

Mark 12:28-34 — "True Love for the Unseen God!"

A true Christian is preeminently a person who loves Christ.

There is no life where there is no love to Jesus (JC Ryle)

THESIS — Here we learn: "what is the greatest commandment! What is the foremost of them all? - it is to love God! (v.30!)

- 1. The IMPERATIVE for you to love your God!**
- 2. The INGREDIENTS for you to love your God!**

I. THE IMPERATIVE FOR YOU TO LOVE YOUR GOD (28-30)

The Scribe —

The Scriptures —

Love the LORD

Love your neighbor

II. THE INGREDIENTS FOR YOU TO LOVE YOUR GOD

★ TO LOVE GOD includes 6 ingredients:

1. you **PASSIONATELY KNOW** God (Deut 6:4-9; John 17:3)
2. you **FULLY OBEY** God (1 John 5.3; John 14.15, 23)
3. you **HAPPILY SPEAK** of God (Gal 2.20; Ps 116)
4. you **MEDITATIVELY COMMUNE** with God (2 Cor 13:14; Luke 10:39-42)

5. you REVERENTLY **WORSHIP** God (Psalm 63; Ps 27)

6. you WILLINGLY **SUFFER** for God (James 1.12; 1 Peter 1:5-8!)

1. a word of CAUTION:

2. a word of COMFORT:

Those who come nearest to Jesus, and enter most closely into fellowship with Him, will be sure to be the most engrossed with Him. Beloved, remember what He has done for you— Make your heart the golden cup to hold the rich recollections of His past loving-kindness. Let your memory treasure up everything about Christ which you have either heard, or felt, or known- and then let your fond affections hold Him close forevermore. Love him!

(Charles Spurgeon)

Some self-examination questions (from Daniel Akin)

1. Is the Lord the all-consuming passion of my life?
2. Do I have a deep, intense and abiding affection for my Lord?
3. Am I loyal to my God with an exclusive love?
4. Do I resist and even oppose anything or anyone that seeks to do my Lord harm?
5. Am I zealous to, with grace, defend my Lord's name and honor?
6. Do I enjoy spending time with my Lord?
7. Do I do things that please my Lord and increase His joy?
8. Do I brag on my Lord to others?
9. Do I tell my Lord that I love him?
10. Do I talk with my Lord as much as I can?

8 PRACTICAL WAYS TO LOVE JESUS CHRIST

by JC Ryle

Here's some solid counsel from J.C. Ryle (1816-1900) concerning 8 practical ways our love for Christ should express itself.

1. If we love a person, we like to think about him. We do not need to be reminded of him. We do not forget his name or his appearance or his character or his opinions or his tastes or his position or his occupation. He comes up before our mind's eye many a time in the day. Though perhaps far distant, he is often present in our thoughts. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ! Christ "dwells in his heart," and is thought of more or less every day (Eph. 3:17). The true Christian does not need to be reminded that he has a crucified Master. He often thinks of Him.

2. If we love a person, we like to hear about him. We find a pleasure in listening to those who speak of him. We feel an interest in any report which others make of him. We are all attention when others talk about him, and describe his ways, his sayings, his doings and his plans. Some may hear him mentioned with utter indifference, but our own hearts bound within us at the very sound of his name. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ. The true Christian delights to hear something about his Master. He likes those sermons best which are full of Christ.

3. If we love a person, we like to read about him. What intense pleasure a letter from an absent husband gives to a wife, or a letter from an absent son to his mother. Others may see little worth notice in the letter. They can scarcely take the trouble to read it through. But those who love the writer see something in the letter which no one else can. They carry it about with them as a treasure. They read it over and over again. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ! The true Christian delights to read the Scriptures, because they tell him about his beloved Savior.

4. If we love a person, we like to please him. We are glad to consult his tastes and opinions, to act upon his advice and do the things which he approves. We even deny ourselves to meet his wishes, abstain from things which we know he dislikes and learn things to which we are not naturally inclined, because we think it will give him pleasure. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ! The true Christian studies to please Him, by being holy both in body and spirit.

5. If we love a person, we like his friends. We are favorably inclined to them, even before we know them. We are drawn to them by the common tie of common love to one and the same person. When we meet them we do not feel that we are altogether strangers. There is a bond of union between us. They love the person that we love, and that alone is an introduction. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ! The true Christian regards all Christ's friends as his friends, members of the same body, children of the same family, soldiers in the same army, travelers to the same home.

6. If we love a person, we are jealous about his name and honor. We do not like to hear him spoken against, without speaking up for him and defending him. We feel bound to maintain his interests and his reputation. We regard the person who treats him ill with almost as much disfavor as if he had ill-treated us. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ! The true Christian regards with a godly jealousy all efforts to disparage his Master's word, or name, or church, or day.

7. If we love a person, we like to talk to him. We tell him all our thoughts, and pour out all our heart to him. We find no difficulty in discovering subjects of conversation. However silent and reserved we may be to others, we find it easy to talk to a much-loved friend. However often we may meet, we are never at a loss for matter to talk about. We have always much to say, much to ask about, much to describe, much to communicate. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ! The true Christian finds no difficulty in speaking to his Savior.

8. If we love a person, we like to be always with him. Thinking and hearing and reading and occasionally talking are all well in their way. But when we really love people we want something more. We long to be always in their company. We wish to be continually in their society, and to hold communion with them without interruption or farewell. Well, it is just so between the true Christian and Christ! The heart of a true Christian longs for that blessed day when he will see his Master face to face.

RELENTLESS LOVE [Declaration]

Relentless love embraced my soul in ages past—
 Love undeserved, unknown, yet deep and vast.
 God set His love on me—on me, in spite of me!
 Salvation's work is His from first to last.

Relentless love transforms my soul and its delights—
 Exceeds the fleeting joys which once sufficed.
 Held by His love for me—a hold which sets me free!—
 I have my heart's desire, and that is Christ.

**Unbounded love, unfailing love,
 Love raised upon a tree;
 Unending love, prevailing love—
 My Savior's sovereign love for me.**

MY JESUS I LOVE THEE [Devotion]

My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine;
 for thee all the follies of sin I resign;
 my gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou;
 if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

In mansions of glory and endless delight,
 I'll ever adore thee in heaven so bright;
 I'll sing with the glittering crown on my brow:
 If ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

I love thee because thou hast first loved me
 and purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree;
 I love thee for wearing the thorns on thy brow;
 if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

MORE LOVE TO THEE, O CHRIST! [Desire]

More love to Thee, O Christ,
 More love to Thee!
 Hear Thou the prayer I make
 On bended knee;
 This is my earnest plea:
 More love, O Christ, to Thee,
 More love to Thee,
 More love to Thee!

Once earthly joy I craved,
 Sought peace and rest;
 Now Thee alone I seek,
 Give what is best;
 This all my prayer shall be:
 More love, O Christ, to Thee,
 More love to Thee,
 More love to Thee!

Love for Jesus is essential to Christianity. No privations can starve it, and no burdens can break it down. It is the core of all true piety. It is the only cure of the reigning worldliness and covetousness and fashion worship, which have made such havoc in too many churches. There is only one way to be a steadfast Christian—it is to get the heart so full of love to Jesus—that the world, and the lusts of the flesh, and the devil can get no foothold.

(Theodore Cuyler)