

Loving the Lord with all your Heart (Audio Issues)

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[0 : 0 0] So I'm thinking this week, you know, how do I start this? So, well, the emphasis is on the heart here today.

We're going to be looking at this great commandment Jesus gives, and we're going to break it down over four weeks. What does it mean to love God with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, all our strength?

Well, we could summarize it saying, well, that's loving God with everything that we have. That's true. But I want to know a little bit more. I want to know what's the difference between loving God with my heart and with my soul and with my mind and then with my strength.

Because if I really want to love God, I want to know how do I do that with all of my being? So in other words, how do I do it with my heart? What does that mean to love with my heart and my soul? How do I love God with my soul?

So that's what we're going to do. We're going to break that down. So today we're looking at heart. What do we mean when we say heart? We even have emojis, you know.

[1 : 0 4] I heart this. What does that mean? And I've discovered there's even different colors of those emojis. And they mean different things.

What in the world? I don't know how to read that stuff. You've got to go look up a dictionary or... No, no, don't tell me. Don't confuse me. I don't want to know. Yeah.

So what is heart? So how do we introduce this? How do we get to this? Well, in our culture, heart means a particular kind of thing.

Various things we mean. And it's different than what the Bible means when it uses the word heart. So here's one of the ways.

I thought, oh, I look up songs. I'm going to look up songs with the title, with the word heart in the title. So I looked them up. And I picked some out. I want to see if you can name the singer.

[2 : 0 5] Okay, so just name that tune. No, not name the tune. It's name the singer. All right. So here's the first one. Achy, breaky heart. Billy Ray. Good. 1991, 92.

And here's one I found. I've never heard of it, but I like it because I've used this phrase. Bless your heart. It's older. The Isley Brothers.

All right. Here's an older one, but a well-known singer. Breaking in a brand new broken heart. 61.

Neil. Diamond. Sadaka. No, there's two kinds of people. No, never mind. I won't go into the Neil Diamond thing. Breaking hearts.

Elton John. Broken hearted me. Ann Murray. Well, I don't know either.

[3 : 1 0] Some of these I know. Cold, cold heart. Good try. No. Tony Bennett. Now, there are, of course, some of these that are original and then sung by other, so you could be right.

Don't go breaking my heart. Now, we know that one. Don't go breaking my heart. Bee Gees. They may have done it.

Elton John did it first. Empty heart. This is newer, so I've tried to pick a few that are newer that I've never heard of. Empty heart. Grace Potter. 2015.

From the bottom of my broken heart. Britney Spears. Here's another new one. Go ahead and break my heart. Blake Shelton.

Heart of Stone. Their name is in the title. Stone. The Rolling Stones. Heartbeat.

[4 : 19] Heartbeat. Carrie Underwood. Who's that? Okay, you've got to know this one. Heartbreak Hotel. Elvis.

I left my heart in San Francisco. Tony Bennett. I heart you. Tell that's a newer one. Tony Braxton.

Wicked Heart. That just came out last year. No? And me either. It's a group called Sublime. Unbreak my heart.

That's one of the most popular. Tony Braxton. Total Eclipse of the Heart. You've got to know this one.

Bonnie Tyler. Yes. Bonnie Tyler. Also Nikki French. All right. So, all right. What was that all about? Well, notice how heart is used in our culture.

[5 : 25] And it comes out in these kind of songs. Overwhelmingly, a lot of them are about a broken heart. Those aren't all country songs either. Broken heart, a cold heart, an empty heart, a stone heart, a wicked heart.

The modern emphasis of heart is about the source of our feelings. The heart is about our feelings and our emotions. Right?

It's about our romance, about our pain and our suffering and our compassion and our sorrow. But when we look at the Bible, the word heart has a different meaning, a different emphasis.

It's not about emotions. It's not about affections. It's not about feelings. And what we want to be careful, what we must always be careful as a 21st century reader of the 1st century Bible, is be careful not to read our thoughts into the Bible.

Our understanding of heart into the Bible. Because then we come up with something that Jesus didn't mean. So if we understand what Jesus meant, we must know, well, what was he thinking? What did he intend when he used that word?

[6 : 48] And heart and soul and mind and strength have particular meanings in the Scriptures, both old and new. So we're looking at this.

What is heart? How do we love God with all of our heart? And what does Jesus mean by this? So remember where we were. Here we come with this scribe, as I introduced. The scribe comes up.

Which is the first command of all? What is the greatest command of all? He's not just saying which command, but what kind of command is most important. And what's striking is Jesus answers with this command that's not one of the ten commands.

We would think, wouldn't he come up with, I mean, the ten commandments, those are the biggies, right? And Jesus says the greatest command isn't even one of those.

It's even bigger than that. It's even more important than that. And it comes from Deuteronomy chapter 6, which is a prayer that the Jews, an Orthodox Jew, still prays every day.

[7 : 59] Shema Yisrael, Yahweh Eloheinu, Yahweh Echad. I'll spit. You know what I'm saying? It's the Shema. Hear, O Israel.

The Lord is your God. The Lord is your God.

What matters most?

And Jesus' answer is surprising. It's not just one, but that's actually two commands. He says the first, the most important is love God. Second is like it. Love your neighbor. That's also foremost.

That also ranks above any of the ten. Oh, okay. So we're talking about theology now. We're talking about theology. In other words, the man wants to know how Jesus is thinking.

[9 : 21] And he has seen how Jesus answered the Sadducees. He saw how Jesus handled that question. And Jesus was pretty impressive in the way he handled that question, answering them from their own text, blowing them away.

That God preaches resurrection. That God preaches resurrection way back in the Old Testament. So he's impressed. So he's impressed. So he's impressed.

We're impressed. So what matters most are these two commandments. And then what we did last time was we described what love is. What does Jesus mean by love?

See, there's another one of the words. Do we read in what we think love means? Or do we understand what did Jesus mean by the word he used? Because in the Greek there's different words for love.

There's agape. There's phileo. There's eros. He uses agape. Agape. Which in the first century before Jesus got hold of that word meant the same thing as love means in our culture.

[10 : 28] It could mean anything. It's up and down. It could mean feelings. It could mean, you know, lust. It could mean just about anything. I can fall in and fall out of love in our culture.

And Jesus takes that word and he makes it more concrete. He says it's a love. It's the word that describes God's love for the world. John 3.16. God so loved, agape, the world, that what did he do?

He gave his one and only son. He did an act. He didn't just think or desire. He did something. He gave his one and only son and that was sacrificial.

It was a self-denying love. He denied himself his son. He gave his only son. For the highest good of someone else. That whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

That's the highest good. I mean, they can't want something better for anybody else than anything. So that's the definition of love. Love is a self-denying act for the greatest good of another.

[11 : 41] Love is the sum of all Christian virtue. Love is not just one of the Christian virtues. Love is the sum of all the other virtues.

1 Corinthians 13. Love is what? All of these other virtuous things. It's kind and it's good and it's persevering and it bears all things.

It is the highest. It's the sum. And then it is also the fulfillment of all of our responsibilities.

One word defines all of our duty and responsibility, both to God and to me. I mean, if you love God, you do everything else that you are supposed to do yourself.

If you love your fellow man, if you love your brother and your sister, you're fulfilling your duty. Yeah. What does that love look like?

[12 : 41] What does that love look like? What does that love look like? What does that love look like? All those cards define the love. And here's the one, two, six, love.

So, how do we love God? How does that love look like?

Thank you.