

Loving God, Jesus Taught Us How Matthew 22:37 (NKJV)

37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

As we saw last week, people have trouble loving God. As a matter of fact, without the Spirit of God working in them people will never love God.

Because of the fall, mankind is at enmity with God and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

That is what set Jesus apart from the world. He loved God and often referred to Him in endearing the term "Father."

But what is strange is that as far as the Bible records, Jesus never said the words, "I love God." Several times we hear Him say that God the Father loves Him.

But is there any question in anyone's mind that Jesus loved the Father? Of course not.

But then how do we know that Jesus loved God if He did not tell us so. We put a lot of weight in saying the words. But as many an young lady has learned it is much easier to say I love you that to actually love.

"The test of love is preference. Love comes out into the light, and is discovered when there is a choice to be made between two, or for or against. The best way in the whole world for a man to show his love for God is to say "no" to the devil, and to stand up on the side of God. But we must not do that because we are commanded to do it, because we are afraid not to do it, but because we want to do it, if there is to be any real love in it." George Hodges (Biblical Illustrator)

This is where Jesus shows His love. His preference was the same as God the Father's preference.

John 8:29 (NKJV) 29 And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, **for I always do those things that please Him.**"

Can you imagine that? To always do those thing that please God.

But Jesus as well as others were assured that Jesus always did those things that pleased the Father.

Matthew 3:17 (NKJV) 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The headings for the outline are from George Hodges, The Biblical Illustrator

- I. Jesus taught God's love for man in the blessed words that He spoke. He looked up to the great God and called Him, and taught us to call Him, by that loving name "Father."
 - A. Although God is referred to as Father in the OT, yet Jesus breaths new life into that simple word, Father.

- B. When He is in the Garden of Gethsemane He prays “O My Father”
- C. He brings us into that relationship in His prayer to the Father in John 17
 - 1. John 17:20-24 (NKJV) 20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. 24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.
 - 2. God brings us into the relationship as sons and daughters of God in order to bring us into this circle of love.
- II. Jesus’ life, even more than His words, was a revelation of God. God is like Christ, and it is not hard to love Christ. How can anybody help loving Christ? And whoever loves Christ, loves God.
 - A. Jesus while on earth was all that God is only in a bodily form.
 - B. It is in Jesus we get to see God with skin on, to see Him interact every with sinners like us, to see His compassion.
 - C. How could we not love Him, even some of the enemies of Jesus have marveled at His perfections.
 - D. Although He was persecuted He did not take revenge or enact justice.
 - E. He is revered by most religious leaders of the world today.
 - F. But for us He is loved, and in loving Him we love God.
- III. He taught the love of God for us in the death that He died. We wonder if pain and love can really go together, and behold! here they are together at the Cross of Jesus.

Luke 2:49-50 (NKJV) 49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" 50 But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Luke 4:4 (NKJV) 4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' "

Luke 6:11-12 (NKJV) 11 But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus. 12 Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Matthew 26:36-39 (NKJV) 36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." 39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

John 18:10-11 (NKJV) 10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"

The person who truly loves the Lord with all his heart and soul and mind is the person who trusts Him and obeys Him. That person demonstrates his love by meditating on God's glory (Ps. 18:1-3), trusting in God's divine power (Ps. 31:23), seeking fellowship with God (Ps. 63:1-8), loving God's law (Ps. 119:165), being sensitive to how God feels (Ps. 69:9), loving what God loves (Ps. 119:72, 97, 103), loving whom God loves (1 John 5:1), hating what God hates (Ps. 97:10), grieving over sin (Matt. 26:75), rejecting the world (1 John 2:15), longing to be with Christ (2 Tim. 4:8), and obeying God wholeheartedly (John 14:21). MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Matthew 16-23.

Psalms 18:1 (NKJV) 1 I will love You, O LORD, my strength.

Psalms 18:2 (NKJV) 2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalms 18:3 (NKJV) 3 I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies.

Psalms 31:23 (NKJV) 23 Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! For the LORD preserves the faithful, And fully repays the proud person.

Psalms 63:1 (NKJV) 1 O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.

Psalms 63:2 (NKJV) 2 So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your

glory.

Psalm 63:3 (NKJV) 3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.

Psalm 63:4 (NKJV) 4 Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.

Psalm 63:5 (NKJV) 5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips.

Psalm 63:6 (NKJV) 6 When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches.

Psalm 63:7 (NKJV) 7 Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.

Psalm 63:8 (NKJV) 8 My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

Psalm 119:165 (NKJV) 165 Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble.

Psalm 69:9 (NKJV) 9 Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

Psalm 119:72 (NKJV) 72 The law of Your mouth is better to me Than thousands of coins of gold and silver.

Psalm 119:97 (NKJV) 97 Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.

Psalm 119:103 (NKJV) 103 How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth!

1 John 5:1 (NKJV) 1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

Psalm 97:10 (NKJV) 10 You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

Matthew 26:75 (NKJV) 75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly.

1 John 2:15 (NKJV) 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

2 Timothy 4:8 (NKJV) 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

John 14:21 (NKJV) 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

Matthew 22:37-38 (NKJV) 37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment.

Mark 12:29-30 (NKJV) 29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. 30 And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

Deuteronomy 7:9 (NKJV) 9 Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

Deuteronomy 10:12 (NKJV) 12 "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,

Deuteronomy 11:1 (NKJV) 1 "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always.

Deuteronomy 11:13 (NKJV) 13 'And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul,

Deuteronomy 11:22 (NKJV) 22 "For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do--to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him--

Deuteronomy 13:3 (NKJV) 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Deuteronomy 19:9 (NKJV) 9 and if you keep all these commandments and do them, which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and to walk always in His ways, then you shall add three more cities for yourself besides these three,

Deuteronomy 30:6 (NKJV) 6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Deuteronomy 30:16 (NKJV) 16 in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.

Deuteronomy 30:20 (NKJV) 20 that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

John 21:15-17

15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Tend My sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?"

And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. NKJV

1 John 4:19 We love Him because He first loved us. NKJV

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. NKJV

Why we ought to love God

Why we ought to love God: --

1. We ought to love God. It is our duty to love God. We are commanded to love God. The Old Testament and the New Testament unite in emphasizing that. It is not likely, however, that this text ever persuaded anybody into loving God. Love laughs at injunctions, pays no heed to duty, absolutely cannot be commanded. Obedience can be got that way, but love -- never! It is of the very nature and essence of love that it must grow in a willing heart. Love is the manifestation of an untrammelled choice.

2. It may be that God set temptation within the reach of man, that He might thus make it possible for us really to love Him. The test of love is preference. Love comes out into the light, and is discovered when there is a choice to be made between two, or for or against. The best way in the whole world for a man to show his love for God is to say "no" to the devil, and to stand up on the side of God. But we must not do that because we are commanded to do it, because we are afraid not to do it, but because we want to do it, if there is to be any real love in it.

3. The purpose of this command is not to establish obedience, but to proclaim an ideal. The spirit of it is not that we must love God because we must, but that God wants us to love Him. "We love Him because He first loved us."

4. Christ is the only authoritative teacher of the love of God.

(1) He taught God's love for man in the blessed words that He spoke. He looked up to the great God and called Him, and taught us to call Him, by that loving name "Father."

(2) His life, even more than His words, was a revelation of God. God is like Christ, and it is not hard to love Christ. How can anybody help loving Christ? And whoever loves Christ, loves God.

(3) He taught the love of God for us in the death that He died. We wonder if pain and love can really go together, and behold! here they are together at the Cross of Jesus.

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