

Love Deeply, Teach Diligently

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[0 : 00] Let's turn for a little to the chapter we read in Deuteronomy chapter 6, verses 5 to 7.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 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 and so on. Deuteronomy, as we know, is quite an amazing book. And it's a book that really is sort of the dividing point between Israel's past and Israel's future.

And Moses, in this book, is reflecting over Israel's history and of how God led Israel out of Egypt and took them through the wilderness and has now brought them to the borders of the promised land.

But the book isn't just reflecting on the history of Israel. It is also assessing where they are right at this present moment. And it's also looking ahead, where Moses is exhorting the people that they are about to cross into the promised land.

[1 : 25] It's going to be a new time, a new venture, a new, a whole new, as it were, new part of their history. And he's setting out before them the key to success, that there is only one way that they can truly succeed, and that is by putting the Lord first.

And I think it's very important for ourselves, where we are, that we have a similar sort of view of life. But it's very important that we always remember our history.

And we're very stupid if we turn away from history and ignore it. Because one of the things that we know so often, that if we don't follow or look or examine history, we keep repeating the same mistakes that has been said so often.

So it's important that we know our history, that we take note of history. But we also look at where we are, and we also project into the future.

Very important that we do all these things. But like as it was with Israel, so it must be with ourselves, that the very heart of who we are and what we are is found in putting God first.

[2 : 38] And that is what we find Moses saying in verse 4. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. That's what he says.

In other words, that God, what he's really saying is God is the only one. That there is no other God. Remember the very first commandment.

You shall have no other gods before me. And that really is a fundamental statement, a fundamental commandment for your life and my life.

And even at a moment like this, we should stop and say, do we have other gods? We're not talking of gods made with wood and stone and metal and card images as such.

But anything that occupies the chief place of our heart, anything that usurps or pushes out the sovereignty of God as being chief and king and lord and ruler of our life really is a God.

[3 : 43] And we should always look at our lives and say, who has the chief place? And I hope for every one of us today, we're able to say, the Lord God is one God and he is my God and he is the only God of my life.

And this is what the Lord is emphasizing to Israel. And then we see that it goes on then to say, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and might.

In other words, you're going to, you have to love the Lord with the totality of your being. And that again is something that for the Christian is something that's essential, but it is a, it is a call for every single one of us to do.

Now, the thing is that we cannot really love the Lord until the Lord first loves us. And you might say to yourself, well, that's, that puts me in a very difficult position.

If today you're here and you have to say to yourself, well, I haven't come into a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. I don't really know Jesus personally. I believe a lot of this, but I don't get really excited about it.

[4 : 57] It doesn't mean all that much to me. Does that mean then that God doesn't love me? Well, the thing is, when God sets his love upon us, it produces a natural response where we in turn love him.

And that's what the Bible tells us. We love him. Why? Because he, first of all, loved us. Love is this compelling, powerful motive, force within our life that changes, changes us, changes our perception, changes our direction, changes our affections, changes our goals.

Because, you know, you might be following the Lord for quite a while. And you look back in your life and you say to yourself, you know, it's quite amazing. Things that meant so, so much to me today. Yes, they're still important, but they're not right up there where they used to be. There are so many things that used to motivate me and drive me on and make my life.

I still enjoy them. They're still part of my life. But they're not that important. I can take them. I can leave them. Because God has come to fill what these things used to fill in my life.

[6 : 16] And that's the way it works. This love that is born within our heart. So this love that we have for God, it implies certain things.

First of all, it implies knowledge. And the reason we say that is that we have to know who it is that we love. We can't love something that we don't really know or know about.

So straight away, when we say we love God, it means that we have to know God. Now, none of us here know God in its entirety. None of us, in some ways, have even got past the ABC of coming to know who God is.

Because he is unsearchable in his being. And yet he has revealed himself to us. And he has given us the wisdom and knowledge to understand a lot about him.

And that is why it is so, so important that people will come to hear about God. Because remember what Paul says, How can a person believe in him of whom he has not heard?

[7 : 27] Now, that's quite a solemn, challenging thought. How can you believe in somebody you don't know of? Somebody you've never heard about? It's kind of, it's not possible. So we cannot believe or love somebody that we don't know anything about.

So that's why it's so important that people come unto the word of God. That people come to read the word of God and study the word of God. So that they come to know who God is.

And it is as they come to know God that they come to believe in him. That they come then to love him. So this is why it's so important. And the more we come to know of God, the more we come to understand his majesty, his glory.

We use big words like his omniscience, which means that he knows absolutely everything. His omnipotence, which means that he is all-powerful.

His omnipresence, which means that he is everywhere. His presence is in every place at the same time. That's what makes God so altogether and utterly different to anything that we are, or in many ways that we can understand.

[8 : 44] The greatness, the majesty, the glory of God. And again, his word reveals to us. And the more we study, the more we come to know of his justice, his judgment, his love, his mercy, his truth, his grace.

All these things. And this is all part of what it is, this love. And the more that we come to know of the Lord, the more we come to love him.

And you know, when a person comes to faith, this is what they want to do. They want to know more and more of the Lord. When a person is young, and I suppose like young people, they always have a great love for the, I suppose, the star for the day, whether it's in sport or in film or in music or in whatever.

And they want to know as much as possible about their heroes or their heroines, about the stars. And they will read everything they can. They will, some of them, collect memorabilia.

It's a great dream if they could meet their stars, their heroes, their heroines, they would love. And that's, all young people go through that.

[9 : 53] And I suppose to a certain extent that is why today when we live in a very much a celebrity culture, there are just, there are so many magazines around today, celebrity magazines telling every single thing.

What people eat, what they drink, where they go, what they do. Because people are interested in that. But you know when a person becomes a Christian, it's that kind of appetite that people may have for finding out other things, that you get for God.

Because you want to know as much as you possibly can about Him. And one of the great things is that the more you get to know about God, the more you want to know.

You know, sometimes it's a reverse with human nature. Sometimes when you meet people and get to know people and you think, Oh, a really nice person. And your attitude doesn't change.

But you know, as you get to know them, you begin to discover all the warts and the failings and the failures. And you see, and we all have, we're all like that. But it's the very reverse with the Lord.

[10:57] The more we come to know Him, the more wonderful He becomes. And the more then that we want to know, we want to know even more and more. And so this is why we study His Word and we seek to find out as much as we can about Him.

And this love that we have for the Lord implies also that it is a powerful love. It's a love that propels us on.

It's a love that drives us. It's kind of like the fuel in our tank. You know, whether a car runs on diesel or petrol or electric, whatever it is, it runs on something.

It's driven by something. Well, for the Christian, love is that which motivates us. It's love is that which, Paul said, the love of Christ constrains me.

It's that which pushes you on and propels you on and motivates you to witness, to serve, to obey.

When you obey the Lord, when you try to obey the Lord, you do it because you love Him.

[12:08] It's a response of love. Our obedience to the Lord is not saying, oh, you know, this is what I've got to do.

Oh, man. We do it because we love Him. Now, that doesn't mean that all His commands for us all the time are easy.

Sometimes we have to ask for the grace to seek to obey Him because we're still sinners. And sin often wants to go another direction. And that's what causes the hurt within our heart.

It's when we disobey Him, when we go another way, when we defiantly and deliberately disobey what He commands us, then that produces within us sorrow within our heart.

And we're saying, oh, Lord, I'm so sorry. Why are we saying we're sorry? It's because we love Him.

And we don't want to hurt Him. And we know that we have hurt Him when we're disobedient and we turn away from Him.

[13:07] So this love is a love that propels us on and drives us on. But it's also a generous love.

This love of God that comes into our heart is generous in the sense that it's not a love that stores up like a reservoir.

It's a love that's like a river that flows in and flows out. And it's a love that has a love in our hearts for others.

If a Christian is somebody who is void of love towards others, and we've always got to remember that love isn't just simply sort of saying, have you got a nice feeling about somebody?

Love is active. Love is where you're prepared to get your hands dirty. Love is where you're prepared to do. It's where you go the extra mile, where you put yourself out, where you want the best for other people.

That's what the love is. And if you have this love, this is how the Christian should operate. If they don't, then there's something radically and seriously wrong. If you have a Christian and he's saying, you know, or she's saying, I struggle loving people.

[14:22] Well, you see it, you're sure. There's kind of a question mark there. Because it's one of the fundamental truths that the Word of God teaches us, that if we love God and if God loves us, then it's almost impossible that we don't love one another.

John says this, If anyone who does not love, he says, Anyone who does not love, does not know God.

Because God is love. Now that's a challenging question. That's what it says. Anyone who does not love, does not know God. And again it says, If anyone says, I love God and hates his brother, that person is a liar.

That's what the Bible says. It's strong language, but that's exactly what it says. So here's this love that comes from God and then goes out with us.

Or out from us. And it's also a love that remains. It's an enduring love. It's a permanent love. It's an everlasting love. This love is always there.

[15 : 33] God's love to us never changes. Now our sense of our love to God we would have to say, It waxes and wanes.

It comes and it goes. But it's always there. It's always, always, always there. But sometimes we're not so aware of it as other times. Sin clouds our knowledge of that love.

But the love is always, always, always there. God never, never will take away his love. And because his love is always there, then in turn, even although it might be very faint, our love to him is always there.

And how do we know that we love God? Well, it's evidenced in, very often in, in all the things that belong to God. We love his people. We love his day. We love his word. We love his house. We love his cause. We love the things that he loves. And again, one of the ways that we know that we love the Lord is that we're often thinking about him.

[16 : 36] When you love somebody, you think about that person. Parents think about their children. Husbands and wives think about each other.

It's a nature of those that you love that you think about them. You don't go a whole week or a fortnight and say, you know, I haven't thought about them.

Of course you have. You don't have to think, am I thinking about them? You just think about them because they're so much part of your life. And so it is for the Christian.

We automatically, we think often of the Lord. So all these things are evidences of that love. And then it says in verse six, very briefly, it just says, and these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

So that the words that the Lord is giving to us, all these commandments are to be part and partial of our lives are to be built up. Why? Because this book is a guidebook for our lives.

[17 : 41] This book is a rule to direct us how we are to go through life. This book is a book that shows us the only way that we can glorify and enjoy God.

God. Because if we'd go any other way, we won't be able to glorify and enjoy him as we should. But then we find the Lord then saying here, these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

And then moves on to say, you shall teach them diligently to your children and you 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.

So the Lord is saying it is absolutely essential if you have children that you teach the children the words and the way of the Lord.

Now some people will say and I've heard people say to me, people have actually said it, I don't believe in teaching the children in this particular way. They should be allowed to grow up themselves and then if that is when they grow up, if this is the direction that they want to go in, fair enough.

[19 : 01] But don't try and tell them these things when they're young. Let them discover for themselves. Let them work these things out for themselves. Well, that is so absurd.

We don't do that with anything else in life. We don't say about our children, well, maybe they'll grow up to be mannerly or maybe they won't. Maybe they'll grow up to do the right things or maybe they won't.

But I'm just going to leave them. Nobody does that. We guide, we instruct, we show our children what is right, what is wrong.

Same as when they go to school. You don't say to yourself, well, if they want to learn, good and well, but don't teach them. Don't teach them counting.

Don't teach them about spelling. Don't teach them anything. They'll discover themselves. that's kind of absurd. We teach our children and particularly we teach our children in the ways of the Lord.

[20 : 04] God is our maker. He's our creator. He is the one that we are accountable to. And one of the greatest responsibilities and the greatest privileges that any parent can have in the young years of their life is directing them and showing them the way to go.

And that's what the Lord is saying here. And God is saying for the future good of Israel it is imperative that the children are taught in the way of the Lord.

You know, see if you read further down we read that verse 20. When your son asks you in time to come what is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you then you shall say to your son we were Pharaoh's slaves and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

God ordered the structure of Israel's way of life in a way that the children would be taught. The Passover which was the great event in the history of Israel which was celebrated from its institution back in Egypt all throughout the centuries even we find it at the time of Jesus it was at the time of the Passover that Jesus was put to death it was the great event in the Jewish calendar.

God set it out you read about it back in Exodus and this is what he says so that in time to come your children are going to ask you why do you do this?

[21 : 41] Why do you have this Passover meal? And what are you to do? You are to tell them exactly what God did for you. It was the same when Israel crossed Jordan we've spoken about this before and God commanded that those who crossed the Jordan that twelve huge stones would be taken out of the riverbed and these stones were to be propped up at the side of the Jordan they were kind of memorial stones and they were put there so that this is what it says in time to come your children will ask what are these stones there for?

You will tell them of how the Lord delivered you out of Egypt took you through the wilderness and took you across this Jordan into the land of promise.

Everything was set out so that the instruction of the children was there and that is why we invest a lot of time and energy and resources into the instruction of children.

Although the main place of instruction is the home the church also takes seriously the instruction of children. You know it's one of the saddest things to go to a church and there's no children or hardly any children because the congregation must feel it.

They'll be saying where's her future? Where are those who are coming behind? And it's one of the most encouraging things to see where there are so many children.

[23 : 17] We thank the Lord for the way that he has blessed us in that particular way. Now don't get me wrong, I'm always aware that not everybody can have children and people have lost children.

I know that a baptism service can actually be quite a sore time for some people. I ask that the Lord will give grace to such in that situation.

But what we're talking about here is how the Lord has set out this particular way for the instruction of the children. And this instruction must be, remember we've been talking about the heart.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart. Verse 6, these words that I command you today shall be in your heart. So how do we teach the children? We teach them without heart.

It's heart to heart. It's not just a kind of a duty. Yes, there's a duty in it, of course there is. But it's got to be from heart to heart. It's because you love them.

[24 : 18] You believe in this. You honestly believe. Let me tell you, children will soon know whether it's real to you or not. If there are any group of people that you can't pull the wool over their eyes, it's children.

It might when they're very, very small, but it won't take them long to suss out. And they'll be saying to them, this isn't for real. They will know very quickly if this is something you really believe in or not. And that is why if it is in your heart and it is coming from your heart, then they will know, oh, this is real. This is from the heart. And so it's imperative that the children are taught.

And you know, these early years of a child's life are so important. You know what the word says? Train up a child in the way that he or she will go. And when they're old, they will not depart from it. Isn't that wonderful? There might be periods in between where they drift and it appears to you that all your training and all your instruction has been in vain. But it says when they're old, they will not depart from it.

[25 : 32] I love that. And what an encouragement that is to us to say, well, Lord, you know, that's, the Lord loves when we take his word to him. And we're able to go to the Lord and say, Lord, this is what your word says.

That's what I'm pleading today. I'm pleading today. Now, I know that none of us have ever felt that we have instructed and taught our children to the fullness of how we probably could.

But if we have set the Lord before them, if we have tried our best to make it to show the reality of the living and true God, of the way of salvation, set out all these things before, then we have to leave prayerfully when they have moved on these things in God's hand.

And God is faithful. We've got to leave it there. Then there's so many other things we could say, but it also tells us here that you are to, this is what it says, you shall teach them diligently to your children.

So this is real, there's real effort and you're working at this, you teach them diligently and you shall talk to them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise.

[26 : 52] you talk to your children, sometimes you sit beside them when they're wee, sometimes they sit in your lap. You talk about this, you talk about that, you tell them stories, always make sure that in all the things you talk about that you talk about the Lord as well.

Important. And again, when you walk by the way, I think I've said this before, it's one of the earliest memories I have when I was a child, when I was wee, and I'd be out with my mum or dad and we'd be walking, and I still, one of the clearest memories I have is a moonlight night, a full starry, starry night and moon, and looking up into the moon and the stars, and remembering my mother saying, you know, God made that, God just brought that he spoke the word, and he brought, see the moon, brought it into being, all these stars, you know what, he counts them, and he has a name for everyone.

Not only will a child go, wow, we still go, wow, when you look up and you say, that's incredible, it's way beyond what we think, but that's why it's so important to teach the children when they're young, so that they have a God consciousness about them.

When they lie down, speak to them, teach them to pray, pray with them, teach them to pray, and similarly, when they're old enough that they'll read a little bit of the word in the morning and at night. What a privilege, but what a responsibility. And just as we finish here, if you're somebody who's still outside the kingdom, I'm quite sure that you here today, that you were taught from a young age in the right way, and that there's been somebody praying for you, maybe that person that has prayed and prayed and prayed for you is no longer living, but that prayers are following on.

[29 : 00] It's a wonderful thing to be prayed for. What are you doing with all the privileges that you've had? Please accept Jesus as he's offered to us in the gospel.

Let us pray. Lord our God, we give thanks for your word and we pray that you will bless us. We ask now that as we come to sing your word and as the children will come in and little grace will come in to be baptized, that you will bless us and that you will put your arms around us and keep us and do us good.

Take away from us our every sin. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. We're going to sing now in Psalm 145, Psalm 145, and we're singing, and it's down as 1 to 7, but we're going to sing verses 1 to 8 just in order to give everybody time to come in.

It's from the Scottish Psalter, page 444. O Lord, thou art my God and King.

This is the second version of Psalm 145, on page 444. O Lord, thou art my God and King, thee will I magnify and praise. I will thee bless and gladly sing unto thy holy name always.

[30 : 20] Each day I rise, I will thee bless and praise thy name time without end. Much to be praised and great God is, his greatness none can comprehend. Race shall I works praise unto race.

The mighty acts show done by thee. I will speak of the glorious grace and honour of thy majesty.

The wondrous works I will record by men the might shall be extolled.

Of all thy dreadful acts, O Lord, and I thy greatness will unfold. They utter shall abundantly the memory of thy goodness great, and shall sing praises cheerfully, whilst they thy righteousness relate.

So on. 1 to 8, Psalm 145, O Lord, thou art my God and King. O Lord, thou art my God and King, He will thy heart glorify God and praise.

I will be blessed and God will sing unto thy holy name always.

[31 : 43] Each day I rise, I will be blessed and praise thy name thy will end.

Much to thee praise and grateful is His greatness none come can Trump be To Christ the assembly He shall thee and Shole, And Him told and I re I will speak Be gone And glorious grace And honor all Thy majesty Thy wondrous works

I will record Thy wisdom I Shall be its soul Of all thy dreadful acts O Lord And I thy greatness Will unfold They utter shall Upon the tree Thou angry hope Thy goodness bring And shall sing praises Tearfully What did thy righteousness

Relay The Lord Our God Is gracious Compassion In unity O soul In mercy He is Pentious But unto Our And anger So I'm going to read in Matthew's Gospel Matthew chapter 28 And we read there verse 16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee

To the mountain to which Jesus had directed them And when they saw him they worshipped him But some doubted And Jesus came and said to them All authority in heaven and on earth Has been given to me Go therefore and make disciples of all nations Baptizing them in the name of the Father And of the Son And of the Holy Spirit Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you And behold I am with you Always to the end of the age Gordon and Sandra You are about to take vows Before God And before this congregation And the one or two things that I am going to say Though I am speaking to you I am speaking to all parents as well And as I was saying This is a tremendous privilege And I cannot stress too much The importance of what you are doing Because in a sense We only have one chance

[36 : 06] One opportunity at it Because As you are very aware Children Little children Because you are always Your children will always be your children But little children Are only little children For a short time And it doesn't take long Until they are actually Away out from Your hands so to speak Although they will always be your children For as long as they are spared So it is important That we take the opportunities That God gives us Now you and I cannot We cannot convert Our children Much and all That we would love to But we can do for them What we can And that is to teach them In the way of the Lord It is the Lord who converts And the Lord Has a place For those Children Of his people And those within The With the sphere of the church I don't think we can emphasise

How important And how special And how precious it is To bring up A child In the sphere Of the church Where God's presence Where God's blessing Is And it is so important That we bring It is not just send Children to Sunday school But we bring our children With us Now when I'm saying this To Gordon And to Sandra I should maybe Maybe Sandra Will shoot me for this But it must be something Of a record Might not be a record But it can't be far Of a record Because One day when I was At the door And everybody was going out Sandra came out It was about a year ago Or roughly around About a year ago She came out From the session room She had been in there And I knew that Little Grace We didn't know She was going to be Little Grace then We knew that The baby was to be due So I said to Sandra When is the baby due?

Oh she said yesterday Whoa I said you're hardy Well Little Grace was born And next Sunday Little Grace Was back here Which is really Something Quite special So when I'm saying The importance Of bringing Your Little ones To the house of God I'm saying it to everybody It's a tremendous Privilege But the most important Place of all Is the home You have more You have more say With your children You have access To your children You're able to do For your children More than anybody else So you make sure That you take The opportunity That you use The opportunity To teach Your children Well And as we say Teach them to Read Bible stories To them Tell them Bible stories When they're old enough That they read them Themselves That every morning Every night Just read Teach them to read Just a wee Wee

Wee Wee bit And I would encourage All you young people Whatever you do Day or night Make sure you Read just a wee Wee Wee bit Every day Every night And ask God To bless you Nothing greater That you can do In your life So we're going to Have the baptism And I'm going to ask Sandra and Gordon To be upstanding And indeed All the congregation To be upstanding As well In the Lord's name I'm going to ask The question Do you believe In the God Of the scripture The God Of Father Son And Holy Spirit The only God As is revealed To us in the truth To be the living And true God Do you believe That the Lord Jesus Christ

Is the only Savior Of sinners Do you promise To bring up Grace Morrison Kennedy In the fear And in the teaching And the instruction Of the Lord Grace Morrison Kennedy I baptize you In the name Of the Father And of the Son And of the Holy Spirit One God May God bless you And keep you May he shine his face Upon you May you Be a blessing To your parents And to all the family And they in turn A blessing To you Let us pray Amen Oh Lord our God We pray that You will indeed Bless us We give thanks That we are witness Today Of something That's very special And very precious Where little Grace Morrison Kennedy Has been baptized And has become

[41 : 06] A member Of the visible Church here We pray that In due time That she will Become a member In a More In a fuller way Where she will Become one Of your people Sitting At your table We give thanks Oh Lord That you are A gracious God And that you Delight In the instruction Of children We give thanks For all the children Who are here today And we pray Lord That you will

Deal graciously With them all That you will Teach them In the way of the Lord That you will Give wisdom To parents To grandparents To all members Of family In the Dealing with children We give thanks For all who Teach them Who give of their Time week By week To look And care For and To instruct And so we pray Your special blessing Today on Gordon And Sandra Keep them And bless them We pray for

Little James Grace's brother We ask Lord That you will Bless him And keep him And we pray For Gordon And Sandra's Respective families That you will Watch over them Do us all good We pray And may your Love surround us May your grace Uphold us And may you Fill our hearts With hope Take away your sin In Jesus name Amen We're going to Conclude now Singing in the 23rd Psalm Psalm 23 And this is from Sing Psalms It's on page 28 The Lord is my shepherd No want shall I know He makes me lie down Where the green pastures Grow He leads me to rest Where the calm Water flow We'll sing the whole psalm The Lord is my shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd No want shall I know He makes me lie down Where the green pastures Grow He leads me to rest Where the calm Water flow My wandering Sets he brings Back to this way In strength Of all righteousness Making me say And this he has done His great name To display Though I walk in depths

I'll leave where darkness Is near Because you are with me No evil I fear Your hope And your staff Bring me comfort And cheer In the sight Of my enemies Such able You spread The oil of rejoicing You pour on my head My cup O earth Close And I Graciously Bend To Of sure Your covenant Mercy And grace Will follow me

Closely In all Of my Ways I Will Dwell In the House Of The Lord Almighty Now may the grace Mercy and peace Of God the Father Son and Holy Spirit Rest and abide Upon each one of you Now and forevermore Amen