



LCS talk 5:
LOVING GOD



A. INTRODUCTION

1. To live Christ is to live out the two greatest commandments, on which the whole law and the prophets depend (**Mt 22:40**), and by which we inherit eternal life (**Lk 10:25**).
2. We look first at what it means to love God.



B. THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL OF LOVING GOD.

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1. Ideals are important to move us on.

- a) Goals direct our human behavior and plans for life.
 - Money? Position? Fame?
- b) Our goals become our ideal of life, influencing and directing our lives.

B. THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL OF LOVING GOD.

2. As Christians in the world, what should be our ideal?

- a) We can give our lives to pursuing good goals (e.g., a better society), but if loving God is not our ideal, then this falls short.
- b) God wants us to make loving Him our highest ideal. Thus God made it into a commandment of the highest priority.

Mk 12:28-30

Mark 12: 28-30

A teacher of the Law was there who heard the discussion. He saw that Jesus had given the Sadducees a good answer, so he came to him with a question:”

*Which commandment is the most important of all?” Jesus replied, “ The most important one is this: ‘Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. **Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.**’*

B. THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL OF LOVING GOD.

3. Some people try to express love for God in different ways:

- a) Psyching up pious feelings.
- b) Humanist or philanthropic endeavors.
- c) Acts of piety.

These are not wrong actions, but they are also not adequate expressions of loving God.

A photograph of the interior of a Gothic cathedral, showing high vaulted ceilings and tall, narrow windows. A semi-transparent white banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text. The lighting is warm and golden, creating a sense of grandeur and reverence.

***C.* WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART.**

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1. First understand what Jesus meant by **heart.**

- a) Modern day understanding = feeling or emotion.
- b) Biblical understanding of heart: the seat of intelligence and decision. In English, we would use “will.”
 - * The heart is the symbol of the core of man, who the man is. It includes intelligent thought and will, along with feeling.
- c) The Biblical understanding makes more sense, because the kind of love God requires cannot depend on feelings, which are changeable, but rather based on a commitment, a decision to love..

C. WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART.

2. To love God with all our heart is to be totally committed to Him.

- a) It is similar to the commitment we make in marriage.
- b) It is a commitment to seek the Lord first and foremost. It is a decision to put God first, to be loyal to Him, to place His will and interest above our own.

C. WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR HEART.

3. How do we put the Lord first in our life?

- a) It requires a decision to obey Him. **Jn 14:15.**
- b) We need to develop a personal relationship with Him.
 - * A relationship that is dynamic and alive, not legalistic.
 - * A personal experience arising from our relationship as His sons and daughters.
- c) We need to spend regular time with Him. In prayer. In reading the Bible.

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John 14:15

“If you love me, you will obey my commandments.”

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***D.* WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR MIND.**



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1. When God created us, He enabled us to think. He did this so we can figure out how to love and serve Him.

- a) A good mind is not necessarily an intelligent mind.
- b) The question is not so much how best to develop our mind, but rather how our mind can fulfill its main purpose—to love God.



***D.* WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR MIND.**

2. To love God with all our mind means to serve Him with the use of our mind, or simply to make available our minds for His purposes.



***D.* WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR MIND.**

3. Using our minds can have incredible consequences for society.

- a) It can be applied to contribute to world progress (e.g., science, neurosurgery).
- b) Or it can become an instrument for destruction (e.g., nuclear bomb, biological warfare).

***D.* WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR MIND.**

4. How do we love and serve God with our mind?

- a) Keep your mind clean and holy.
 - * Free of all evil thoughts. **Mt 5:28.**
 - * Free of uncharitable thoughts. **Mt 7:1-5.**
 - * Be very discerning in the use of TV, the Internet and other media, which can expose our minds to inputs not consistent with Christian living.

Matthew 5:28

“So if your right eye causes you to sin, take it out and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell.”

Matthew 7:1-5

“Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you. For God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others. Why, then, do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the log in your own eye?”

4. How do we love and serve God with our mind?

b) Let your mind be preoccupied with the things of God.

- * How you can be holy, not just how you can be rich materially.
- * How you can please God.
- Fill your mind with thoughts of God. Read the Bible, Christian books and other helpful Christian literature that can help form your Christian mind.

4. How do we love and serve God with our mind?

- c) Use your mind according to God's truths and not according to the ways of the world.
 - * Our decisions and choices must be guided by God's word in the Bible.
 - * Keep our minds free of worries, because God promises to provide and care for us.

4. How do we love and serve God with our mind?

- d) Use your mind actively for God's purpose.
 - * In your business, family, peer group, parish, etc.
 - * In Christian service.

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***E.* WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH.**



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1. This means making all our resources available to God—time, money, energy, possessions, gifts, abilities.

- a) We are God's creation. He owns us. What we call "ours" is not really ours but His.
- b) We must not set limits on our giving.

***E.* WHAT IT MEANS TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH.**

2. What are the concrete ways we can love God with our resources?

a) Money.

- Develop proper attitudes towards money.
 - We are stewards, not owners.
 - We have a responsibility to manage and use well the resources given to us. We must act according to God's interests.
 - God is interested in our money, not because He needs it, but in order to see the condition of our heart. **Mt 6:21.**
- Concrete steps we can take:
 - Tithing. This is giving 10% back to God. **Mal 3:7-10.**
 - Resource sharing. This is temporary use of our resource without charge.
 - Almsgiving. This is an outright grant.

Matthew 6:21

“For your heart will always be where your riches are.”

Malachi 3:7-10

“You, like your ancestors before you, have turned away from my laws and have not kept them. Turn back to me, and I will turn to you. But you ask, ‘What must we do to turn back to you? I ask you, is it right for a person to cheat God? Of course not, yet you are cheating me. How? You ask. In the matter of tithes and offerings. A curse is on all

of you because the whole nation is cheating me. Bring the full amount of your tithes to the Temple, so that there will be plenty of food there. Put me to the test and you will see that I will open the windows of heaven and pour out on you in abundance all kinds of good things.”



***F.* LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR SOUL.**

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1. We are to love God with our whole being (**Lk 10:27**) —emotional, spiritual, mental, physical. The love of God must engage the total person.



***F.* LOVING GOD WITH ALL OUR SOUL.**

2. We are God's creation, called to be holy, intended by Him to spend eternity together with Him. While in this world, we are to love God with all our soul.



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1. He was dedicated to accomplishing his mission. **Jn 4:34.**

”My food,’ Jesus said to them, is to obey the will of the One who sent me and to finish the work he gave me to do.”

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2. He was obedient unto death. **Lk 22:42.**

“Father,’ he said, if you will, take this cup of suffering away from me. Not my will, however, but your will be done.”

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3. He was constantly seeking the Father's will. **Mk 1:35. Mt 14:23.**

Mark 1:35.

“Very early the next morning, long before daylight. Jesus got up and left the house. He went out of town to a lonely place, where he prayed.”

Matthew 14:23

“After sending the people away, he went up a hill by himself to pray. When evening came, Jesus was there alone.”

H. Conclusion.

- 1. Loving God is not as vague and impractical as you might think. Rather, it involves specific, practical actions, decisions and commitments.**
- 2. It is not easy. We cannot do it on our own strength. We need the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Group discussion



How have I loved God in a concrete way?

