



Sermon Series: "C" Series
Part Two: Comanded to Love
Mark 12:30

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Introduction: **Mark 12:30** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. When I first became a follower of Jesus I fell in love with the Bible [the Word of God] and began to claim its promises for myself especially those that dealt with prosperity, peace, empowerment and eternal life. But after a time I began to see commands or as I called them, verses I love to hate. **1 Peter 1:15** says, "Be Holy." **James 1:2** declares, "Count it all joy when you fall into many trials, tests, problems and difficulties" In **Matthew 5:44** Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you, do good to those that hate you." These commands are impossible for us to obey without God's supernatural power enabling us to comply with His will. Some, maybe most people regard these commandments as cruel taskmasters enslaving us in a prison of guilt because of our inability to obey them. But they are not merciless taskmasters imprisoning us in impossibility! I've come to believe that God's commands are *windows into His soul revealing His needs and the work He will do in each person who is willing to walk with Him*. We hinder God from working in us by saying, "I could never do what God wants me to do and I can never be what God wants me to be." The commandments reveal the *potential* we have in our relationship with God. *The commandments do not deal with the actuality of our weakness, but with the potentiality of our strength in Him. The power to keep every command is provided by the One who gave us every command to keep.*

John 14:15-18 Amplified, "If you love Me, [you can] keep My commandments. ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another *Helper [an enabler]*, that He may abide with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor

knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. **R. T. France:** To know about God is nothing; to know Him is everything. **Ephesians 3:20 ... there is greatness in you.**

#1. Commanded To Love (*Mark 12:30* You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength).

A. Albert Camus: *There is only one duty, and that is to love.* **Joseph Cafasso:** *We were born to love, we live to love, and we will die to love still more.*

1. WE CANNOT BUT HELP CONFORMING OURSELVES TO WHAT WE LOVE

- a. Pastor Dan:** Worship is the expression of your affection aimed in the direction of God.
- b. Pastor Dan:** GOD CONFORMED HIMSELF into what He loved more than anything else—He became flesh and conformed Himself into His favorite creation—Man. **John 1:1-2, 14 Amplified:** In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself. ² He was [continually existing] in the beginning [co-eternally] with God. ¹⁴ And the Word (Christ) became flesh, and lived among us; and we [actually] saw His glory, glory as belongs to the [One and] only begotten *Son* of the Father, [the Son who is truly unique, the only One of His kind, who is] full of grace and truth (absolutely free of deception).
- c. Pastor Dan:** God conformed Himself into a human being so that He could die for us. As we surrender our lives to Jesus God conforms us into the image of His one and only Son so we can live for Him.
- d. Romans 8:29 NKJV** For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He [Jesus] might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- e. 1 John 5:3 Amplified** For the [true] love of God is this: that we habitually keep His commandments and remain focused on His precepts. And His commandments and His precepts are not difficult [to obey].
- f. Pastor Dan:** Somewhere in eternity past God looked into the mirror of His need and He saw a reflection of my face and yours. It was then that He decided on our existence.
- g. Hebrews 12:1-2** Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses [who by faith have testified to the truth of God's absolute faithfulness], let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² [looking away from all that will distract us and] looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God
- h. Pastor Dan:** God has written me into His life and written Himself into my life. When I connect with Him and allow Him to connect with me then and then only does my life makes sense, I am empowered to obey and I experience a peace that passes all understanding. (I was born 51 days after my parents were married. When in the process of conceiving me they were not focused on and did not see

me. But God had His eye on me and brought me into this world as a product of His love. **Psalm 139:13-16 NLT** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. ¹⁵ You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. ¹⁶ You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.)

2. OUR LIFE EXTENDS INTO ETERNITY (*Closing Point and Invitation*)

- a. **Why should we love God?** *Dr. Tim Keller:* Our life extends into eternity. The life we live [the love we love—the desire we desire] today follows and extends itself into eternity.
- b. *Frances of Sales proclaimed this eternal truth,* “We cannot help conforming ourselves to what we love.”
- c. *Pastor Dan:* If we devote our lives to loving, serving, obeying, seeking and walking with Jesus then that desire will continue to perpetuate itself throughout all of eternity.
- d. *Pastor Dan:* If we spend our lives resisting, rebelling, sinning and walking away from Jesus then that desire will continue to perpetuate itself in us throughout all of eternity. ***We are transformed into the image of that on which we habitually concentrate.*** We cannot but help conforming ourselves into what we love.
- e. *Pastor Dan:* Do not love the world or you will be transformed and conformed into the world—you will be worldly and lost.
- f. **1 John 2:15-18** Do not **love the world** or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

Dr. Tim Keller: We've got an incorrect and total misconception when it comes to hell. It is a travesty to picture God casting people into a pit who are crying, “I'm sorry! It is also a travesty to image people repenting in hell and God not forgiving and letting them out. C.S. Lewis in his parable *The Great Divorce* depicts people traveling in a bus on the road to hell. These travelers would rather have their freedom, as they define it, than salvation so they don't get off. Their delusion is that, if they glorified God, they would somehow lose power and freedom, but in a supreme and tragic irony, their choice has ruined their own potential for greatness. **Romans 1:24** declares, “God gave them up . . . to their desires.” ***All God does in the end with people is give them what they most want, including freedom from Himself.*** What could be more fair, but that God give people what they desire. Hell is nothing more than a great monument to human freedom.