

J.R. Miller:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Matthew 22:37

We are to notice, first, that it is love God wants. We may give Him our life's highest honor " but He is not satisfied with honor. We ought to obey Him. He is our God and our King, and we owe Him the fullest obedience. But obedience is not enough. We owe Him service also, for we belong to Him, and we ought to pour out our lives for Him. But it is neither honor, obedience, nor service that this command requires. We are to LOVE God. If it were possible for us to render such honor, obedience, and service as the angels give " and yet not love Him, He would not be satisfied. Nothing but love will satisfy Him.

We are told here also the measure of the love that we are to give to God. It must be an all-absorbing love. God wants no half-hearts. He must be loved supremely " more than all tender friends, more than all worldly things. Then this love must draw the whole life after it " the mind, the soul, the strength; it must lead to true and entire consecration.

Suppose a mother gives her child a beautiful flower-plant in bloom, and tells her to carry it to a sick friend. The child takes the plant away, and when she reaches the friend's door she plucks off one leaf and gives it to her, keeping the plant herself. Then afterward, once a week, she plucks off another leaf, or a bud, or a flower, and takes it to the friend, still retaining the plant. Has she obeyed? Nothing but the giving of the whole plant would be obedience. Yet God asks for all our life's heart, soul, mind, and strength " and we pluck off a little leaf of love now and then, a bud, a flower of affection, or one cluster of fruit, and give these little things to Him, keeping the life itself. Shall we not say, "Let Him take all"? This first commandment requires the complete consecration of the whole life to God!