

Studies in Christianity Christian Love #2

S#1.

Learning to Love God

S#2.

Text : **Deuteronomy 12: 28—13: 11**

S#3.

A. How fantastic it is that we have the ability to worship a truly awesome God.

1. The one true God who is infinite in all His attributes.
 - a. He is not a little bit of anything.
 - b. He is totally and invariably consistent in every way.
2. Our last lesson showed God to be a totally loving being.
 - a. **I John 4: 8, 16 ... “God IS love.”**
 - b. Because the very essence of God is love, He cannot act unlovingly.
 - c. This same principle applies to all of God’s attributes ... justice, holiness, power
3. We ended our lesson asking what our love for God had cost us.
 - a. God gave His only begotten Son.
 - b. The Son gave His life and rose in a body.
 - c. The Apostles gave up everything and were painfully martyred.

S#4.

B. Today we’ll observe a text message from God instructing His people to love Him.

C. Have you received a text message yet today ?

1. Texting has become one of the most common ways to communicate.
2. On average, 6 billion texts are sent each day in the U.S. alone.
 - a. Most texts are read within 3 min after being received.
 - b. On average, people respond to texts within 90 seconds.
 - c. Depending on age and gender, texts average 50 characters.
3. Texting is informal communication defined by Cambridge Dictionary as :
 - a. A written message, often containing short forms of words, sent from one mobile phone or pager to another. (**supposed 150 character limit**)
 - b. SMS language or “textspeak” is the abbreviated language and slang commonly used with mobile phone text messaging,
 - 1) LOL ... Laugh Out Loud
 - 2) SUL ... See You Later
 - 3) G2G ... Got Two Go

D. There are verses in scripture that are like text messages from God, short and right to the point.

1. **John 3:16** – For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. **S#5.**
2. **Eph. 2: 8** – For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; **9** not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them
3. **Matt, 22: 37** – And He said to him, " 'You shall love the lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' **38** "This is the great and foremost commandment. **39** The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' **40** On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

S#8.

E. With this lesson we want to examine one of God's "text messages" in the O.T.

1. It has only about 100 characters, but has a power packed message.
2. **Deut. 13: 4** – You shall follow the Lord your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.

0. Before we open this verse, let us first establish the context.

S#9.

- A. **Exodus 1-14** ... Moses lead the people out of Egypt.
- B. **Exodus 19-40** ... Moses gets the law for the people and builds the tabernacle.
- C. **Leviticus** ... How to implement the Law of Moses.
- D. **Number 14** ... They arrive at the promise land, but refuse to go in.
- E. 40 years of waiting in the wilderness for a generation to die. (*Time out*)
- F. **Deuteronomy** ... Moses is restating the Law in preparation for entering Canaan.
- G. With 110 characters Moses gave us 6 ways to honor and to love God. **S#10.**

Deut. 13: 4 – You shall follow the Lord your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.

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|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Follow the Lord | 4. Listen to His voice |
| 2. Fear Him | 5. Serve Him |
| 3. Keep His commandments | 6. Cling to Him |

I. Those who love God will “follow” Him.**S#11.****A. Definition :**

1. Put one's self behind another, to yield your will to theirs.
2. To imitate a leader,

B. Remember the kid's game “Follow the leader?”**S#12.**

1. Everyone tried to stay in a line and mimic every action of the leader.
2. Anyone could play, only two requirements ;
 - a. Surrender going their own way.

Isa. 53: 6 – All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;

- b. One has to know where the leader is going. (*pay attention, be ready*)

Matt. 16: 24 – Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come **S#13.**
after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow
Me.²⁵ "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever
loses his life for My sake will find it.

3. In order to be a follower of God, one must deny himself.

Eph. 5: 1 – Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; **2** and walk **S#14.**
in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us,
an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

C. How are you doing in your following Him.

1. Do you have your eyes fixed on Him to see where He will lead you ?
2. How does one learn His ways ? *Be in the word; reading and studying.*

II. People who love God “fear” Him.**S#15.****A. “Fear” is more than is traditionally interpreted as “reverence.”**

1. It's like riding a motorcycle. “*When you are not afraid of it, buy a bigger one.*”
2. It's like the respect one has for electricity. *It is useful, but it can kill you.*

B. In other scriptures this same word is used for being afraid.

1. **Gen. 32: 11** – Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the **S#16.**
hand of Esau; for I fear him, that he will come and attack
me and the mothers with the children.

2. **Psa. 23: 4** – Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they

3. **Job 37: 22** – Out of the north comes golden splendor;
 Around God is awesome majesty.
24 – Therefore men fear Him;

S#17.

C. Jesus told God's people to fear God.

1. **Matt. 10: 28** – Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.
2. God is the all-powerful sovereign ruler of the universe. *Fear is appropriate.*
3. I am awed by lightening, but I also respectfully fear it.

D. As we read the scriptures we must be attuned to learn about God.

III. The one who loves God will “keep” His commandments.

S#18.

A. Not as commonly understood, i.e., not just saying obey.

1. This word does incorporate obedience, but is not limited to that meaning.
Deut. 13: 18 – ... show mercy to you, and have compassion on you and make you increase, just as He has sworn to your fathers, **18** if you will listen to the voice of the Lord your God, keeping all His commandments which I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord your God.
2. It also carries the meaning of guarding.
 - a. **Deut. 4: 9** – Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart
 - b. **Exod. 34: 12** – Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst.
3. It carries the meaning of protecting, caring for, or superintending.
I Sam. 17:20 – So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him.
- * 4. This same concept is taught in the N.T.
II Pet. 3: 17 – You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,

B. Christians also have a responsibility to guard and care for the truth.

1. **I Tim. 6: 20** – O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge" — **21** which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith.

S#22.

2. **II Tim. 1: 13** – Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.
14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us,
the treasure which has been entrusted to you.

C. Israel was to love God by avoiding idols; we love God by obeying truth and protect it from having error mixed in with it ?

1. The Lord tells us how via His Apostle.
II Pet. 3: 18 – grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. We can identify error by knowing truth. *We need to be in the book.*

IV. The one who loves God will “listen” to what he says and harken to Him. S#23.

A. For the child of God, listening to Him is more than just hearing words.

1. It involves taking action based upon what one hears.
2. **Matt. 21: 28ff** ... Two sons ... only one actually did what he was instructed.

B. When God speaks, He expects active obedience. (*not mental just ascent*) S#24.

1. **James 1: 22** – in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. **22** But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.
2. **Luke 6: 46** – Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? S#25.
47 " Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them,
I will show you whom he is like: (*House on rock verses sand*)

C. Obedience is fundamental to salvation.

John 3: 36 – He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

V. Those who love God actively “serve” Him. S#26.

S#27.

A. Many understand “serve God” to mean worship God, BUT it means more.

1. “*Avad*” means to till, to toil, to work, to make one’s self a servant
2. Paul explains that to serve goes beyond worship.
Rom. 1: 25 – For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.
3. **Lev. 25: 46** – You may even bequeath them to your sons after you, to receive as a possession; you can use them as permanent “slaves.” But in respect to your countrymen, the sons of Israel, you shall not rule with severity over one another. (*Israel had been slaves*) S#28.

B. The N.T. also teaches the concept of toiling, working, laboring for God. S#29.

Luke 4: 8 – Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and "serve" Him only.'"

C. The Christian's spiritual labors extend beyond his self to God's family

1. **Phil. 2: 4** – ... regard one another as more important than yourselves; **4** do not **S#30.** merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.
2. **Gal. 5: 13** – For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

VI. Those who truly love God will "cling" to Him.

S#31.

A. To cling translates a word that's contemporary use is "glue."

S#32.

1. dâbaq : to cling, stick, stay close, cleave, keep close, stick to, stick with, follow closely, join to, overtake, catch
2. **Ruth 1: 14** – And they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth "clung" to her.
3. **Gen. 2: 24** – For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be "joined" to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

B. God wants for His people stay close with Him, to hang on and not be separated.

1. **Deut. 10: 20** – You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him and "cling" to Him, and you shall swear by His name. **S#33.**
2. **Rom. 12:9** – Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; "cling" to what is good
3. **I Cor. 6: 17** – But the one who "joins" himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

CONCLUSION :

S#34.

A. As we strive to learn how to love God more and better, God has given us 6 ways.

Deut. 13: 4 – You shall follow the Lord your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him

B. Pray God will enable us to amplify each of these in our individual lives.

INVITATION :

Have you given your heart to God ?

S#35.

Is your love for Him growing ?

S#36. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**Deuteronomy 12: 28—13: 11**

28 Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the Lord your God.

29 When the Lord your God cuts off before you the nations which you are going in to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, **30** beware that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How do these nations serve their gods, that I also may do likewise?' **31** You shall not behave thus toward the Lord your God, for every abominable act which the Lord hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

32 Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it.

13: 1 If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, **2** and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, ' Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' **3** you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God is testing you to find out if you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. **4** You shall follow the Lord your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. **5** But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has counseled rebellion against the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to seduce you from the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from among you.

6 If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, ' Let us go and serve other gods' (whom neither you nor your fathers have known, **7** of the gods of the peoples who are around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end), **8** you shall not yield to him or listen to him; and your eye shall not pity him, nor shall you spare or conceal him. **9** But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. **10** So you shall stone him to death because he has sought to seduce you from the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **11** Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and will never again do such a wicked thing among you.