

Searching the Scriptures / 28 / Love For God / Part 3

Today we want to examine the concept of loving God and will be considering the following topics:

1. A Matter of the Heart
2. How God’s Word Enters the Heart
3. God’s New Covenant

A Matter of the Heart

What does the Bible mean when it says we are to love God? Let’s first take a look at Deu 6:4-6, *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart...”*

This verse is indicating that we are to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might. How are we to do that? This is an impossible situation as far as man is concerned. After all, God describes the condition of an unsaved person’s heart very early in the Bible in Gen 6:5: *“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”* We also know that man is spiritually dead from conception, as we find in Psa 51:5, *“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”* However, we do find a clue about our loving God in Deu 6:6: *“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart...”* So, how do God’s Words make their way into a person’s heart?

How God’s Word Enters the Heart

Since the Bible makes clear that we must love God with our heart (that is, with our soul and spirit), the greatest miracle that God performs is to take a dead heart, or soul, and infuse it with His Word, which is eternal life. God uses the descriptive language of *“cutting”* to accomplish this, as we see from Heb 4:12, *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

God’s Word penetrates people’s dead hearts or souls in order to either bestow eternal life or to confer eternal damnation. Keep in mind that not one human being has ever been left untouched by the effects of God’s glittering sword. Two examples of this are found in the New Testament. The first one in Acts 2:37 is representative of those who are being cut for salvation: *“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”* Rom 10:17 also explains, *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* The second example reveals how the Word cuts to perdition. Acts 7:54, speaking of the testimony of Stephen to the Sanhedrin before they killed him by stoning, states: *“When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.”*

The Old Testament also uses the language of circumcision to illustrate the cutting that Heb 4:12 speaks about, as we find in Deu 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, that thou mayest live.”* Physical circumcision involves the cutting away of

the skin of the male reproductive organ, which symbolically points to the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was “cut off”, or separated from God, when He suffered the equivalent of an eternity in Hell for the sins of His people. Rom 2:29 also adds, *“But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”*

God’s New Covenant

Heb 10:16-18 which quotes Deu 6:7-8 and Jer 31:33 says: *“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.”* The “covenant” is actually the Gospel itself, which concerns itself with the forgiveness of a person’s sin. In fact these two words of Gospel and Covenant are synonymous in the Bible. The Bible says that this Gospel is the Gospel of the grace of God. This is why the Lord Jesus was “cut off” for the sins of His people in order to satisfy the payment for sin, which is everlasting punishment in Hell.

Jesus also satisfied the righteous demands of the law for every Christian, which in turn He also bestows His righteousness upon each one of them. We also read further in Heb 10:11-12, *“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God...”* Heb 8:10 also affirms, *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.”*