

“A TIMELESS MESSAGE”

MARK 12:28-34

NOVEMBER 20, 2005

Introduction:

In May 1830, thirteen baptist pioneers who had settled near the head of Brouilletts creek, met together and made the decision to be organized into a church in order that they might more effectively spread the message of the Gospel. On Saturday, July 3, 1830 the First Baptist Church became a reality. 175 years later the First Baptist Church still exists as a viable body of believers in the Kingdom of God.

When I begin to think about everything that has happened in the world in last 175 years, it is a bit overwhelming. In 1830 our country was a mere 54 years old.

People traveled by horse as well as horse and buggy.

No one dreamed of traveling by car, airplane or even traveling into space not to mention landing on the moon.

Andrew Jackson was the president of the United States
There have been 36 presidents since he was in office.

Our country has been at war many times in the past 175 years.

The Spanish American War

World War I

World War II

Korea

Vietnam

Two Gulf conflicts

Wars were fought with men who had guns that fired a single shot and had to be reloaded.
Cannon's were the high powered weapons of 1830.

Today we have aircraft carriers, laser guide weapons, and nuclear bombs that can destroy entire continents.

In 1830 it was legal to own a slave and gratefully 30 or so years later a Civil War erupted and slavery was abolished.

Communication/information was by word of mouth, town crier, books, or weekly newspaper.

Today – the internet, email, television – local news & cable, cell phones are how we receive information.

Shopping consisted of a small one room store in 1830.

Today we have Wal-Mart and large shopping malls where you can buy every conceivable item.

I'm not sure what sports existed in 1830 but I know that basketball, football, & baseball had not been invented yet.

I am sure that the comparisons could go on and on.

The world is a vastly different place than it was in 1830.

However, there are some things that have not changed.

Simply put the Word of God & the Truths that are contained within this book we call the Bible have remained the same. The words that we find on these pages are as relevant today as they were in 1830 and as unchanging the day they were written.

Last Sunday afternoon following the Bears victory, I began to think about this week's message. So I simply said this to the Lord, "What do you want me to tell the people next week?"

And here is passage that the Lord laid on my heart almost immediately.

Here are the verses that came to my mind.

Tell them to continue to...

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...Love your neighbor as yourself.

The 13 people who gathered to organize this church did it in order that they might be a more effective witness of the Gospel and when we take the Words of Jesus in Mark 12 and apply them to our lives we will fulfill the foundational purpose of those people, of this church, and the Word of God.

Read Mark 12:28-34

1. The greatest commandment remains unchanged.

"Of all the commandments which is the most important?"

Let me paraphrase for you what the teaching of the law was asking...

"Jesus there are over 600 different laws that we are required to follow...which one is at the top of the list?"

That question appeals to me because I am a list person...I like to look at the rankings in sports.

Jesus answers the man's question by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 a passage that this man would have known very well. Because even today in the Jewish culture this verse holds great significance. It is quoted at the beginning of every synagogue service. They call it the **Shema** which simply means **hear**. In our culture it would be something like saying pay attention or listen up. The only thing that I can think of that equates to the Shema in our culture is our National Anthem or the Pledge of Allegiance.

First let me say this...

Love for God and our neighbors is built on the love the Lord has for his people and on his identification with them. This type of love involves one's whole being.

Heart = (English word cardiac)

The seat of man's entire mental and moral activity. It is used figuratively for **the hidden springs of the personal life.**

Jesus said that whatever we speak comes from our heart!

Our heart is revealed by our speech...it shows who we are and what is going on inside of us. The heart is the center of man's inward life. The heart represents the true character of who a person is. When we love God with all of our heart, we love Him with the very center and very fabric of our lives.

Soul = breath of life

(Genesis 2:7 "the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man become a living being")

Love the Lord God with our very being...We love him with the very life that He has given us. He has given us breath of life and we love him with every breath.

*This is the air I breath, This is the air I breath, Your Holy presence living in me
And I'm desperate for you
And I'm lost without you*

Mind = thinking through, mediation or reflection (with the work of the Holy Spirit)

(Romans 12:2 "do not conform to the pattern of this world any longer but be transformed by the renewing of your mind")

We love God with our very thoughts which in turn set the course of our life.
We allow God to be part of our thought process.

Strength = physical strength

As we go about our days, we love him with our physical strength.
FCA ...

Love The Lord Your God With Your Whole Being!

It seems almost impossible to love God with only a portion of our life. As a matter of fact, it is incongruent to think that we have to love God only on a Sunday morning for an hour. Yet, that is often how we equate our love for God. Feeling like we have completed our religious duty.

It should be reflected in everything that we do and say. It should be seen in every decision we make. It should be scene in how we relate to other people.

It is a way of life. Not an easy way but **I John 1:19, "We love because he first loved us."**

When we say we have a relationship with the Lord this is exactly what we mean. It takes time to develop a love relationship with someone. It is not something that takes place overnight. That is why it is so crucial that we take time out of our busy day to spend time with God in His word, in prayer, & in worship.

Romans 5:5b “God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us.”

It is a past action that signifies a present reality.

God said that He love you so much that he has poured (not sprinkled) his love into our hearts...

Let’s be completely honest with ourselves today and let this be between you and the Lord. If we took the 4 words used to describe how we are to love God how would you rate? How would I rate?

Heart

Soul

Mind

Strength

John 14:15, Jesus said, “if you love me, you will obey my commands.”

This might be a good test or it might not be but let me ask you this question.

“Do you have a passion for Jesus”

“How often do you verbalize your love for the Lord when you are by yourself?”

“When we sing the song, ‘I Love You Lord’ do we mean it?”

Release you from guilt if you haven’t – because we all fall short in this area.

God loves us for who we are not what we should be!

Are we worthy of God’s love? Not even in the slightest. We are depraved people.

Yet, God still loves us...God still extends His grace to each of us this morning.

2. The second greatest commandment remains unchanged.

The second is this: “**Love your neighbor as yourself**”

(Leviticus 19:18)

“Never seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.”

Key Understanding in light of the previous section:

When we realize how much we don’t deserve God’s love and yet He gives it to us free of charge, we will begin to love other people to a greater extent. Our love will be based on a realization that God loves us and that we love Him.

Our love for other people will be **proportionally** reflected by how much we love God. Or by the quality of relationship that we have with Him.

If your vertical relationship is right your horizontal relationships will be right.

If your love for God is great, your love for others will be great.

The closer I get to the Lord, the more I love my wife, family & others.

It will be next to impossible to love others if we cannot love God.

As a matter of fact, when we show a lack of love for others we are revealing something about our very lives...How much we love God.

The people that I know who love God in fact love others also...

Love your neighbor as yourself...

Treat people how you would like to be treated. But even deeper than that.

Go the extra mile in a relationship with your neighbor.

Talk is cheap but action backs up our true convictions!

Read 1 John 4:7-8, 19-20

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

“We love because He first loved us.”

In almost 20 years of ministry, I have seen this reality played out over and over again.

Men and women of God who love Him intensely, extend that love to others around them. They are people who are marked by mercy and not judgment.

Let me set some directional guidelines for love by using **Matthew 5:43-47**.

Who is my neighbor? Anyone you ever come in contact with!

You will never meet someone that does not matter to God!

Verses 32-33 in Mark

Well said, teacher, You are right in saying...

God is one and there is no other

Love God with my whole being

Love your neighbor as yourself

“this is more important than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices”

In other words he is saying this is more important than being religious...

Religion = my works to gain God’s approval for salvation

Christianity = my acceptance of God’s free gift of salvation manifesting itself in my personal relationship with the God

Watch out for the teachers of the law.

In other words watch out for "**religious people.**"
"Freedom From The Religious Spirit"

Thirteen people gathered on the third Saturday of May in 1830 several miles south of Chrisman in a community called Bloomfield because they had a vision for the spread of the Good News, the Gospel. The world has changed in some incredible ways in 175 yet their vision lives on here at the First Baptist Church. The spread of the Gospel is built on people who love God with their whole being and it is built on people who love others. **These are Biblical truths for an ever changing world!**

Read at the closing of the service 1 Timothy 1:17

"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen"