

INDICATORS OF A MIND THAT LOVES GOD:

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In this supplement to my expositional series on what it means to love God, I decided to put together positive and negative indicators to assist me in critically and reasonably reflecting upon the extent of my love for God. This way of re-examining my thoughts on the “Greatest Command” in Scripture comes out of a series of conversations with my friend Carson Smith on campus at Texas A&M University (spring 2009).

Recapping my expositional series on Mark 12:30 I raised the following question:

What does it mean to Love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and with all your strength (Mark 12:30)? In my study of this passage I discovered the following truths:

- a. The “*heart*” emphasizes your deep-seated affections, your inner desires; it is the control center of your human personality;
- b. The “*soul*,” while it is a rich concept with a variety of meaning, we can say at least that it emphasizes your self-conscious thought life.
- c. The “*mind*” emphasizes your capacity to think, reason, understand, and make judgments.
- d. “*Strength*” emphasizes your bodily powers (physical & emotional capabilities).

Therefore, when you place your trust in Jesus Christ as Savior, you are given a new mind, a new heart, and a new will. Thus, when you the child of God, exercises your mind toward God to know Him, your heart to love Him, and your will to obey Him, then you are in fellowship with God. In his classic and unforgettable work, *Designed to be Like Him*, J. Dwight Pentecost makes the following observation:

...if any area of your personality is not in harmony with Him, then you are not enjoying fellowship with God. And because fellowship with Him is the reason we were created and then re-created in His image [2 Cor. 5:17; 3:18; Romans 8:29; 1 Cor. 2:16; Col. 3:10], we cannot glorify God apart from that fellowship.

Now having summarized my previous studies on the matter, I now turn our attention to the following list of indicators to assist me in critically pondering my love for God from out of my whole mind. The bottom line is that we are loving God with our minds *when* we represent His interests as His living representatives, defend the Christian faith with both accuracy and gentleness, integrate our minds with our affections, soul, and bodily powers, maximize our minds for His glory

(think, reason, understand and make judgments), dedicate our minds to Him as an expression of worship, faithfully pass down biblical doctrine to the next generation, and corporately worship God in a setting where His truth is proclaimed, practiced, and protected.

To be sure, the following indicators should be viewed as “road signs.” Some of these road signs are related and some are more important than others. Nevertheless, each of these indicators is designed to provoke critical self-evaluation that may motivate us with resolved and determination, by His enablement and yieldedness, to love God all the more.

What are indicators or “road signs” that we are loving God from out of our whole minds?

WE ARE LOVING GOD WITH YOUR MINDS WHEN...

Central Statements:	Positive Indicators	We are not loving God when...
<i>We are loving God with our minds when...</i>	We commit our minds to accurate knowledge and appropriate application of God’s Revelation (Psalm 19; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)	We marginalize, trivialize, or abandon the acquisition of biblical and theological truth and its importance in the life of the Christian and the Christian community.
We reflect God’s Image as His living Representatives: Genesis 1:26-27; Philippians 1:7	We are prepared to answer the best answers to the deepest questions explaining why the biblical worldview, that is, God’s revelation, possesses the greatest explanatory power.	When we purposefully fail to prepare to answer anyone who asks why we believe what we believe.
We defend the Christian Faith with both accuracy and gentleness: Acts 17:16-17; 1 Peter 3:15-16	We reason with and refute with a Christ-like disposition those who reject Christ and seek to exploit biblical truth and God’s people	Unable to recognize or act upon false teaching that finds itself in both the local and universal church with a Christ-like disposition.

<p>We integrate our minds to our deep-seated affections, thought life, and bodily powers: Mark 12:30; John 17:17</p>	<p>We capture the life of the mind for the glory of God; every aspect our lives (heart, soul, mind, and strength) is harmonized together in worship to God.</p>	<p>We attempt to diminish, isolate, neglect, or segregate the mind from the heart, soul, and strength. When we fail to study as an expression of worship to God.</p>
<p>We use our minds to the best of our God-given ability: 2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8; 1 John 4:1; Titus 1:9, 13.</p>	<p>Think critically, appraising truth claims and focusing on what is true, accurate, and noble; maximizing the intellectual capacities God has given us, and consistently expressing it within the community</p>	<p>We do not seek to develop our minds to think critically, appraising what is true, accurate, and noble; When we are not prepared to observe and expose false teaching.</p>
<p>We daily dedicate our minds to God as worship: John 17:17; Psalm 19:7-11; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10</p>	<p>When we make it our aim to intimately know and please Him as an expression of worship (1 Corinthians 5:9-10); When we allow God's Word to saturate our minds.</p>	<p>Our minds are negligent, indifferent, or are rebellious against God; when we do not seek to intimately know God; when we fail to mediate upon God's Word.</p>
<p>We faithfully pass down to the next generation uncompromised biblical truth: Jude 3-4</p>	<p>When we parents take personal responsibility to teach our children biblical truth.</p>	<p>When we parents relinquish the primary responsibility to teach our children biblical truth.</p>

**We actively
Participate in a local
church where biblical
truth is accurately
proclaimed, pursued,
practiced, and
protected:
2 Timothy 4:1-5**

When we commit
ourselves to being
involved in corporate
worship where the whole
counsel of God's Word is
proclaimed as it is to
people as they are.

When Scripture is
marginalized, neglected,
corrupted, or ignored as it
is to people as they are.

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