

Loving the One Lord God

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 January 2007

Preacher: Paul Barker

- [0 : 00] Love is a many splendid thing. All you need is love. Love lifts us up where we belong. All you need is love. The supreme Christian ethic is love. Love is at the heart of the Christian life. Love is at the heart of godly obedience. Love, you see, is the only reciprocal ethic. That is, we obey God. God does not obey us. We serve God. God does not serve us. We trust God. God does not trust us. We fear God. God does not fear us. We love God and God loves us. And if you want to understand obedience, the law, godliness, etc., at the heart is love. Love is the engine room of the Christian life. Love is the driving force of Christian behaviour, morality, ethics and so on.
- [1 : 25] Love is the driving force in the Old Testament law as well as in the new. So often Christians despise the law and especially despise the Old Testament law and think that somehow we've grown out of it, we've put it aside, we've moved on beyond it. But they fail to understand the Old Testament law as Old Testament law, that is, driven by with the engine room of love. Having recited the Ten Commandments, which we saw on Wednesday night for those who are here and they're recited in Deuteronomy chapter 5, Moses again urges all Israel to hear. We see it in verse 4 of chapter 6. Hear, O Israel. Just like in chapter 5, verse 1, hear, O Israel. That is, there is a summons to listen, to pay attention and to heed and obey the words that are following. There is a sense of importance and some urgency about the words that Moses is about to speak. He's not just rabbiting on for 30 chapters of a sermon. He's pausing here to say, hear, O Israel, the words that follow. These are important words that follow. And then comes in verse 4, a famous verse, an enigmatic verse, a puzzling verse in some respects.
- [2 : 52] Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord alone. It's a verse that different translations will translate in slightly different ways, partly because there's no verb. Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord, one or alone. So we've got to work out where do you put the verbs. How do you connect all those terms. And the other big difficulty is, is the word alone at the end or is it the word one? In the end, despite the difficulties of precise translation, the meaning is actually relatively clear. That is, there is, there is one God. The uniqueness of God is being explained or rather stated in verse 4. The Lord, our God, that is Yahweh, our God. Yahweh alone is God, is the most likely sort of thrust of that verse.
- [4 : 00] That is, Yahweh is unique. The God of Israel, the God of the Bible is unique. We saw that back in chapter 4 last Sunday night. There is no other. He is incomparable. That is, for all the other so-called gods and idols that the nations parade and place on their ancient mantelpieces, there is actually only in effect, in the end, one God.

There is no other. He's incomparable. He is, in the end, unique. And though in one sense, Deuteronomy doesn't quite say there is only one God in the whole universe, that is a statement of monotheism, in effect, that's what is being stated.

There's, in a sense, no escaping that conclusion from the words of chapter 4, and that's reiterated here in verse 4 of chapter 6. There is perhaps also one other thrust in the verse.

The word for alone is the word one. Yahweh, our God, Yahweh, one. Possibly with the sense of there is only one God, most likely that's the thrust.

[5 : 04] But maybe the conciseness of the words also bears an additional thrust. That is, the integrity or the unity of God. There is no pantheon of gods.

You don't have a whole array of gods and idols, and depending on the day of the week, the season of the year, the elements of the universe, or whatever stars in alignment with this, that, or the other, which God you pick on, there is one God to whom we always go.

So it's the unity of God and the uniqueness of God, both of which, in effect, are summed up by the fact that there is actually only one God anywhere, anytime.

It's, in the end, monotheism. The unity of God and the uniqueness of God. And that God is Yahweh, Jehovah, depending on your translation.

The name revealed to Moses back at the burning bush at Mount Sinai, before the period of the Exodus. Therefore, since there is only one God, a unique God, all our devotion is to be to Him.

[6 : 17] That is, not to be shared amongst a whole pantheon of gods, a devotion on Sunday to this God and Monday to that God, and if it's raining to that God, and if we're wanting children to that God, sort of sharing.

None of that. Since there is one God, all our devotion goes to Him. That's the connection from verses 4 to 5.

One means all. That is, one God means all our devotion. It's to be not half-hearted, not reluctant.

It is to be total and exclusive. The argument has been built from chapter 4 onwards, indeed from chapters 1 to 3 as well. That is, since there is one God, who is God of everything and every place and every person, even if they don't acknowledge that one God, then our relationship to Him is to be both total, that is all, but it's also exclusive, not to be shared with other gods or so-called gods.

And the way that verse 5 famously expresses that is that you shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your might.

[7 : 32] In one sense, the language that's being used, that sort of slight repetition, all your heart, all your soul, all your might, is not quite to divide a person into three parts, a tripartite humanity.

It's not really arguing that. It's the language of, in a sense, positively speaking, rhetoric, that is to urge our total devotion. All your heart, in ancient Hebrew, would involve not just the emotions, as we might think, but also the intellect, the will, the decision-making.

It's the heart and mind. The heart, for Hebrew, was the place where you would think and make reason and make decisions and express your will, as well as your emotions. That's why, when Jesus quotes these verses, He says, all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, because in the Greek language and thinking, the heart had a sort of narrower meaning than for Hebrew.

So, He added heart and mind to encapsulate what is here meant by heart alone. All your soul is not actually, as some people think, the immortal part of you, the immortality of the soul that lives on.

The word is literally, in a sense, your being. That is, with all your being, you are to love the Lord your God. And with all your strength, that is, all your effort, all your might, but not just your personal effort and might, also your resources, all your muchness, is another way of translating that word.

[9 : 00] So, with all your wealth and all your possessions, all your time, effort, energy, etc., you are to love the Lord your God. And the word that's used is love.

Not a sensuous love, not a romantic love, not a selfish love, not a celebrity love, not a warm, fuzzy, emotional, feeling type love, but rather love that is sacrificial, costly, devoted, and selfless.

You see, we know the sort of love with which we are to love God, because it is to mirror the love with which He loves us. It's a reciprocal ethic. And the love with which God loves us in both Old and New Testaments is steadfast, robust, persevering, coping with our failure, very loyal, it is costly, it is sacrificial, not least in the New Testament.

But we find that in the Old as well. It is a love that is defined by God and not by us. We're not at liberty to determine what it means for us to love God.

God tells us what love is like. He demonstrates it by His relationship to His people in both Old and New Testaments. And that determines the nature of love.

[10 : 26] Love is a commitment of the will. God determined to love Abraham and his successors, and therefore He held fast with Israel despite its sinfulness and rebellion.

That is, it's a commitment of the will that is followed through with faithfulness and steadfastness. In the marriage service, we ask couples when they get married, not do you love each other, if they didn't, they wouldn't be there.

Rather, will you love each other? That is, it's a statement of intent and expression of the will. So love, and that reflects the nature of biblical love.

God determines to love and He keeps loving. And we are to determine to love Him and to keep loving Him as well.

The other thing that's implied by verse 5 is that Israel is in a relationship with God. It's not in order to become in a relationship with God.

[11 : 31] It's already there. It's a relationship established by God. Something that we've seen already in chapter 5 and in earlier chapters as well. That is, the response of love is to a God who's already loved and already established a relationship with His people.

And the love that He's demonstrated for ancient Israel to this point is fundamentally not only the promises earlier on, but then acting on those promises to redeem them and bring them, to this point, to the verge of the promised land.

Someone raised with me recently that we, in a sense, should play down Old Testament law because what is required of us Christians in the light of the New Covenant and the New Testament is not the letter of the law, but its spirit.

I think in some respects that's a false dichotomy. We could say that the spirit of the law is love. Here it is demonstrated, chapter 6, verse 5 of Deuteronomy.

When Jesus summed up the law, He summed it up using these words along with Leviticus 19.18, of course, to love your neighbour as yourself. But the first and great commandment is chapter 6, verse 5 of Deuteronomy.

[12 : 55] Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength, as Jesus quoted it. The spirit of the law and the letter of the law is a little bit of a false dichotomy because from verse 5, having said, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength, the ramifications or the implications of that, the consequences of that will be keeping the precise laws that God has given.

And they follow all the way through to the end of chapter 26. So that when you get into the midst of all those little laws in later chapters about looking after your neighbour's animal, about not lending an interest, about right sexual relations, about what food you should eat and shouldn't eat, about how you deal with the enemies who live in the land and outside the land, the laws about establishing a city of refuge and doing it this way, the laws of sacrifice and priests, and the laws of how to worship and where to worship and when to worship and what to bring for different sacrifices, we might think, well, that's all tedious detail.

That's letter of the law. I want to dismiss that. But no, that gets it wrong. We love God or we are to love God on his terms. He tells us what it means to love God.

He says to us, if you love me, then you will bring the right animal at the right time for the right sacrifice. It will mean that you eat the right foods at the right time, that you observe these feasts and you establish these cities of refuge.

It will mean how you deal with economics about sexual relations, about neighbours' animals, etc, etc. That is, God tells us how to love him. The detail is not in conflict with the spirit of love.

[14 : 38] The detail expounds and explains how to love God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our strength.

See in verse 6 how it flows on from verse 5. Having said, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and might, keep these words that I'm commanding you today in your heart.

These words being all the words of Deuteronomy, chapters 1 to 30 at least, that Moses preaches to Israel on the verge of the promised land. Keep these words.

That's specific, that's detailed, that's letter of the law. You keep the letter of the law and that expresses the spirit of the law which is love.

Notice that verse 6 also says, keep these words that I'm commanding you today in your heart. The ideal throughout the Bible is that the word of God is written on our heart that we may believe it and do it.

[15 : 46] It's easier said than done of course. How do we get the word of God preached or written inside us onto our hearts? And the story of the Old Testament and indeed really of some of the new is that we fail to do that for our hearts are hard, stony, cold, unreceptive to God's word so often.

The sorts of things in the Old Testament that are stressed for us to get the word into our heart is that we meditate on God's word, that we rejoice in it and delight in it, that we see it as sweet as honey like in the song that we sang a little bit earlier and so on.

But in the end we fail. We'll see this later in Deuteronomy and for those later in the year in Holy Trinity when we get especially to chapter 30. In the end God is the one who gets his word onto our heart.

That's the promise of the new covenant. I will write my law on their hearts that they may do it. Jeremiah 31, 31 for example. Something that only comes in the new covenant of the New Testament.

But for now for ancient Israel how are they to get the word in their hearts? Well what follows are some examples of taking it seriously. Verses 7 to 9.

[16 : 58] Recite them to your children. I don't think there is meant once and then for the rest of their life as children or teenagers you forget about it.

There is a repetition, a constant recital that is to be done for your children. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you're at home and when you are away.

The idea of two opposites put together in Hebrew is often the case of meaning everywhere. That is when you're at home and when you're away and everywhere in between. The best example I can think of in English where we use an expression like that is when you've lost something.

Somebody might say I searched high and low for it. Well you don't respond and say well search in the middle. You see when you say I've searched high and low for it you mean I've searched everywhere for it. Well you haven't searched everywhere, you haven't searched where it is but you think you've searched everywhere for it.

So when Moses says talk about the laws when you're at home and when you're away means all the time wherever you are. And then the rest of verse seven says when you lie down and when you rise.

[18 : 03] He doesn't mean by that well don't talk about them when you're sitting. He means talk about them all the time, every place, every, all the time. Recite them to your children, that is get them in to their hearts.

That will take a lot of effort like a dripping tap that will gradually, gradually have some effect. That's not perfect. Our hearts are cold. It will take a lot of dripping on some hearts to get God's word onto the heart.

That's why in the end God has to do it, not us. But you see how important it is. And the fact that verse seven puts two pairs of opposites together shows how doubly important it is to take God's word so seriously that it's on our lips all the time and for the benefit of children as well.

Verse eight says, bind them as a sign on your hand, which many Jews of course have taken literally and wrap around them the words of these verses, verses four and five and other key verses of Exodus and Deuteronomy as well.

Fix them as an emblem on your forehead and you will see some strict Jews in various places who bound around their head, the Teflin, the flat trees and so on with words of Deuteronomy six, four and five and other verses as well.

[19 : 19] Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. And if you walk through Caulfield and East Brighton and suburbs like that in Melbourne and Doornock for whatever purpose, you will find often above the doorpost on the right hand side, the mezuzah carrying within it words of Deuteronomy six and some other verses in Exodus and Deuteronomy as well.

Are they meant simply literally? No. But that's not to say they're not meant literally as well. That is, it's not meant to be fulfilled simply by writing them on your hand, your forehead and your doorpost.

But that's symbolic of whenever you go in and out, whenever you do something with your hands, whenever you think something, the word of God is to be formative and instructive for your behaviour, your words and your action.

The point is, get them on your heart. Not necessarily a simple literal fulfilment of those words, but the literal fulfilment may help the real fulfilment of getting it into your hearts.

Now these words, I think, in verses 7 to 9, are a serious challenge to Christian parents. What do you teach your children? children? I don't mean necessarily what facts you teach your children, but in teaching your children, what importance do you place on teaching God's words to them?

[20 : 41] See, I reckon most, or many, I should say, Christian parents will be very emphatic to make sure their children know that 2 plus 2 equals 4. They'll be very, very emphatic and take a great deal of seriousness about making sure that some spelling is right or that some mathematical formula right or whatever the subject is.

But so often I hear Christian parents, maybe yes, teaching God's words, but by the very nature of how they teach it, simply implying that this is of secondary importance.

I've heard Christian parents say, well, it's the Sunday school teachers or the youth ministers' job to teach. No, it's not. It is a parent's fundamental responsibility not just to teach what is true, but to teach the importance of God's words as truth.

And we'll only do that when we do it systematically, regularly, repeatedly, reciting the words time after time again. I don't mean as a sort of parrot-fashion mantra. I mean regularly teaching the Bible to them from their earliest years all the way through to adulthood.

You see, in the end, it is more important to be a believer than to be literate or clever or numerate.

[22 : 03] It is better to be an illiterate believer than to be an unbelieving writer. It is better to be a believer who fails abysmally your VCE than it is to get a 99 TER score in a VCE and be an unbeliever.

Our world doesn't think like that, of course. Our world thinks in complete reverse. But so often I see Christian parents, when their children are coming to the crunch years of school, church takes a back seat.

Reading the Bible takes a back seat. Teaching the truths of scriptures takes a back seat. We've got to get through year 12. That's the big year. Then we'll come back to church and we'll get it all right again. You have lost the priority if you as a parent do that.

Don't. Take seriously the emphasis and importance that God places on teaching our children the truth of God's words. Well, as many of you know, I like to travel and I quite like reading travel books.

I quite like looking at travel guides. One of my favourite books is The Lonely Planet Countries Guide. What's it called? Just the travel book. A couple of great glossy big pages for every country in the world.

[23 : 20] And I look at these places and pictures and I think, how good is that? Oh, I'd love to go there. I dream of going to the West Indies. You know, I was thinking of going this year for the World Cup. It's a little bit expensive.

Maybe I'll go a different time. But, you know, you look at these pristine beaches in these little islands in the West. Wow, that'd be great. I was reading through the Lonely Planet travel book and I was reading Benin.

No, I got as far. Yeah, Benin was one of them, Belize and other places. And I thought, why does this book make me want to go there? These places can't be much better than Nigeria where I've been three times.

That's the last place I'd ever want to go for a holiday, I must confess. Well, here in the verses that follow is something that would tempt anyone to travel here.

Verse 10. When the Lord your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob to give you, a land with fine large cities that you did not build, with houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, with hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant and when you've eaten your fill.

[24 : 40] Well, what a great travel guide for ancient promised land of Canaan that would be. This is paradise. You don't have to work, it's all provided for you.

You're going into a new land, you don't have to build the cities. You don't have to plant the vineyards or the olive groves. Of course, they take a number of years before they bear a significant fruit. They're already there, so the fruit's ready to pick is in effect what's being said.

You don't even have to hew the cisterns. Now, we're living in the middle of a drought here. We know how significant water is. Well, we've suddenly become guilty about it anyway in the last few weeks. In the ancient world, in ancient Canaan, water was a prime commodity.

For all its beauty and flowing with milk and honey, it was a place where water in some parts of it is very scarce indeed. Some of the driest parts on our planet are a part of the promised land.

And you can go still today and you can see the archaeological remains of some wells which are extraordinarily deep and built before a thousand BC. Think how on earth would they build a well so many metres deep to get water?

[25 : 47] You can walk into a cistern that holds over a million and a half cubic litres of water which was hewn out of solid rock, plastered on the inside so that the water that eventually filled it would not get covered in algae.

Places like Masada and other places. You can see tunnels that channeled water for 520 metres under Jerusalem through solid rock. What an effort to get water. But this is promising to go into a place and the cisterns are built.

Water's on tap. The houses are there and they're filled with good things. Imagine moving into a new house and opening the pantry and it's full. Opening the fridge and it's full. The wardrobes and they're full.

Well this is the travel guide par excellence. This is greater than anything lonely planet can ever do. And it promises to be full. That is the people will be filled.

They'll be satisfied. They'll be replete. By the end of verse 11 where it says and you'll be full, it's a bit like those Sunday afternoon naps that I never seem to quite get.

[26 : 52] You have a Sunday roast, sit in front of the fire, watch Australia beat New Zealand at cricket, put your feet up and you have a little doze like a cat purring. That's the sort of picture of repleteness and fullness and satisfaction that's being described in verses 10 and 11 here in chapter 6.

The trouble is that prosperity, that good times, that comfort and a wealth of supply is actually very dangerous. Complacency is a spiritual danger.

That sort of Sunday nap contented feeling is in one sense spiritually a danger point. So alluring and tempting are these great glossy travel guides that promise you everything.

The trouble is the reality is dangerous. And that's why verse 12 begins as it does. Take care. The perils of prosperity far outweigh the spiritual perils of poverty.

There are perils of poverty spiritually speaking. Israel in the wilderness has demonstrated that too. But when you're nodding off replete, take care.

[28 : 06] And you've got everything you need, sufficient water and housing and clothing and fruit and veg and so on, take care. When you're drifting into a sort of physically satisfied slumber, take care.

Prosperity dulls our cutting edge spiritually. Prosperity dulls our spiritual cutting edge of obedience. I've just read quite a good biography, autobiography that somebody gave me at Christmas called Taming the Tiger by a British person called Tony Anthony who was a world Kung Fu champion and in prison and a robber and bandit and bashed up people and all this sort of stuff.

And from the depths of a Nicosia prison was ministered to and became a Christian. Came back to England, eventually married, was cared for and rehabilitated in a sense by Christians and Christian churches but ended up back in prison having hit and run a pedestrian in England.

Having got comfortable eventually with a good job and wife and child and house and having earlier been critical of so many complacent Christians' lack of discipleship because they ended up in comfort, he realised that he was in the same point as they had been.

It's very typical. Forgetfulness, comfort, wealth, prosperity, complacency, they all lead us to drift, to drift spiritually, to drift into ingratitude.

[29 : 36] We'll see that in chapter 8 later on next week or whenever. To drift into disobedience as well. And let me say that I've seen many, many keen young Christians end up drifting away from faith.

And probably those of you older than I have seen many more. People who at university are keen in their faith, ardent in their evangelism, keen in their Christian groups and church life and even theos and so on.

A few years down the track they get married, they end up getting a good job, comfortable house, kids, pleasures of work and the trappings of wealth, holiday homes, whatever it is.

And the complacency sets in spiritually. They are dangerous points being prosperous and the vast majority of Australians are very prosperous. We're almost the most prosperous people who've ever lived on this planet, by and large, generalisations.

They are dangerous things, prosperity. That's what Israel is being warned here. It's the incentive to go into a great land with everything that you could wish for. But take care is the emphasis of verse 12.

[30 : 53] Oh yes, Israel might say we'll go into the land and we'll be right. We'll obey God. The trouble is that our resolve is compromised by our moral weakness. That's why Moses says take care.

It doesn't come naturally or simply for us, automatically for us to do the right thing. We tend always to drift because we're sinful, fallen people.

Our moral weakness compromises our resolve to do what is right. The story of Israel through the Old Testament is that repeatedly. It's there in the New Testament as well.

And that's why the warning is so strong. Take care, verse 12, that you do not forget the Lord. How could we forget Him? But you do when you drift away from obedience and faith.

That's forgetfulness. So take care that you do not forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. The Lord your God you shall fear, Him you shall serve, and by His name alone you shall swear.

[31 : 53] The emphasis clearly there is on God. He's placed first emphatically in each of those clauses. Him you shall fear, Him you shall serve, and by His name alone you shall swear.

Don't follow other gods. How on earth could we ever follow another god? An Israelite listening to these words might say. Far be it from me to even contemplate such a thing. But the point is that the path to idolatry deviates little at first.

Just a little step away. As we drift and become complacent. As we perhaps water down our obedience. As we limit our devotion to God.

And that subtle drift leads eventually down a path that leads to the exact opposite direction. Idolatry.

The worship of other gods. In effect the opposition to the one true living God. Yahweh. Hundreds of years after these words were spoken.

[33 : 02] At the top of the pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus heard the devil say to him. Throw yourself down.

Let God's angels in effect. Save you. And Jesus said in reply. The word says. Do not put the Lord your God.

To the test. Verse 16 of chapter 6. Says. Do not put the Lord your God. To the test. Exactly that.

Jesus was quoting. In those temptation. In that temptation. In the wilderness. 40 days. With the devil. Matthew 4 and Luke 4. Do not put the Lord your God.

To the test. As you tested him at. Massar. At Massar. Exodus 17. Recounts. On the. Journey into the wilderness.

[33 : 59] Towards Mount Sinai. Israel had tested God. They were thirsty. They were complaining. And they were grumbling. They said that God has led us out into the desert. To die. In effect. They doubted that God could save them.

And their very grumbling and murmuring. Was testing God. Testing God's capacity. To save them. Which they doubted that he could do.

It's a very different. Thing. To Gideon and his fleece. I say this. Because so often people raise the comparison. When Gideon.

Tested. In a sense. With the fleece. He wasn't. Testing God's capacity so much. As. Wanting assurance of God's guidance for him. From a position of faith.

But Israel in Massar. Is from a position of lack of faith. Testing God. And doubting his capacity to save. Jesus refused to put God to the test.

[34 : 58] Israel failed that test in the wilderness. Don't put God to the test. The emphasis is that God is faithful and powerful.

You don't need to test him or doubt. His capacity. To do what he says. So the verses that follow. Give us that context. You must diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God.

And his decrees. And his statutes that he's commanded you. Do what is right. And good. In the sight of the Lord. So that it may go well with you. And so that you may go in. And occupy the good land. That the Lord swore to your ancestors.

To give you. Thrusting out all your enemies from before you. As the Lord has promised. The point here is. That trusting God. And the trust comes out of the evidence.

Of his past power to save. Leads to obedience. Leads to obedience. When you trust God. You don't put him to the test. You obey him. In faith.

[35 : 57] But if you're not trusting God. Then you end up putting God to the test. From a position of faithlessness. Doubting that God can do anything. To save you. And so the emphasis in verses 16 to 19.

Is that. Deepen your trust. As you look back to what God has done. That will lead to your obedience. To take the land. As God has promised you.

He will do. That same connection. Is found in the last paragraph. As well. The last paragraph. Begins. Of chapter 6. That is. From verse 20. With the rhetorical question.

When your children ask you. In time to come. What is the meaning. Of the decrees and statutes. And the ordinances. The Lord. How God has commanded you. That is. Why the law. Why do the law. Why should we bother.

Obedying the law. The answer is. God is powerful to save. And he has saved us. Verses 21 to 23. You shall say to your children.

[36 : 57] We were Pharaoh slaves in Egypt. The Lord brought us out of Egypt. With a mighty hand. And the Lord displayed. Before our eyes. Great and awesome. Sights and. Signs and wonders. Against Egypt. Against Pharaoh. And all his household. He brought us out from there.

In order to bring us in. To give us the land. That he promised on earth. To our ancestors. Why keep the law. In the past. God has been powerful. To save us. To bring us. Into the land. Therefore.

In response to God's. Powerful acts. For our benefit. We keep the law. Is in effect. The logic. Of what's being said. In the. Sixteen to nineteen.

Paragraph. As well as in the. Twenty to twenty. Twenty five. Paragraph. So as a result. Verse twenty four and five. The Lord our God. Commanded us to observe. All these statutes.

To fear the Lord our God. For our lasting good. So as to keep us alive. As is now the case. If we diligently. Observe. This entire commandment. Before the Lord our God. As he has commanded us.

[37 : 52] We will be. In the right. In other words. God's. Love. To save us. Leads to. Our love.

In devotion to him. God has powerfully. Saved us. In response. We obey his law. Why the law? Because God has saved us. And we respond to the law. With obedience. Because of God's.

Gracious power. To save. The additional motive is. It's for our own good. Child asks their parents. Why should I eat my vegetables? They're good for you.

That's what my mother used to say. And so on. It's for your own good. The end of verse twenty four. For our lasting good. We obey the law. Because it's in response.

To God's grace to us. It's how we respond. Or to go back to the language. Of verse five. God's loved us. So we love him in response. But in addition to that. It's for our own good.

[38 : 49] For our lasting good. To keep us alive. For eternal life. So why must we obey the law? Why does God give us the law to obey?

They're actually the subconscious questions. That we should ask ourselves. Frequently in our lives. Why should I be generous now. When the world around me is not.

When we're faced with a dilemma. Of what to do with our money. Why should I be faithful now. In my marriage. To my husband or wife. Why should I now be.

Giving substantially. For Christian ministry. And mission. Why should I give time. To serve. And commit myself. In the life of the church. Why should I be honest.

When I don't actually benefit. From being honest. When I'm given too much money. At the cash register. Overpaid by my employer. Or something. Why should I be honest. Nobody else is.

[39 : 49] They get away with not being honest. The answer to all of those questions. And the rest. Is. Because God has acted. In powerful love. To save me.

And for my own good. I am to obey. I am to obey. His law. Why the law. Because in the end.

Obedience to God. Is for our good. Not in the context. Of a blessed life. In Canaan. As was promised. Ancient Israel. But in the context. Of a blessed life.

In God's heavenly kingdom. Because my relationship. With God. Matters more. Than worldly pleasure. Than ease. Or comfort. Than immediate.

Or fleeting. Pleasure. Or benefit. Because God's attitude. To me. Matters far more. Than the world's attitude. To me. When I'm torn.

[40 : 43] With the. Peer group pressure. To go and get drunk. Or swear. Or sleep around. Or whatever it is. Why should I obey. God's law. Because in the end.

It's for my good. Why the law. Because God loved me. And therefore. Out of love to him. I obey the law.

They're the two motivations. That are given here. In effect. Because God loved me. Out of love to him. In response. I obey the law. Secondly. Because ultimately.

It is for my good. That I obey God's law. Yes. There might be immediate. Gratification. That this world promises. But it is not worth it. Compared to the eternal.

Good. That comes to me. From God. When I obey. His law. Why the law. Because he loved me.

[41 : 41] And therefore. I am to love him. If the Old Testament. Demands. A total. And exclusive. Love to God.

With all our heart. Soul. And strength. As verse five. Makes clear. How much more. Does the New Testament. When God's love.

For us. Is demonstrated. Even more deeply. And fully. Than it was. In the old. We are under. Even more. Obligation. Than ancient Israel. To love God.

With all our heart. Soul. Mind. And strength. Here. Oh Israel. The Lord. Our God. Is God alone. You shall love.

The Lord. Your God. With all your heart. And with all your soul. And with all your mind. That's important. That's why verse six says.

[42 : 36] Get it into your heart. Keep these words. That I'm commanding you today. In your heart. Amen.