

MONDAY AUGUST 2

LOVING GOD
Matthew 22:37

The depth and extent of our love for anyone will only come because of getting to know that individual. Getting to know someone means spending time with them. When it comes to a love for our children, there is that deep love for them because they are a part of us.

When it comes to loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind (as we are instructed in Deuteronomy 6:5 and again as Jesus spoke), requires our total being. Nothing is to be held back. The word for love here is agapao which is a totally unselfish love. It is Christ's love deposited within our lives and which the Holy Spirit helps us to demonstrate.

We are to love God with all our heart (all inward affections). The heart is the center of all our desires and affections and there should be no desire or affection greater than the one for God and His Son.

To love God with all our soul (all our consciousness) is to love Him with all our life...all of who we are our uniqueness, our gifts and abilities.

To love God with all our mind (all thoughts) is to submit our intellect to His will. With all our heart and soul, we are willing to submit our mind to learning His teachings, to be guided by them and to be devoted to them.

With all that incorporates our heart, soul, and mind combined; we use our strength to love and worship a holy God. He should be the greatest object of all our efforts. If there be any other thing or person that exceeds this, that is an idol and needs to be brought down. God and He alone should be the One exalted far above all others. There is no one or nothing more worthy and deserving.

The second command attached after loving God is to love others as yourself. Just as we look out for ourselves and caring about our needs, we are to be directed to do the same toward others. Jesus Himself was a servant...our example, and we are to have the same servant mind-set. "Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Love therefore, is the fulfillment of the law." (Romans 13:10 HCSB)

It brings **J**esus (first) **O**thers, **Y**ourself!