



- Up Words # 11

With All My Heart



With Valentines Day upon us it is no doubt an appropriate time for us to consider the matter of love. Does it ever seem to you that we trivialize this emotion? We say that we love Hershey bars and we see things like "I ♥ the Colts," and we all know that what this really means is that we really like a particular candy or team.

There is a difference between really liking something and loving it. Jesus made this point when addressing Peter in John 21:15-17. Jesus began by asking Peter if he truly loved Christ in a selfless and sacrificial way to which Peter replied in affect, "I really like you," or "You're a good friend." Jesus asks the same question and got the same response in verse sixteen. Finally Jesus uses Peter's expression and asks, "Do you really like me?" and Peter affirms that type of affection (v.17). Now this is not all bad, for Jesus was willing to use Peter where he was and commissioned him to serve and feed his sheep, but the fact is Peter was not yet willing to fully, selflessly, sacrificially love Christ.

When we wish to express our deepest, sincerest love we say something like, "I love you with all my heart." I hope you share words like that with your spouse this Valentines Day. It is a great way to express your affection and the one you love will be delighted to hear it. You could probably repeat that expression several times every day and your darling will never grow tired of those seven words.

The fact is, Jesus would love to have that type of devotion as well. When an argumentative and cantankerous scribe came to Jesus he tried to trip Him up by asking, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" (Mark 12:28). Jesus answered by pointing the legalistic law-keeper to Deuteronomy 6:4-5. Part of Christ's reply was this: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30).

I wonder, do we love the Lord with all our heart? Has loving Him become something trivial? Do we love Him like we love candy and football? Is loving Him really only a matter of being friends with Jesus? Are you really fond of Him? Is He nothing more than a good buddy? Christ calls us to total commitment. His desire is that we love Him with all our heart.

Looking Up,
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