

Discipleship - Session 22

Loving God Completely

Things we will cover this lesson:

1. What does it mean to love God with my “all”?
2. Jesus’ interpretation of Deuteronomy 6:5.
3. How do I love God with my spirit, soul, and body?
4. The vital importance of loving God by taking care of your body.
5. How to build your “temple” for God’s glory.

Assignment:

1. Continue ALONE prayer log. (One day -- 1/2 hour.) (One day -- 1 hour.)
2. Communing Word log.
3. Pray 2 Peter 1:1-15 into your life.
4. Pray the 6 Marks into your life.
5. Also go over the material you learned this session. Look up all the scriptures. Put this lesson to practice in your daily life.

LOVING GOD COMPLETELY

We have learned that the expression “eternal life” means that we are to know God. We have also seen how much the Father loves us. Because He does love us so, we can and should be living in the peace of God.

These wonderful truths should compel the child of God to have an insatiable desire to love God back with a pure and complete love.

During a special time of prayer and fasting before the Lord, I (Gary Stewart) was once again filled with the wonderful knowledge of how much the Father loves me. I asked Him how I could love Him back; and how I could love Him back more than just saying, “I really do love you.” The Lord understood my heart and led me to an in-depth study of Deuteronomy 6:4-5. I now share that study with you in a condensed form. It gave me something definite to do to demonstrate my love for Him. It is not intended to gain more love from Him (*for His love is perfect and pure and can never be more toward us than it already is*), but it is intended to help you know how to express your love to Him.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

⁴“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

⁵“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. (NKJV)

The Hebrew word for “heart” includes all the following and more: the inner man, the inner part, the seat of moral character, the seat of emotions and passions, and the seat of courage. The word is used over 250 times in the Old Testament, being translated by the word “heart” over 230 times. It is far more than an organ that pumps blood. It is an inner part of me that has a consciousness to understand right and wrong. **I am to love God with all of my heart.**

The Hebrew word for “soul” includes all the following and more: soul, self, life, creature, person, appetite, mind, living being, desire, emotion, and passion. The word is used over 750 times in the Old Testament, being translated by the word “soul” 475 times, and by the word “life” 117 times. It is a most inclusive word in Hebrew thought. The Hebrew mind does not usually look at man as being made up of three parts. It mainly looks at man as a total unit and the word for this was “soul”. However, when distinction was needed, then soul was used as in this verse of scripture. The soul of man is that unique part of man where his decisions and emotions combine in such a way as to make him distinctly who he is. **I am to love God with all of my soul.**

The Hebrew word for “strength” is a word that surprised me. It does not mean strength in the normal way I thought. It is best translated by the thought of exceeding and much. The word is used 299 times in the Old Testament and is translated by the “very” 147 times, the word “greatly” 49 times, the word “exceeding” or “exceedingly” 30 times, the word “great” 12 times, and the word “much” 10 times. The whole concept of the word is *abundance to a great degree*. In other words, **I am to love God with all my exceeding muchness!**

In order to get the best understanding of Deuteronomy, we need only to look to Jesus' quotation of this passage in the New Testament. It may surprise you how Jesus quotes this passage.

Matthew 22:37 ³⁷ Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' (NKJV)

Mark 12:30 ³⁰ 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This *is* the first commandment. (NKJV)

The Greek words for "heart" and "soul" are very similar in meaning to the Hebrew words mentioned above. But notice that Jesus said something a little different for the word "strength" when He quoted this passage. In both New Testament passages, Jesus uses the Greek word "mind". This word means the mind as a faculty of understanding, feeling, and desiring. Jesus is telling us we must learn to think like "kingdom of God" people. ***I believe Jesus is saying to us that we will never learn to love God with all our "exceeding muchness" until we learn to love God with all our mind.*** You will never love God more than your thinking. Proverbs 23:7 relates to us that as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

The Greek word that Jesus uses for "strength" is the word that denotes strength or power (especially physical) as an endowment. It has implication toward body strength in the sense of physical well being or good health. **I am to love God with all my mind and strength.**

Next, let us consider what Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

²³Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may **your whole spirit, soul, and body** be preserved **blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

All three parts of me are to be found blameless at the coming of our Lord. Does Paul mean the heart, soul, and strength? I think he does. Let me explain why. Jesus tell us we are "born again" in our spirit. Paul tells us to believe with our "hearts" and we will be saved. Therefore, Paul's thinking seems to imply "heart" and "spirit" as meaning the same thing. "Soul" is used by Jesus and Paul in very much the same sense. No problem here. When Paul uses the word "body", I believe he is talking about our physical health or "strength" in the sense Jesus used the word.

Therefore to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength would mean the following (and more):

The Spirit: - Heart

The Destiny - why God made you.

How do I love God with my all my heart? By being a person of prayer, meditation, word, communion with God, praise, worship, etc.

The Soul: - Soul

The Deliverance from this world system.

How do I love God with my all my soul? By the choices you make! What you choose to think about, read, see, do, friends, etc. Particularly the choice to live stress free. The choice to walk in the peace of God.

The Body: - Strength

The Doing of loving God with your exceeding muchness.

How do I love God with my all my strength? One major part of doing this is by taking care of my health. To be physically alert. To care for my body because I understand my body is the temple of God!

Note: In Christianity we have done our best work in seeking to love God with all our hearts. We overcame sin by coming to Jesus Christ. We have done our best to have our regular times with the Lord. We have at least tried to walk in the Spirit.

We have not done nearly as good a job at loving God with all our souls; but there has been some good effort in this area and the church is growing more daily in this area. Deliverance ministry is getting stronger and more of God's children are becoming free to make quality choices as Christians. We are learning to get free from living a stressed filled life, and we are learning to walk in the peace of God.

When it comes to loving God with all our strength (especially when it relates to taking care of our health), the church is greatly lacking and seemingly unconcerned.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Your spirit will live forever. Your soul will live forever. But your present physical body (the temple of your spirit and soul) is for this life only! You are going to serve God on this earth no longer than your present physical body is going to live. Therefore, we should learn about this temple and take special care of it so we can serve God as long as possible on earth.

By now you should understand that Satan wants to destroy all of God's children. He would delight in getting you to commit suicide if he could. If he cannot get you to kill yourself quickly, he seeks to get you to kill yourself slowly by making you ignorant of the fact that you are to take care of your body. Listen to the following passages of Scripture.

Romans 12:1-2

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies** a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (NKJV)

Psalms 139:14 ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am **fearfully and wonderfully made**; Marvelous are Your works, And *that* my soul knows very well. (NKJV)

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 ¹⁹ Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit** *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (NKJV)

It is terribly sad to say, but many (maybe most) Christians take better care of their automobiles and other possessions than they do of their own bodies.

One of the best motivations to me (Gary Stewart) to take care of my health (especially since I was seeking a way I could demonstrate to God that I loved Him with my all), was to think of myself as building a temple for God's glory.

Consider how much time and quality materials went into building the tabernacle and the temple in the Old Testament. (Exodus 25:9; 40:34-35 and 1 Kings 6 along with 2 Chronicles 7:1-2.) When these were finished, the glory of the LORD filled them. Is it possible for me (and you) to temple build in such a way that we might realize more of the glory of the LORD in our own lives? Maybe so. Maybe this is one reason God tells us to love Him with all our strength.

Four questions when answered will give us help toward quality temple building.

QUESTIONS:

1. How can you temple build when you do not know anything about the temple?
2. How long should man expect to live?
3. Why are Christians as sick as the non-Christians in normal illnesses and dreaded diseases, especially in the light of the fact that God takes care of us.
4. How do we build this temple for the glory of God?

ANSWERS:

1. How can you temple build when you do not know anything about the temple?

Romans 12:1-2

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Understand the human body! Most Christians know very little about how their body works. Learn and you will take much better care of it. We truly are “fearfully and wonderfully made.”

The building blocks for your temple are the body parts you have and how you take care of them (i.e., how you enable them to function their finest).

Satan's deceit is to get us to destroy this temple. God's desire is for us to build this temple.

2. How long should man expect to live?

The last thing God Himself says on the subject is that man is to live 120 years. I believe God intends for this all to be in excellent health, excellent mobility, and excellent mentality.

Genesis 6:3 ³And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be **one hundred and twenty years.**" (NKJV)

Noah 950, Sarah 127, Abraham 175, Isaac 180, Jacob 147, Joseph 110, Levi 130, Aaron 123, Moses 120, Joshua 110, Job 140, King Johoiada 130

3. Why are Christians as sick as the non-Christians in normal illnesses and dreaded diseases, especially in the light of the fact that God takes care of us.

Hosea 4:6 ⁶ **My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.** (NKJV)

Christians are as sick as the non-Christians because they violate the body with improper eating just like the world does. Gravity works for believers and non-believers. But you cannot violate the principle of gravity just because you are a Christian.

4. How do we build this temple for the glory of God?

Think smart. See how God made us in the beginning. In the beginning man was vegetarian. He ate raw fruits and vegetables. Now ask yourself this question, "What is better to eat: what God makes or what man makes?" Later God did add meat to the diet, but not like we eat it in the normal American diet. It was eaten mostly on special occasions. And the meat they ate was not pumped full of chemicals like ours is.

What are the major elements needed to build a glorious temple for the Lord?

1. Air

96% of the physical needs of the body has to do with oxygen.

Weeks without food. Days without water. Only few minutes without air.

THE PROBLEM: dirty air.

THE SOLUTION: clean it.

Learn to deep breathe daily.

2. Water

THE PROBLEM: dirty, chemical water(including tap water).

THE SOLUTION: clean it.

Drink lots of good clean water.

3. Proper Food

THE PROBLEM: what man thinks is proper food.

THE SOLUTION: discover what proper food is.

Genesis 1:29

²⁹And God said, "See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. (NKJV)

Learn about juicing, eating organic, and cell nourishment.

Beware of cooking! - At 107° heat kills all the enzymes and much of the vitamins, minerals,!

God does add meat - Genesis 9:3-4 ³"Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. ⁴"But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood. (NKJV)

But certain meats are forbidden in Leviticus 11:1-23 and Deuteronomy 14:3-21.

- BEWARE: It was through eating that Satan first deceived man.
- NOTE: The primary cause of all disease is toxicity & deficiency and these happen mainly because of improper diet!

4. Exercise

Genesis 3:19 ¹⁹ In **the sweat of your face** you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return." (NKJV)

God designed our muscles to be used. Your lymph system has no pump. Proper exercise of all your body is what makes your lymph system work best.

Learn about two major needs of your body: Aerobic & Strength training.

5. **Sunshine** - Minimum of 15 minutes per day. (But beware of too much.)
6. **Rest** - Be sure to get plenty of proper rest daily.
7. **Good Elimination**

Remember God gave your body to you. You decide! You learn! You research! You are responsible!

Never become legalistic in your eating habits! Read the following passages: Romans 14 and Colossians 2:16.

This lesson is about loving God completely. We have focused primarily on loving God with all your strength because this seems to be such a major weakness in the church today. Please realize that your total being is involved in loving God completely. Any time you are excelling in loving God with any one of the three "areas", then the other two are automatically lifted. On the other hand, when we are lax or even failing miserably in one area, then the other two are adversely affected.

SUMMATION STATEMENT: Loving God completely is the great commandment of scripture. One of the most neglected aspects of loving God is to love Him with all our strength. Build your "temple" and expect your awareness and alertness for God to grow. Expect glory in your temple. Love Him with all your "exceeding muchness."