

Deuteronomy 6:4–6

⁴“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

⁶“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

What are our priorities?

Deuteronomy 6:4–6

INTRO:

I read an autobiography of Viktor Frankl while we were on vacation. Frankl was a Jewish psychiatrist who survived three years in three Nazi concentration camps during World War II. Out of this experience he taught the importance of meaning in life. To Psychologists meaning comes from living according to our values. When I read about this, I immediately thought about this passage of Scripture. To the Jews this is known as the Shema Yisreal. It is the heart of their morning and evening prayers.

Our task today is to understand the priority of loving our God and how to practically put this value in our lives.

I. The Principle Stated (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

II. The Principle Restated (Various verses)

III. The Principle Implemented.

I. The Principle Stated (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

A. We begin in a very famous portion of the Word of God. **(Deuteronomy 6:4–6)**
“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.”

To the Jews this is an extremely important message. They recite it in both their morning and evening prayers.

B. The command to love is a response to the LORD’s revelation. Because the LORD (Yahweh) showed us that He is one LORD, we must respond. God never gives us a revelation without expecting a response in our lives. This response is a priority which requires all we are and have. **(v.5)**

“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

The number one priority in our lives is to love the LORD our God with all that we have.

1. We are to love the Lord our God with all of our hearts. The heart is who we really are. This means we are to love our God with all we are.
2. We are to love Him with all our souls. We are to love God with all of our life force. We are to love Him with all that our lives contain.
3. Finally, we must love the Lord with all our strength. This means all your force, all that your strength can produce.
4. Did the LORD leave anything out? Can anyone actually do this? The answer is, no. This is why the Lord Jesus had to come into the world and die for us so God could forgive us for not doing all we must do to honor and serve our amazing God.

II. The Principle Restated (Various verses)

A. Many times we think, because we cannot do this perfectly, we shouldn't try to do this at all. This is not acceptable to God. Let me give you a quick survey of some other places this command surfaces.

B. In **Deuteronomy 10:12** the LORD said through Moses;
“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”

C. This command is repeated many times in the Old Testament. I want to take you to **2 Kings 23:25** where the writer described Josiah the king of Judah.
“Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.”

I want to incite some spiritual envy. How much would you like God to record this kind of description of you?

D. The Lord Jesus, Himself, applies this principle in a New Testament context in **Matthew 22:37-39**.
“Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Far too often, we look at the second commandment given as the first and great commandment.

III. The Principle Implemented.

A. Having understood something about the first priority in life, I want to provide a tool to help us in our seeking to grow in loving the Lord with all that we are all of the time.

B. Do we rate God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as the most important being in our lives? How much time do we give to putting this practice into practice in our day to day lives? What goals can we set to help us make Him a greater priority in our lives?

C. I included four other priorities in our tool. This is because we need to work on these priorities simultaneously with our working on loving God. The “why” we do what we do informs “what” we do what we do.

D. The Jewish people for centuries include the reciting of that they called the Shema Yisrael twice a day in their lives. But they have not carried it out in their lives. How about us? What about us? Do we acknowledge that the Lord said this in His Word and forget about carrying it out in our lives?

This also is New Testament. The only way we can truly do this is by experiencing His love in forgiveness (**1 John 4:19**).

We love because he first loved us.