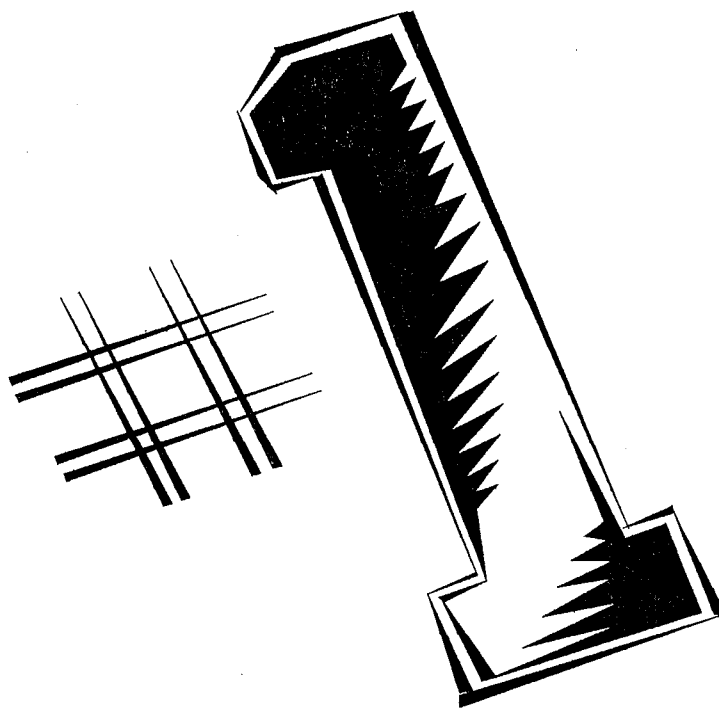


# THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

(The One Command That Encompasses All The Rest) Mark 12:28-30



## WHAT IS IT?...

- ◆...Your Heart
- ◆...Your Soul
- ◆...Your Mind
- ◆...Your Strength

*“Love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, this is the first commandment” (Mark 12:30)*

Bill Kirk

# “THE FIRST COMMANDMENT”

**Text:** Matthew 22:34-38 / Mark 12:28-30

**Subject:** Life's Greatest Aspiration

## Introduction

### (In Mark, Chapter 12, Jesus Is In A Pickle)

- ◆ It begins in Mark 11:27 & 28. (Let's read it):

“And they come again to Jerusalem, and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders”.

“And say unto him, by what authority doest thou these things? And who gave you this authority to do these things?”

**Question:** What is happening here?

**Answer:** Religious leaders approach Jesus as He ministers in the temple. (Why?)

- ◆ They are trying to trip up Jesus with their questions.
- ◆ The chief priests, scribes (which were teachers of the law) and elders are bent on putting Jesus in a bad light.
- ◆ They try 4 times here, to discredit the Lord with tough questions.

**Question:** Why are they religious (but antagonistic)?

**Answer:** Because Jesus threatened their security:

- ◆ The people were drawn to Jesus.
- ◆ They might begin to proclaim Him as Messiah.
- ◆ The people might rise up against the Roman authorities.

**Question:** What's the big deal?

**Answer:** The big deal is; if the Jewish leaders are replaced as the ruling body of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish leaders will lose 4 things: #1. Their position #3. Their esteem  
#2. Their authority #4. Their wealth

### (So Here's What They Do)

- #1. In chapters, 11:27 to 12:12, they question authority.
- #2. In chapters, 12:13-17, they question responsibility.
- #3. In chapters, 12:18-27, they question the resurrection.
- #4. In chapters, 12:28-34, (our text) they question the commandments.

### (Notice Verse 28)

“And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, which is the first commandment of all?”

### (Here's The Picture Today)

- ◆ The religious leaders meet to plot against Jesus again.
- ◆ This time they take a different approach.
- ◆ Earlier they challenged Him as a group. (3 times)
- ◆ Now, a new strategy; they choose one member (just one smart one among them) to do the work.

**Question:** Who is the smart one?

**Answer:** He's a lawyer (called a scribe), the most brilliant and most versed in the law, (but he's not Matlock or Perry Mason)

**Question:** What's the question for Jesus?

**Answer:** (Verse 28), “Jesus, which is the first commandment of all?”

**Question:** Why did he ask Jesus this question?

**Answer:** Because the scribes had determined that the Jews were obligated to obey 613 precepts in the law (365 negative ones, 248 positive ones).

- ◆ Most Jews believed 3 laws were the most important (circumcision, sacrifices and the Sabbath).
- ◆ So the schemers want their lawyer friend to get Jesus to offer His opinion. (Why?)
- ◆ Because they know that no matter what Jesus says, the people will be disturbed.
- ◆ They know that when Jesus speaks and mentions one of the 613 precepts of law, He has to skip over many other important laws. **(In Other Words)**
- ◆ No matter how Jesus answers, they believe Jesus will entrap Himself.
- ◆ If Jesus says the Sabbath is the most important law, they'll accuse Him of neglecting circumcision.
- ◆ If Jesus says circumcision is the most important law, they'll accuse Him of neglecting the sacrifices.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ They think they've got their man, and here's what Jesus says in verse 30:

"Love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, this is the (what?) first commandment".

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ If we make this commandment our first priority, we don't have to worry about the other 612 laws. (They will automatically be taken care of in the first commandment). **(In Other Words)**
- ◆ Nail down this one priority in your life.
- ◆ Make this one objective your highest goal. (And guess what?)

1. Your happiness will be found.
2. Your conscience will be clear.
3. Your emotions will be healed.
4. Your energy will be focused.
5. Your priorities will be ordered.
6. Your obsessions will be decreased.
7. Your temptations will be overcome.
8. Your bad habits will be broken.
9. Your purpose will be fulfilled.
10. Your joy will be constant.
11. Your insecurities will be quenched.
12. Your expectations will be healthy.
13. Your life will be a blessing.
14. Your fears will be removed.
15. And your life will be built on an unshakable foundation.

**Question:** Pastor, what's the secret to having all of this?

**I. "Love The Lord With All Your Heart"**

**Question:** What does it mean to love the Lord with all you heart?

**Answer:** It means to love the Lord with pure devotion.

- ◆ It means your heart is devoted entirely to the Lord.
- ◆ It means your one goal in life is to be faithful to God.
- ◆ It means you are possessed (as A.W. Tozer once said) "With an everlasting preoccupation with God".
- ◆ It means to find in God a satisfaction so profound that it fills up all your heart.

**Question:** What does the word heart mean?

**Answer:** The word heart means: The seat of your whole inner man.

- ◆ It is the essence of who you are.
- ◆ It is your inward spiritual nature.
- ◆ It is the seat of your motives, will and governing principle of life.

**Question:** Why is the heart so important?

**Answer:** Because from the heart flows the choices and decisions we make every day.

**(Proverbs 4:23)**

“Keep your heart (guard it) for out of it is where you get direction for your life”

**Question:** Why so important to guard our heart?

**Answer:** Because it is the seat or essence of our will.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ The heart causes us to devote ourselves to good or evil.
- ◆ The heart is the residence or house of my will.
- ◆ The heart will draw me closer to God or away from God.
- ◆ The heart is the place where I decide on (verse 30):

**(To Love The Lord Supremely Or Love Myself Supremely)**

**Question:** So what does it mean to love the Lord with all your heart?

- ◆ It means to esteem God above everything else in the world.
- ◆ It means to be zealous for God’s glory in your life.
- ◆ It means to aspire to be in close communion with God.
- ◆ It means to consciously make an effort to obey God’s will.

Remember this above all else today, God is most glorified when we are most satisfied in Him!

**II. “Love The Lord With All Your Soul”**

**Question:** What is the soul?

**Answer:** The soul speaks of our emotions!

- ◆ It refers to our passion, feelings, desire, and enthusiasm for God.
- ◆ It speaks of a white hot love affair with the Lord.
- ◆ It’s a single eye devoted to being passionately in love with Jesus.

**(Its Described In Song Of Solomon 4:9)**

**“You have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes”**

**Question:** Has your heart been captured with one glimpse of Jesus?

**Question:** Do you have deep feelings for the Lord?

**Question:** Are you more passionate with feelings toward God –

- than anybody? - than any hobby? - than any job? - than any material thing?

**Question:** Why is it so important to love the Lord with all of our soul?

**Answer:** Because to the degree we surrender our emotions to God, to that same degree He will fill up all the aching corners of your soul. (Repeat)

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Whenever my emotions or passion or feelings are wounded or hurt, as I love the Lord with my passion and feeling, He becomes greater than my pain!
- ◆ He fills and heals and replaces the aching pains that want to deaden my passion and feeling and enthusiasm for God.

**Question:** Has anybody hurt you?

**Question:** Are you afraid to get close and trust and love someone again?

**(What’s The Answer?)** ◆ Run after God with a passion. (Why?)

**(Psalm 147:3)** “He heals the broken heart and makes well all your griefs”

**III. “Love The Lord With All Your Mind”**

**Question:** What is the mind?

**Answer:** The mind is the seat of your reasoning, understanding, intellectual powers and thought life.

- ◆ Your mind is your mental ability.
- ◆ It is your thinking process.

- ◆ It is the brain God gave you to feed your heart, your soul and your spiritual man.

**Question:** What does it mean to love the Lord with all your mind?

**Answer:** It means to dedicate your mental ability to God.

- ◆ It means to present to God your brain.
- ◆ It means to give the Lord your thinking.
- ◆ It means to fill your mind with God's thoughts.
- ◆ It means to saturate your thinking with the scriptures.
- ◆ It means to shut the door, slam the door closed on any garbage from polluting your thought life.

**("To Love The Lord With All Your Mind" Means:)**

- #1. Think on wholesome thoughts.
- #2. Renounce the vulgar T.V. sitcoms.
- #3. Discard the videos that glorify the flesh.
- #4. Avoid the low-rated movies.
- #5. Trash the fleshly magazines and books.
- #6. Protect your eyes from sensual powers. (Why?)

**(Because Of Proverbs 23:7)**

**"For as a man thinketh in his heart, so that is what he will become"**

#### IV. **"Love The Lord With All Your Strength"**

**Question:** What does it mean to love the Lord with all your strength?

**Answer:** The heart means – pure devotion.

The soul means – passionate feeling.

The mind means – thinking God's thoughts.

- ◆ Strength has to do with our energy and what we do (our actions).
- ◆ It is putting feet to what we believe.
- ◆ It is faith yes, but faith with works!

**(Colossians 3:17 Says:)** "Whatever you do, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus"

**(Ecclesiastes 9:10)** "Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might"

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Whatever strength I have, I use it for the Lord.
- ◆ Whatever health I have, I use it for the Lord.
- ◆ Whatever energy I have, I use it for the Lord.

**Conclusion**

**Question:** Pastor, what's the blessing of obedience if I practice Mark 12:30?

#1. If I love the Lord with all my heart...

- ◆ I won't backslide because I'm constantly moving forward with God.

**Question:** Is anything interfering with your purest devotion to God?

#2. If I love the Lord with all my soul...

- ◆ I'll be healed in my emotions and feelings and be a spiritually whole person.

**Question:** Any past offenders or offenses you need to give to Jesus, for a healthy attitude?

#3. If I love the Lord with all my mind...

- ◆ Evil thoughts will be destroyed and my flesh will be subdued.

**Question:** Do you need to make any changes to redirect what's going into your mind?

#4. If I love the Lord with all my strength...

- ◆ I'll live with the joy of serving God, and helping others, and bearing good fruit!

**Question:** Are you serving somewhere in your local church to bless other people?