

Do We Love God?

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[0 : 00] Blessings to all of you this morning. Excuse me. Blessings in Jesus. I want to speak this morning on loving God.

And how do we know that we love Him? Is it just a feeling or an emotion?

There's a scripture that I found in Corinthians that I'm not sure that I realized what it meant or that it was even there in 1 Corinthians 16, verse 22.

It says, If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be, and I'm not sure how to pronounce these next two words, but it's anathema maranatha is the way it looks like.

And I read that and I thought, what? What does that even mean? So I looked it up in some other translations, several others.

[1 : 26] One of them says, If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. And another one says something like, If you don't love the Lord Jesus Christ, then you are cursed.

Wow. That's some straightforward reading or speaking.

Apostle Paul, we know that he wrote to the Corinthian church, so he, I believe, wrote this to them. And it just spoke to me that the seriousness of loving Jesus.

That you either love Jesus or you're cursed. So we better know whether or not we love him. Right? This thought came to me as well. If you or I were taken to a court for a hearing on whether or not we love God. And the judge knows the Bible inside out, and he's going to hear our case to see whether or not we love God.

[2 : 51] What would your case be, and what would the outcome be? What would your argument be? Would you tell him all the good things you have done for God?

Jesus talks about that in Matthew. When he's talking of the end time, there are many shall come and shall say this. Have we not?

Have we not done this? And we've done this. And he's going to in the end say, No, I never knew you. And then I thought about, Well, doesn't God know everybody?

Doesn't Jesus know everybody? What was he saying when he said, I never knew you? That's always been a little question in my mind as to what does he mean by that?

Does it mean that, is it another way of saying, You never loved me? I don't know you because I don't have a relationship with you.

[3 : 58] It's not that he doesn't know who you are. He created you in the first place. And he knows everything. But it's a way of saying, I don't know you personally.

We don't have a relationship. So how would this be if we were in court and we had to prove that we love God?

How would we do? What's your argument? And you know, we have that hearing coming up.

And the judge not only knows the word of God, he is the word of God. And he's the author of the written word. And yes, we will be judged by it.

Do we love God this morning, is the question. A few verses in Deuteronomy 10, 12 and 13, it says, And now Israel, What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God and to walk in his ways and to love him and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul?

[5 : 20] That's verse 12. In Deuteronomy, the word of God to his people, to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good.

It says here that it's a requirement. I like the way it's put here. It doesn't say it's a commandment here, although we are commanded to love God.

But here it says, As a question, And now Israel, God's people, What doth the Lord thy God require of thee? And then it gives those answers.

To fear God and to love him and to serve him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Now let's turn to Matthew chapter 22. Matthew 22 verse 36.

[6 : 34] See what Jesus said about loving God. And these are all familiar verses. 22, 36.

Actually start in verse 35. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. You know, isn't it amazing how that you have all the Old Testament, you have all the law and all the prophets, the whole scripture up to this point.

And then Jesus puts it in a nutshell in one or two verses. And he said, the whole thing hangs on this, that you love the Lord your God.

[8 : 01] Not only love him, but with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. Have you ever met somebody that seemed like all they think about is God?

Well, maybe they loved him with all their mind. What is it? All your soul, all your heart. You know, when a young couple comes together and they start a relationship and they begin to love each other, they would say that I love him or her with all my heart.

Jesus said we're supposed to love God like that. And on that hangs all of the Old Testament. In Luke, Jesus went on to explain who is our neighbor.

And he gave us a picture of, I believe it was the man that fell among thieves and was beaten. And the Samaritan came and picked him up and took him to the hospital, took care of him. He never, he probably never met that man before. But he was his neighbor in this sense.

[9 : 31] Do you believe this morning that it matters to God whether or not you love him? I know that we have also preached already on the love of God and how God loves us.

But sometimes I think it's important to remind us that we are to love him with all our heart. Let's turn to John chapter 21 and look at what Jesus, a conversation Jesus had with Peter.

John chapter 21 verse 12 I believe we'll start at. John chapter 21 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine.

And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? Knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh and taketh bread and giveth them and fish likewise.

This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus saith unto Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?

[11 : 01] He said unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. It's as if Jesus was saying, you know, after in response to Peter saying, you know that I love thee.

He gave him something to do. Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee.

Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. We notice here that there is a relationship of love with the Savior that Jesus wanted with Peter.

[12 : 13] It was a personal thing. It was Peter. It wasn't all you disciples do you love me? It was Peter. Do you love me? You can put your name in there.

I can put my name in there. Then feed my sheep and feed my lamb was an action.

Like, Jesus wanted to see this love being acted out. Have you ever wondered why Jesus asked Peter three times?

What does three times remind you of? Anyone? He denied him three times. It doesn't say this, but maybe Jesus was giving him a chance to tell me you love me three times.

You think? We did the denying thing. That was the old life. But do you love me? Let's turn to Revelation chapter 2.

[13 : 31] Justin, could I have some water, please? Revelation chapter 2. This is a familiar scripture as well to the church at Ephesus.

You know, and I know that sometimes we read Revelation and what was said to these churches and we might have kind of a judgmental attitude towards them.

Like, well, how could they? But let's just read this and we'll go over a few things. Unto the church of the, I'm sorry, unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience and how thou canst not bear them which are evil and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not and has found them liars and has borne and has patience for my name's sake has labored and has not fainted.

we have these verses here complimenting Jesus complimenting the church at Ephesus the way they've labored the way that they don't have time for evil and they've tried these phonies that say they're apostles but they're not and they're liars and they've stood up against that.

[15 : 28] They've been patient for his name's sake they haven't fainted but in verse four it says nevertheless I have somewhat against thee because some wait a minute nevertheless I have somewhat against thee because thou has left thy first love remember remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works or else I will come unto thee quickly and I will remove thy candlestick out of this place except you repent but this thou hast that thou now he goes on and he gives additional compliments compliments this thou hast that thou hast thou hatest the deeds of the um Nicolait someone say that word I always said Nicolaitans and that's wrong

Nicolaitans I'm so used to saying it I almost can't say it the right way close Nicolaitans Nicolaitans yeah it's more like that anyway doesn't matter but those deeds were evil um and it says here that which I also hate so Jesus is complimenting the church again at Ephesus for you know they've stood against false prophets false apostles and now this uh these people which he also hates in other words the church at Ephesus was hating the things God hates he that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith under the churches to him that overcometh

I will give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God what were their deeds the deeds of these people were evil they were immoral loose living and yet calling themselves Christians and the church at Ephesus was standing up against that saying we stand against that and and God Jesus here is complimenting them but he just had one problem and that's that you don't love me like you used to you don't love me like you used to and Jesus feels that he felt that and he asked them to repent of that quickly he says perhaps these people the Nicoladians which isn't said right were like the people in

Galatians where Paul says Galatians 5 he says for brethren you have been called unto liberty only use not your liberty for an occasion to the flesh but by love serve one another for all the law is fulfilled in one word even this thou shalt love the neighbor as thyself but if you bite and devour one another take heed that you be not consumed one of another this I say then walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh just thinking about that group of people and what it says here I think that would apply to them that they were taking the liberty that we find in Jesus for occasion of the flesh to do what I want to do to be and then say I'm free in Christ we see that a lot today don't we to say that we're free in Christ and it really doesn't matter how I live otherwise you know the devil is the enemy of

God and he has one goal and that is to destroy the relationship between a holy God and man and God's people he is a thief and a robber and he comes to steal kill and destroy he wants to destroy the plan that God had for his creation mankind you know if you think back into the garden Adam and Eve in the garden there was no law there they I mean they had one rule to not eat of that one tree and I don't know but I think God maybe gave them that rule to honor the choice that he created them with man was created with a choice and he God perhaps honored that choice by telling them look you can eat of all the trees in the garden except this one in the middle that one of good and evil not to eat but then the evil tempter came and after man fell

[20 : 57] God began to give laws unto mankind to keep them on the right track and also to show us the need of our salvation for many generations God's people lived under the law and they even added hundreds of additional laws that God didn't even give they added to the laws and then they added to those rules you know but then our savior came and he showed us a better way he restored that broken relationship once again the law is finally fulfilled by one word by love the law is fulfilled are you under the law this morning are you under grace do you have the love of Jesus in your heart do we have we allowed it to get cool off let's look at a few verses in 1st John chapter 2 you know the enemy of God has many devices and many snares all set up to try to separate us

from this love relationship with God and I want to look at maybe just a few of those things maybe not so much at details but just to have our mind think about this in 1st John 2 verse 15 a very familiar verse in fact most of us grew up with this verse and we were tired of hearing it

I heard it from a little boy up in German love not the world neither the things that are in the world if any man love the world the love of the father is not in him you know that verse was often used to try to uphold a religion and anything outside of this religion must be the world but it just says love not the world in its purest way purest form just the Bible love not the world neither the things that are in the world because if you love the world the love of the father is not in him that's the part that was often missing what about the love of the father for for all that is in the world the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the father but is of the world and the world passeth away and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of

God abideth forever little children it is the last time and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come even now are there many antichrists whereby we know that it is the last time you know I'm glad this morning that Jesus didn't put in here you know all the details that men argue about today of what's world and what's not because the world changes the world that we live in today isn't quite the same world they were living in but the world is still the world and the love of the world is still the love of the world and the things that are in it it applies to every generation every culture it's universal the things that are in the world what are the things do you know for sure that you love

God in Matthew 24 11 Jesus said and many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many and because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold because sinful things abound iniquity our own way is iniquity stubbornness is iniquity because this abounds the love of many that means you had love but it waxes cold can't wax it can't get cold if you don't have it in the first place then he says but he that endureth unto the end the same shall be saved how can we know for sure that we love

God let's look here let's turn to 1 John 2 maybe you're still there we you might have turned there but also 1 John 2 in verse 3 Jesus gives us some of the answers to this he says and hereby do we know or John but Jesus hereby we know we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments he did you get that did you do you ought himself also to walk even as he walked to walk even as

[27 : 24] Jesus walked you know do we obey to prove that we love him or do we obey him because we love him that might not sound like a big difference but it is there's a lot of people that are still trying to live the New Testament church life under the Old Testament but that love in their heart that work of the spirit never happened do we love him and because of our love and our adoration of our savior and what he has done for us we love him because why because he first loved us and because of that and that relationship we become devoted we are devout we are inspired by that relationship to obey him to follow the word of God is it all based on that a love relationship with God we love him with all our heart mind and all our soul and mind you know as we go through life from day to day and we make decisions what is our guide do we stop and think about our decisions that we are about to make is it based on our love of God is it based on his word that guides us you know we all make decisions very regularly probably daily that you know not all not all decisions are big and you know whether

I have you know this kind of breakfast or that kind of breakfast or no breakfast you know those are not what I'm talking about those are kind of small decisions but we do make decisions that affect our lives affect those that follow us affect eternity how do we make those decisions should I buy this item should I go to this place should I wear this in other words is this modest discerning God's will on decisions that we make how do we discern God's will especially on things that are not clearly spelled out in scripture there's a list of questions here I'd like to read that I've had with me for a number of years and I'm not sure who came up with all these but

I didn't there's something I copied when we are trying to discern God's will in making decisions based on a remember it's based on whether we love God or not do you really love God if we do then I think some of these questions we can take them and meditate on them and I'll gladly share these with you as well but number one is is it the decision I'm about to make is it contrary to New Testament teachings you know you might not have an exact verse but is it contrary does it flow with New Testament teachings I think we can know those things if we care number two can I do it with a clear conscience now we have to be careful on that one there is something about a clear conscience but we have to be careful on that one because sometimes our conscience needs

adjusted to the word of

God number three can I do it in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ now that is profound that probably overrides most of the others can I do it can I do this in fellowship with the Lord Jesus can I take Jesus with me is he on the same page can I ask God to bless me as I do it that's another good one number five is is it something I can do for the glory of God we're supposed to do all to the glory of God number six is will it dishonor God's name because I'm a child of God and if I do this or go here or whatever it is that the decision I'm trying to make will it dishonor

God's name number seven would I be comfortable doing it if the Lord Jesus would return today that's a good one he's coming back one day right number eight was will it be spiritually profitable and edifying number nine is one you might want to write down will it desensitize and dull my spiritual edge in any way will it desensitize that's one of the tricks of the enemy is to desensitize us to make sin feel less sinful and things that might have bothered us one time just they're normal now he wants to desensitize us number ten could it cause someone else to stumble could this cause someone else to stumble remember what

[34 : 07] Jesus said about causing a child or yes a child to stumble it would be better to hang a millstone around his neck and throw him into the sea number eleven what do older and wiser brothers and sisters say about it those are some pretty good guidelines as we want to make decisions in life especially important decisions in life you know many of the things in the world are not wrong in themselves and we use this world's goods to live and get through life food we need money we need vehicles tools toys we got technology the list goes on and on they're not wrong in themselves but where the devil is working hard is to steal our love for God to make

God second not first Jesus asked Peter do you love these more than me or do you love me more than these you know I think that's the question God is asking us today do you love me more let's turn to Matthew chapter 10 I'm sharing this with you all but I want you to know that this message is for me first it really is I really mean that God is speaking this to me first Matthew 10 verse 32 I think we'll start whosoever therefore shall confess me before men him will I confess also before my father which is in heaven but whosoever shall deny me before men him will I also deny before my father which is in heaven think not that I am come to send peace on earth I came not to send peace but a sword for I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother and the daughter in law against her mother in law and a man's foes shall be they of his own household he that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me he that findeth his life shall lose it and he that loveth his life for my sake shall find it you know we had a young couple here last night we had our children here too but we had this young couple here that she's from a church group that would believe in salvation for the most part they would teach salvation by faith and yet she's totally rejected from her parents and her father didn't come to her wedding and she's not allowed to come home even it's not the kind of people that you all came from

Michigan from a very yeah much more they would much more receive the gospel or have an understanding at least of the gospel of salvation and you know and she's working through this we feel like she needs to come to a place of forgiveness and so on but I had to think of these verses last night and just talking with them you know and they will always take this thing that you have to obey me as a father you have to obey me you know even after you're married you have to obey father and mother and and that is there's a truth in that but there's also this thing of children that are under father and mother in the home but if everybody would always just obey father and mother what would our religion be today where would we be at today you know somebody

I mean where would the Christians that used to be Muslim where would they be at today you see we we could never follow Christ unless everybody in our past was following Christ so when it comes down to the gospel and following Jesus we must follow Jesus we must follow Jesus in fact if you don't and you say well I guess I'll just listen to mom and dad and grandpa and grandpa and just all down the line and dad was good enough for them I'll just do that Jesus said to you that believe that way that if you love them more than me you're not worthy of me anyway I added the word anyway and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me and then he says and he that taketh not his cross that means even yourself even you yourself have to die if you don't do that and follow me then you're not worthy of me either it's not just mom and dad and brothers and sisters and family members it's yourself he that findeth his life shall lose it so in other words if you protect and

defend your life and who you are and you want your way if you find that you're going to lose it but if you lose your life for his sake you lay down your own agenda your own passions your own life for [41 : 30] Christ's sake then you'll find life you always follow Jesus first if you love him even if that means disappointing your parents that's a tough one usually when that is spoken it's only to lift up a certain religion it's a religious thing want to talk about the time when Jesus died on the cross and we're getting real close to the end here this is not a long message I want to talk about

God providing the ability for us to have a relationship with him why did he if it doesn't matter it's a big deal to God in fact that's why you and I were created for we were created for his pleasure because he wants a relationship with us he wants a close tie a friendship a relationship that can't be broken in the Jewish temple the veil served as the barrier to the holy of holies the holy of holies was said to be where God's presence rested and it housed the ark of the covenant only the high priest could enter this area and then only one time per year to make atonement for the sins of Israel in kings by the way we read about this holy of holies in exodus 30 in kings it records that Solomon's temple was about 30 cubits high this would have been 45 feet tall the first century Jewish historian Josephus records that Herod extended the temple's height to 40 cubits high which is about 60 feet tall he also records that the veil was four inches thick I think somewhere it says it was a hand breadth so the veil of the temple was very thick let's just say you know it wasn't just a curtain hanging there blowing in the wind it was a very thick very protective very strong very large very large veil in

Matthew chapter 27 verse 50 and 51 I want to read those two verses yet when Jesus was crucified it says and Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit and behold the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom from top to bottom notice these details Jesus died 15 minutes 10 17 ■ peace ooh have you know the devil thought that day when they killed Jesus on the cross that they won.

They probably thought, finally, we're putting Him on the cross. And then, that afternoon, it got dark and the earth shook.

[46 : 47] Dead people came out of the graves and were walking all over. But I think one of the most amazing things that happened that day was this curtain.

This veil. This presence of God.

And people don't take advantage of it. People don't understand it. They don't, many don't care that we can have a relationship restored.

I believe just like Adam had in the garden before sin. We can come boldly. In Hebrews, I think it is, it tells us to come boldly into the presence of God.

Meaning with all confidence that God provided a way we can have a relationship with Him again.

Do we love Him enough that we even want that?

[47 : 58] The door once again opened for all that want a love relationship with their God and can once again stand and live in the presence of the Almighty.

All of heaven rejoiced, but all of hell trembled. You know, God did all He could to restore His plan of salvation and love for mankind.

But the choice is ours. Will we walk in the Spirit of His love? Or will we stay under the law with no real relationship with God?

You know, that provision has been paid in full. That, you know, I know that heaven's coming. We know that. Heaven's coming.

Eternity is coming. It's not far away. But I believe that God made this provision for today. For His people today. For His church now.

[49 : 03] Right away. What will we do? How shall we escape if we neglect? Do you love God with all your heart?

You know, this may be a question we should ask ourselves continuously. Do I love God? With all my heart. God has provided everything for us.

We are left without excuse. If your relationship with God this morning is less than good. He wants to make it good.

If it's pretty good, but could use some more depth, that Brother Reggie said, going out a little deeper, that's available. The question is, am I available?

Let's pray. What do you think? Could you? Why? How do you think about this idea? What do you think? I would... Talking I know have an answer. It's always gonna be one day as well. fix that, chat,

for me. In the afternoon. We haven't provided everything, Oh my God.

[50 : 16] For me, it's always going to go out. Let's go back into April 15, And quickly... come out, there it is really gonna go out too. Now I'll solve it a little bit. I can ■■■■ite it. I feel like my God... wish it was an impact with this crew. I didn't matter what my heart is.