

Loving God Totally

Part 2

Introduction.

1. Last week we studied the importance of loving God and how horrible this world would be without God's love.
 - a. Much of the world has no love for God, but what keeps this world a tolerable place to live are those who love God and especially those who love God totally.
 - b. Without the love of Christians and the influence this love has on the world, the world would sink into utter depravity and absolute hopelessness.
 - c. It would soon be like the world of Noah's day. (Gen. 6:5).

Gen 6:5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

2. This lesson will be devoted to loving God totally.

- a. **God is not pleased with partial commitment.**
- b. God does not want part-time friends or people who are only fond of Him.
- c. God expects His people to be totally committed to Him and to His way.
- d. Our way may seem right, but it leads to death. (Prov. 14:12).

Prov 14:12 There is a way {which seems} right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

3. Today we are going to explore what it means to surrender **all** to the Lord, God.
 - a. We are not talking about partial surrender or even being mostly submissive to God.
 - b. We are talking about loving God with our all and being totally submissive to Him.
 - c. We are talking about this submission being motivated foremost by love for Him.
4. The Bible clearly reveals God's love for us and the kind of love He expects from us.
5. The Lord did not show us a half-hearted love, but gave everything so that we might be saved.
6. It should not surprise anyone that He demands that we surrender all to Him.

Paul's Statements

1. Paul made this powerful statement about His life in Galatians 6:14.

Gal 6:14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

- a. Many were ashamed of the cross, but Paul boasted of the cross and chose to boast only in the cross.
- b. He knew apart from the cross there is no salvation for himself or others.
- c. He exclaimed, "the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

2. Paul knew the Christian life is the noblest and happiest life, but living for Christ is challenging in a world that does not understand or appreciate this devotion.

- a. The world lives in the darkness, and does not like light.
- b. In fact the world most often hates and persecutes those who walk in the light.

3. Paul made this statement that was true of him and must be true of us to please God. (Gal. 2:20).

Gal 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the {life} which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."

4. It is our task and privilege today to live by faith in Christ and to be crucified with Him.

5. We no longer belong to ourselves, but we belong to Him. (1 Cor.6:19, 20).

1 Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

1 Cor 6:20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

6. Christianity is more than a name to wear; it is a life!

- a. Some would like to make it a Sunday life or a life lived now and then.
- b. Christianity demands we follow Christ and faithfully walk in His footsteps all the days of our lives. (Lk. 9:23).

Luke 9:23 And He was saying to {them} all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

7. Because we belong to the Lord, we surrender every thought, every word, and every act to the will of God.

8. Like Christ, we pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" and "yet not my will, but Yours be done." (Matt. 6:10; Lk. 22:42).

Do W Love God Totally?

1. Mark records these words in his gospel.(Mk. 12:28-31).

Mark 12:28 One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?"

Mark 12:29 Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD;

Mark 12:30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'

Mark 12:31 "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

a. Men often think they can love God with part of their heart and not be totally committed to Him.

b. Jesus dispelled this erroneous notion of half-hearted commitment being pleasing to God.

2. Jesus teaches here that the greatest commandment is to love God totally.

3. This was what Paul was saying of himself in the statement he made earlier in Galatians 2:20.

Gal 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the {life} which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

a. He was not saying he was literally crucified with Christ.

b. He was not at Calvary and had not hung on a cross

c. He was speaking figuratively of the commitment he had for Christ and we should have for Him.

d. It is possible he eventually died by crucifixion, but this is not what he meant by the words "crucified" in Galatians 2:20.

1) The crucifixion of this verse was while he was alive.

2) It was a way of describing his total commitment to Jesus. (Phil. 1:21).

Phil 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

4. Crucifixion was a horrible, painful, shameful death.

a. It was a cruel, slow and painful death, designed to make a person suffer as long as possible.

b. Sometimes a person would live days on the cross.

c. Wild beasts would sometimes feed on those crucified.

6. Crucifixions, in ancient times, publicly shamed the criminal to keep others from committing a crime against Rome.

7. Our crucifixion with Christ is a public identification with Him.

a. We are united with Him in His death, burial and resurrection when we are baptized according to Romans

6:4-7.

Rom 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Rom 6:5 For if we have become united with {Him} in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be {in the likeness} of His resurrection,

Rom 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with {Him,} in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

Rom 6:7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

b. We are crucified with Christ in order to put to death the old self of sin and to be born again to walk in the newness of life.

8. We cannot walk in newness of life until the old man of sin is dead.

a. When we repent and are baptized into Christ, Christ begins living in us.

b. In being crucified with Him, we take a stand with Christ for truth and for morality.

c. We say to the sinful and worldly things “We are dead to you. You have no more power over me.”

d. Paul said, “those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:24).

e. This commitment is a thorough, lifelong, total commitment.

f. When we come to Christ there is no turning back.

g. Since we belong to Christ, we can say as Paul did in Romans 8:12-13.:

Rom 8:12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh--

Rom 8:13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

h. Our eternal destiny is dependent on whether we choose to live for the Lord or we choose the flesh.

i. We choose to follow Christ by coming to Him and loving what He loved and doing good.

1) Romans 6:8-11 tells us how to please God.

Rom 6:8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

Rom 6:9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.

Rom 6:10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Rom 6:11 **Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.**

2) Christians are willing to give up the old way of life so they can show their great love for Christ.

3) Being “crucified with Christ” means we give Him first place in our lives.

4) When we choose to follow Christ, we cannot select whether we will treat people kindly or whether we will live a moral life.

5) These things are essential. (Col. 3:1-2, 5-14).

Col 3:1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Col 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Col 3:6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,

Col 3:7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

Col 3:8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, {and} abusive speech from your mouth.

Col 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its {evil} practices,

Col 3:10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him--

Col 3:11 {a renewal} in which there is no {distinction between} Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

Col 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

Col 3:13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Col 3:14 Beyond all these things {put on} love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Conclusion.

1. Next week we will carefully study the words Jesus spoke in John 14:15.

Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15).

2. The Scriptures teach us how to love God the way He wishes to be loved and the need for keeping His commandments.

3. We will study these questions, "Can love and law coexist? Can people keep God's law lovingly?" in a study of "Love and Law."

4. These are important questions that some answer with an emphatic "no," ignoring the clear teaching of the Bible to the contrary.

5. A careful study of the Scriptures will reveal that love and God's law are inseparable.

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