children to watch our lives and see if we truly believe what we say.

Thus,

## **Love for the Lord must define our habits.**

*You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.*

If you go to Israel or find yourself around Orthodox Jews you will see this practiced in a literal way as they tie Scriptures to their left arms and their heads. Though they know that these are

What we see and what we do must be seen and understood through the worldview that is defined by our love for the Lord.

## **Love for the Lord must define our habitats.**

*You shall write them upon the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

Our communities must be defined by the commands of the Lord and our love for him. When we live with the Lord in front of others then we become what Christ called us to be: salt and light in a dark and bland world.

When Christians live with Christ so that our hearts, our homes, and our habits are defined by our love for the Lord first and foremost that will flow out of us and into our communities. We begin to imitate the Lord's love for us.

## **That love is seen nowhere more powerfully or clearly than in the sacrificial love that Jesus had for you and for me.**

He loved us with the highest love, a love that ended in his death on the cross for our sins that we might be reconciled to the Lord.

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*John 15:13 (ESV) Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*

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Jesus showed what it means to love the Lord above his own life and love others above his own well-being.

## **How can your respond this week?**

How can you prioritize your love for the Lord this week?

How can you show that love to your family?

How can you show that to others?