

Be Passionate
February 12, 2012

Deuteronomy 6

Valentines Day is two days away...a PUBLIC SERVICE announcement for the men in the class...you've been reminded! Because Valentines Day is two days away lets talk about LOVE. I'm going back to pick up the lesson we missed the week Mark and Susan were with us.

Opening question: Show of hands...any couples who were college sweethearts? High school? Elementary school? Regardless of when you met...who remembers where you went on your first date?

We may not have met our sweetheart in elementary school, but, we all experienced it when we were in elementary school. Stories have been told about it. Songs have been written about it. It's the ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LOVE NOTE. It suddenly gets shoved in front of your nose. You unfold it and your stomach quivers as you read it. What does it say?

I Love You...DO YOU LOVE ME? Check YES or NO.

Use your imagination: Picture this...what if you're just going through your day to day life, minding your own business, when a folded paper note dropped from the sky...you open it...and it says:

I Love You...DO YOU LOVE ME? Check YES or NO...Signed, GOD.

How would we answer? YES!

On Tuesday it will be all about LOVING YOUR SWEETHEART. But, this morning we're talking about the LOVE that ALLOWS us to be ABLE to love our sweetheart the way we should: LOVING GOD!

By the way, I would contend that in EVERY LOVE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE, SPOUSE, KIDS, FAMILY, that person you love is mentally asking every day: "Do you love me? Yes or no? Followed by THIS PS: (pause) PROVE IT!

What if we get that note from God and we ENTHUSIASTICALLY ANSWER YES! THEN another note drops from the sky that says "PROVE IT!" (PAUSE) Could we? (PAUSE) How well could we PROVE to God and others that we PASSIONATELY LOVE HIM?

Every day God is looking our way for the answer to that question: "Do you love me? PROVE IT!"

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

- Verse 4: We said a couple of weeks ago that this verse is a Hebrew confession of faith called the SHEMA...which translates to that first word "HEAR".
- Not just "hear" but "hear and obey" in response to OUR GREAT GOD.
- "The LORD our god...is ONE.". Yes, He's God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...but He is the ONE TRUE GOD.
- As we sing in worship: "There is NO ONE like our God!"
- Our GOD is the ONE who created EVERYTHING we see
- Our GOD is all knowing, all present, all powerful
- Our GOD is BOTH JUST and MERCIFUL
- COMPASSIONATE and FORGIVING
- FAITHFUL and CONSTANT
- "The Alpha and the Omega", beginning and end, "who IS and who WAS and who IS TO COME, the Almighty."
- He's our HEALER, our PROVIDER, our COMFORTER
- And, in the person of His son Jesus, our SAVIOR AND LORD!
- There is NO ONE like our God! (Amen!)

How do we respond to OUR GREAT GOD? Verse 5:

5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

- What do we call that? The GREAT commandment.
- It doesn't say "You shall love the LORD your God..."
- If you feel like it...or, when you get around to it...or, IF He blesses you...
- "...love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" PERIOD
- Do you love me? Yes! PROVE IT!
- Look at verses 6-9

6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. (symbol on your forehead)

9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- Engrave this command on your heart! In the Hebrew, here the meaning is not the heart as the "seat of emotions" as we normally think of it...it means the MIND and WILL
- Basically, make up your mind...determine that you will keep this command to LOVE GOD with all your heart, soul, might.
- Then we're told to DO some things out of our LOVE for God
- I thought about verses 7, 8, and 9 in terms of THREE R WORDS

- REMEMBER, REFLECT, and REINFORCE
- First, REMEMBER -
- When we love someone (spouse, child, parent) sometimes something can just cause us to have a SURGE of emotion recalling HOW MUCH WE LOVE THEM.
- Question: What kinds of things can TRIGGER that feeling? (Discussion) [A thought, a sight, a sound, even a smell.]
- Example: Susan picking me up from the airport...silly I guess. Just seeing Susan or my kids!
- If we stop and REMEMBER what that person means to us our heart LEAPS with LOVE!
- Verses 8 and 9 say of these words to LOVE GOD:
- 8 ...bind them as a sign on your hand, and let them be a symbol on your forehead
- 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- I interpret that to mean: Post this command where you can't help but see it and REMEMBER.
- Question: Let's make a different list...what are some things that cause you to remember how much you love God?
- We need to REMEMBER
- We also need to REFLECT
- If we take this command to LOVE God and put it on our hands, forehead, door posts...we are REFLECTING our LOVE FOR GOD
- Hand...how does what we DO with our hands, our ACTIONS, REFLECT OUR LOVE FOR GOD?
- Forehead...we could paint John 3:16 like Tebow, but I looked at it this way...
- When you see my face you see my COUNTENANCE
- When people see my countenance do they see the my LOVE FOR GOD or do they see a "pickled sourpuss" who can't even spell Jehovah?
- I recognize we all have trials. Some of us are dealing with pain and loss. Some struggle with honest to goodness, clinical depression for which they should seek help.
- I'm pushing POSITIVE THINKING
- But too many Christians are not clinically depressed just PERPETUALLY GRUMPY
- How you doing CHILD OF GOD? "Not great!" "Life's tough and then you die."
- That'll make people want what I have! Instead of wanting the Christian life they'll be afraid they might catch it!
- Larry Gatlin wrote a great song line:
- I'm "...greatly blessed and highly favored, imperfect but forgiven child of God."
- How are you doing? Greatly blessed, highly favored, imperfect but forgiven child of God!
- That's REFLECTING our LOVE FOR GOD.
- The third R is REINFORCE.
- Verse 7: You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.
- Am I REINFORCING my LOVE FOR GOD by teaching my kids and discipling others?
- Do I talk about it around the house, out of the house, day and night?

- Question: If you were blessed to grow up in a Christian home, how did your parents REINFORCE LOVE FOR GOD to you as a child?
- Question: What are some ways you and I can help ourselves REMEMBER how much we LOVE GOD?

One final note: (Turn to Deuteronomy 30:6) You may be saying, "I believe in God, but I don't seem to PASSIONATELY love God...I just don't think about Him much except on Sundays."

Deuteronomy 30:6

And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

John Gill says of this LOVE FOR GOD: "though the duty of every man, is performed by none but those that have the grace of God; there is no love to God in the heart before this inward and spiritual circumcision of it: it is a fruit of the Spirit in conversion when the affections are taken off of other things, and set on Christ; when a man sees his sin and his Saviour, and the one is odious, and the other precious; when the blessings of grace are applied, and the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, which cause love to God and Christ again"

Only when we accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord will our hearts be CIRCUMCISED, changed by SPIRITUAL SURGERY, to LOVE GOD with PASSION.

So, What's the Takeaway?

- What if God sent you a note: Do you love me...with all your heart, soul, and might? Yes or no?
- This week, how will we PROVE IT TO HIM by
- REMEMBERING
- REFLECTING
- And REINFORCING?