

With All Your Strength

(Mark 12:30)

- Introduction:
1. Ills. of Grandma's heavy iron.
 2. The reason for showing you my grandma's iron is to reinforce what it means to put all your "strength" into something.
 3. And the reason that is important is that the greatest commandment of all of God's commandments is to love God with all our strength.
 4. Let's consider the implications of this greatest command.

I. First, The Command Is Easier to Obey When We Don't Define It

- A. When asked, "What are the two greatest commands?" we often respond by saying...
 1. Love God.
 2. Love your neighbor as yourself.
- B. While that is true, we have left "how" he expects us to love God "undefined."
- C. Leaving "love" in that nebulous, "better felt than explained" realm, makes loving God easy, and lowers the expectations we place on ourselves.
- D. But what do we see when we define the terms.

II. Defining Love

- A. (Mark 12:30).
- B. With all our "heart" - our emotions, sincerely.
- C. With all our "soul" - our life, our existence.
- D. With all our "mind" - intellect, intention, choices.
- E. With all our "strength" - intense effort, strenuous.

III. Examine How Jesus Loved

- A. Beginning of his ministry - Fasted 40 days (Matthew 4:1-11).
- B. During his ministry - No home (Matthew 8:20).
- C. End of his ministry - In the Garden & on the cross (Luke 22:44).

IV. How Have You Loved?

- A. We cannot pick and choose.
- B. These aren't multiple choice.
- C. When is the last time you've "strained" to express your love for God?
- D. When is the last time you were "worn out" and "exhausted" because of your service to God?
- E. Maybe we need to do some self-evaluation.
- F. Don't deceive yourself into thinking doing less than what is expected, (especially on nothing less than the "greatest command") will be acceptable.

- Conclusion:
1. I encourage you to obey the Lord, and love him, not with a fluffy, convenient, easy, sort of love.
 2. But love him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.