

Let Us Love God  
(Matthew 22:34-38)

Introduction:

1. On this occasion Jesus was asked to identify "*the great commandment in the law.*"
2. Although the man asking this question did not have a pure motive, Jesus took advantage of this situation to teach a very important lesson.
3. "*The first and great commandment*" is to love God with all the heart, soul, and mind.
4. Since Jesus considered loving God to be so important, it deserves our careful attention.
5. Perhaps Valentine's Day is a convenient time for us to concentrate on our responsibility to love God.
6. The first point we need to make is that . . .

Discussion:

- I. THE BIBLE EXPLAINS WHY WE SHOULD LOVE GOD
  - A. John stated twice that "*God is love*" (1 John 4:8, 16).
  - B. According to 1 John 4:19, "*We love Him, because He first loved us.*"
  - C. We learn from 1 John 4:9-10 that God demonstrated His love in a powerful way.
  - D. We know that loving God is "*the first and great commandment,*" and we understand why we should love God.
  - E. This brings us to our next point.
- II. THE BIBLE EXPLAINS HOW WE SHOW OUR LOVE TO GOD
  - A. One way we show our love to God is by keeping His commandments.
    1. Regardless of what men may say, our response to God's commands is a true indication of our love to God (1 John 2:3-5).
    2. To be right with God, we must keep His commandments (1 John 3:22-24).
    3. Those who truly love God will not consider His commandments to be burdensome (1 John 5:2-3).
    4. Let us make an observation from Deuteronomy 6:1-9.
      - a. Moses called upon the Israelites to love God.
      - b. In addition, Moses wrote at length about obeying God's commands.
    5. Let us contrast 2 men and their responses to God's instructions.
      - a. Abraham's willingness to offer his son Isaac showed God something (Genesis 22:9-12; James 2:21-23).
      - b. Saul's disobedience showed God something (1 Samuel 15:10-11, 22-23).
      - c. God showed His love to Abraham and Saul.
      - d. We can determine by their actions which man truly loved God.
    6. A special blessing will be given to those who show their love to God by keeping His commandments (Revelation 22:14).
  - B. Another way we show our love to God is by loving our brethren.
    1. God knows whether we truly love Him by our love [or hatred] for our brethren (1 John 4:7-8, 11-12, 16, 20-21).
    2. To illustrate, God knew something about Cain because of the way he treated Abel (1 John 3:10-12).

Conclusion:

1. "*The first and great commandment*" is to love God with all the heart, soul, and mind.
2. Let us love God as He desires -- "*He first loved us.*"
3. Let us show God that we love Him by:
  - a. keeping His commandments
  - b. loving our brethren.