

# Love the Lord With All Your Mind

Mark 12:30

In the 12th chapter of the book of Mark, we have an account of scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees and Herodians seeking to entrap or entangle the Lord in his speech. Really, their intent was to undermine his teaching. And it's in this context, the Bible tells us that there was a scribe who was a Pharisee. He heard them reasoning with the Lord.

And the Bible tells us that he perceived that the Lord had demonstrated wisdom in answering them. And so we wanted to know, what's the first commandment of all? In other words, what is the preeminent commandment of all the commandments? And Jesus went back to the book of Deuteronomy in chapter six, and he said, the first commandment is, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one.

And you shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your soul, with all of your mind, and with all of your strength. This is the first and great commandment. A second like it is this you shall love your neighbor as yourself. He said, there is no other commandment greater than these. The scribe, having heard the Lord respond in a very wise manner, said, you spoken rightly.

Teacher, he said, there is but one God. No other but he. And then he said, and to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, with all of the understanding, with all of our soul, with all of our strength. He said this more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. Jesus, then, recognizing the wisdom of his answer, said, you're not far from the kingdom of God.

And then, interestingly, Mark tells us that from that time no one dared question him. I want to go back and look at verse 30 specifically where Jesus said, we are to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Specifically, what does it mean to love the Lord our God with all of our mind?

The word mind here really cares, with the idea of examining an issue from side to side and then drawing some conclusions. We might say it is an analytical process. It is an acute intellectual exercise. You remember in the book of acts, in chapter 17, Paul and Silas, they been in Philippi. They made their way to the great city of Thessalonica.

And Luke tells us that for three Sabbaths they reasoned with those in the synagogues from the scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that Jesus had to die and rise again, and that this Jesus that they were proclaiming was indeed the Christ. But note, if you would. Luke said, they were reasoning. There was a discourse among them. I can just imagine the Apostle Paul from a biblical and logical fashion.

Historically speaking as well, pointing out that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the Christ, the one of whom the prophets of old had spoken. And that from a historical vantage point he had lived among them. He had been put to death. It was evident he had risen from the dead. And as we know, he had ascended to heaven, where he sits at the right hand of God over in the book of acts, chapter 17.

We also have an account of Paul making his way to the city of Athens, that great intellectual center of his day. The city of Athens was well known for her great philosophers. You had the Stoics and the Epicureans that Luke makes mention of in that context. But if you look at the city of Athens, one of the things that really stands out is

these people were steeped in idolatry.

So Paul, as his custom was, as he was prone to do, went into the synagogue and began reasoning with the Jews and the Gentile worshipers, and then also in the marketplace with those who were assembled there. Well, what then was the purpose of his reasoning among those people? Well, his purpose was to share the Christ, the resurrected Christ.

And as a result of his preaching and teaching, drew a lot of response. Now, let me just back up for a moment or two and ask this question. If we're thinking about loving God with all of our mind. What would that entail? What would it entail for me to love God with all of my heart, soul, mind, and strength?

But specifically to love him with my mind? Well, it seemed to me that if I'm going to love someone, or if I'm going to love God, I've got to know something about him. Now you think about the dating process. Sometimes we'll see somebody that catches our I think about those who are married. Many of us, we've been married for many years.

Now, I would grant that there is a physical attraction, but love is deeper than just a physical attraction. We have to learn to love somebody. We've got to learn something about them. So go back and look, if you would, at the book of Exodus. You remember in Exodus chapter five, God had already summoned Moses to become the leader of his people.

God's people were in Egyptian bondage. He was going to deliver them. They'd been there for some four centuries. Moses and Aaron were instructed to go before Pharaoh and to tell him to let the children of Israel go and worship him. Well, when they stood before Pharaoh and they said, let my people go. Here's what Pharaoh said. Who was the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go?

Now it would take those great miracles performed by Moses and Aaron to help Pharaoh understand something about the nature of the power of Almighty God. So you have ten miracles, culminating in the final miracle that is the death of the firstborn, which ultimately led to the release of the people in Egypt. And thus Pharaoh would later follow them, and Pharaoh and his army would be destroyed or killed.

But nonetheless, let's just go back for a moment or two and think about it. Pharaoh wanted to know who is the Lord that I should obey him. Well, as I said a moment ago, he would come to understand something about the power of Almighty God. Now, there are those today. They don't know anything about God. And we talk about love.

And as I said a minute ago, love is much more than just an emotion. It's much more than just saying I love you, but rather there is an acute intellectual process involved in coming to an understanding of the God of heaven. How can I love a God that I don't know anything about? So that being the case, wouldn't it only stand to reason that I would want to know something about my creator?

Now I know that we live in a day in time when many people today dismiss the whole concept of God, and they have the idea that we're the product of some type of evolutionary process. I don't believe that for a minute. Now you think about the logic being employed to come to the conclusion that we're the products of chance or evolution doesn't make a bit of sense.

I'm wearing a watch right now. If I told you that this watch just automatically, miraculously appeared, you would say, wait a minute, you've lost your mind. Well, rightly so. You say this watch. This watch is evidence of a watchmaker. The world that we live in is evidence of a designer of a greater power. Now go back to Genesis chapter one.

In Genesis chapter one, verse one. Here's what Moses said in the beginning. God created the heavens and the earth. Now here's what David said by the word of the Lord. Well, the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth he spoke. And it was done. He commanded. It stood fast. No wonder David would say in Psalm 19, the heavens declare the glory of God.

The firmament shows his handiwork. Yes, God is the creator of the world that we live in. You remember what the Hebrew writer said in Hebrews chapter three? The writer there said in verse four, every house is built by some man, but he that built all things is God who built the home that you live in. I would imagine that you had somebody that was the architect of your home.

You had an architect, and then you had a builder. By the same token, God was the architect of the universe, and the Lord Jesus Christ was the builder. He was the agent by which this world was brought into existence. Now, you might ask the question, how do you know that? Well, because John said in John chapter one, in the beginning was the word.

The word was with God. The word was God. All things were made by him. Without him was not anything made that was made. So God is our creator. Look at Genesis chapter one, verse 26. There we are introduced to the Godhead, because God said, let us make man in our image and in our likeness. So not only did God create the world, but he created the human family.

Again, we're not the products of chance. We're not the result of the evolutionary process, as is claimed by so many today. No, not at all. But rather we are the products of design. No wonder David would write in Psalm 139 that we have been fearfully and wonderfully made. Look at the complexity of the human body and the beauty of the human body.

When David wrote in Psalm eight, you remember he said, when I consider your heavens the work of your fingers, the sun and moon, he asked this question, what is man? What is man that you're mindful of him? The son of man that you visit him? He said you made him a little lower than the angels crowned him with glory and honor.

You put all things under his dominion. So, David, they're recognizing that God not only created the world, but created man. And then you step back and ask this question, what kind of God would create a world? And then the human family and do so and meet his every need. Says something about the benevolent character of God, doesn't it?

Now again, we see evidence of God in this world. Now think about the power of God and then his great provisions. Now, the Hebrew writer said, he upholds all things by the word of his power. Have you ever thought about how God has richly blessed us in this world, that he meets our every need? In Matthew chapter five, it was Jesus who said that the Lord makes the sun to rise on the evil, and the good sends the rain on the just and the unjust.

In the 14th chapter of the book of Acts, Paul is in the city of Lystra, and the Bible tells us that he pointed out to those people that it was God who created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. And then he said, God has not left himself without witness, and that he's done good, given us rain from heaven, fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

Paul recognized that we are the recipients of a benevolent God. James writes in James chapter one, every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above, from the father of lights, with whom is no variation, neither shadow of turning. The Psalmist in Psalm eight nine, many years ago said, blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits.

Now you just step back and think about all the benefits and blessings that we enjoy from the hand of Almighty God. He is the source of all of our blessings. Paul would say in Colossians chapter four, verse two. Continue steadfastly in prayer, watching there and with thanksgiving. Now the Bible tells us that we're to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Specifically, we're talking about loving God with our mind to understand the God that created us, the God who created the universe. The God who, the God who is sustaining us on a daily basis. What's something to think about, isn't it? And then there's another aspect to our study. We talk about God the creator, God the sustainer. But what about God?

The Redeemer? It's here that I really see something about the love of God and the need for me reciprocating that love in my own life. Now, did you know that God is the perfect essence of divine love? In first John chapter four, verse eight, here's what John said. And he said in a very concise and emphatic way, he said, God is love.

Over and over again in Scripture, the Bible talks about the marvelous, wonderful love of God. You think about that great scripture in John chapter three, verse 16, often called the Golden Text of the Bible. I tell you why it's golden. Because in John 3:16 Jesus said, For God so loved the world. That's inclusive of everybody. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

You can go through the scriptures. You begin sifting the scriptures. And what you're going to find out is that there is a God in heaven who has declared his love for you. Time and time again the declarations of the love of God in Romans chapter five. In verse six, Paul said, when we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly.

In verse eight he said, But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Now let's just step back for a moment and pause here. We're talking about God the Creator, God the sustainer, and God the Redeemer. You remember what David asked? What is man that you're mindful of him?

The Son of man that you visit him. Why would God be interested in me? Well, because I'm the crown of his creation. I mean, we look around at the world, and that's the handiwork of God. But mankind made in the image, in the likeness of God. God has demonstrated his interest in us. He has demonstrated his interest in us to the extent that he has invested in us.

Well. How so? Well, look again at Romans chapter five, verse eight. But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The cost to the father in the realm of my redemption. Did you know that God had a plan in place before he ever created the human family to save us?

God had the wisdom, the foresight to put a plan in place so that when man sinned, that there was an answer, a remedy to the problem of sin. Now, you might ask the question, well, how then did God know that man would sin? Well, that's a good question. But you got to remember that God did not make the human family as robots, but rather God has created or endowed us with the ability to make choices in life.

You remember, for example, in Joshua chapter 24, when Joshua said, choose you this day, whom you will serve. We make choices every day in life. So God, in his infinite wisdom, creating man, endowing him with the ability to make choices recognized. At some point man would succumb to temptation and thus stand in need of redemption. So go back to Genesis chapter two.

God had set forth the prohibition they were not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God said, the day you eat thereof, you'll surely die. Well, chapter three informs us the grim reality. Man sinned in the garden. Yet in verse 15, God began unveiling his redemptive plan. That redemptive plan involved the second, remember the Godhead, the eternal word.

Jesus answered the call on behalf of the father. David in Psalm 40 spoke of a body being prepared, that body being prepared for the Lord. Well, where was it prepared? In the womb of Mary? You see, in Matthew chapter one, the angel said to Joseph in a dream that which is conceived in her, that is in Mary is of the Holy Spirit.

And she's going to bring forth a son, and you're going to call his name Jesus, for he will save their people from their sins. God was willing to give his Son so that I might have the opportunity to have fellowship with him, to enjoy forgiveness, to be at one with my creator. Now, what about the cost to the father?

Was it not Paul who said God spared not his own son, but freely gave him up for us all? As a father, I know how much I love my son as a mother or father, I would imagine that you love your children. You love your children. In words beyond human description, you could bankrupt your vocabulary and never be able to fully, adequately express the love that you have for your children.

Well, God loved us, and because of the great love of God, he was willing to sacrifice his only begotten son. And then what about Jesus? Now we talk about the love of God, but the love of Jesus, the willingness of the second member of the Godhead to leave the glories of heaven, the association that he had with the father to come to earth, to be robed in human flesh, to live among men, to willingly, humbly, submissively die on a wooden cross for my sins.

John said in John chapter one at verse 14, the word became flesh, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth. I'm not sure that I can fully, adequately wrap my mind around the fact that Jesus the Son, remember the Godhead willingly came to this earth, robed in human flesh, and died for my sins.

Now I believe it. Will I ever fully be able to comprehend that kind of love? I don't think I can. I don't think I will be able to. You know, the Bible says in John chapter 15, the Lord himself said, greater love has no man than this, than to lay down his life for his friends. You remember the Apostle Paul would say to the church at Philip, I have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, counted not being on an equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, being found

in fashion as a man. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death. Yes, even the death of the cross. Can I fully appreciate that? I don't think I can. I'm grateful. I will forever be indebted to the Lord for that tremendous love. I like the words of Paul in Second Corinthians chapter eight. He said, you've heard of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he were rich, yet for your sake he became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich.

So what does it mean to love God with all of my mind? It's to understand something about my creator, to understand something about my sustainer, and yes, to understand something about my Redeemer. That my Redeemer as we sing from time to time. Yes, my Redeemer lives. Now, based upon the fact that Jesus came to earth, he willingly offered himself as a sacrifice

for my sins.

You see, sin is the problem. The answer is the blood of Jesus. In Romans chapter six, Paul said it like this. The wages of sin is death. Well, what about the human factor? Are you telling me, then, that the human family has been marred by sin? Yes. Now, we're not born in sin of some allege. The Bible says that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father.

Neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. Now Ezekiel also said, the soul that sins shall surely die. So back in Romans chapter three, Paul said, there's none righteous, no not one. All have sinned. All have come short of the glory of God. And so in Romans 6:23, the wages of sin is death. The flip side of that coin is the gift of God eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Now listen to Paul in Ephesians chapter two. Paul said, But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, might us alive together with Christ by grace are you saved to know something about the mercy of God, the love of God, that the Lord Jesus Christ literally died?

He was my substitute. He vicariously suffered, bled and died for me. Second Corinthians chapter five Paul would say in verse 19 that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. In verse 21 he said, him who knew no sin, he became sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him. When Paul said there for Christ, who knew no sin became sin on our behalf, what he was saying is that Jesus offered himself for sin.

He was the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the human family. As John the Baptist said on one occasion, behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. The Lord Jesus is the answer to sin. So what would you need to do to become right with God? How can you enjoy fellowship with God? Forgiveness.

That's a great question, isn't it? Forgiveness is something that we all long for. Now the Bible again says that since the problem, forgiveness is, forgiveness is a reality. On Pentecost day, Peter and those who were also fellow apostles preached the gospel in all of its fullness for the very first time. And you remember the bulk of their sermon.

They talked about Jesus, his life, his death, his resurrection, his ascension to heaven, coronation in heaven, seated at the right hand of the father, sitting upon a spiritual throne. And you recall Peter said, let all the house of Israel no, assuredly, that this same Jesus, whom you crucified, God's made both Lord and Christ. Now Luke said in verse 37, when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they wanted to know men and brethren, what shall we do?

And here's what Peter said repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins. So what Peter was saying to those people press on on Pentecost day, if you will repent, you already believe in the Lord. If you'll repent of sin, be immersed in water. You can enjoy forgiveness of sin. Well, what then is what then is it that washes away my sins?

Is it the water? No. No. John said unto him, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Revelation chapter one, verse five. How then do I appropriate that blood? Well, number one, I got to go where it was shed. Shedding death. John, chapter 19, verses 33 and 34. That's why Paul said, no, you not all were you who are baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death.

When I'm baptized into Christ, I can't take the blood of Christ. Furthermore, I'm added to

the body of Christ. Well, what's so essential about the body of Christ? I mean, what do I need to be a member of the Body of Christ in the church? Acts two, verse 47. You remember what Luke said the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

That means the church was comprised of saved people. The saved were in the church. Why then do I need to be a member of the church? Well, listen to what Paul said in Ephesians 5:23. Paul said, he is the Savior of the body. That is, he's the Savior of the church. So when the Lord Jesus comes again, he's coming to save the church.

Well, who's in the church? Those who've been baptized into Christ. Those who put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repented of sins, confessed his name immersed in water. The Lord added them to the church. The exhortation be faithful unto death. Now listen to what John said in first John chapter four, verse 19. John said, we love him because he first loved us.

Can we love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength? Yes. When I come to understand God the creator, God the sustainer, and God the Redeemer, I can't help but love him who died for me. Hope to see you back here again next week. Until then, God bless.