

Make room.

Mark 12:28-34

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?"²⁹ Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.³⁰ And 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.'³¹ The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."³² And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him.³³ And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."³⁴ And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long.³ Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they

shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

“It was essentially the whole man, with all his attributes, physical, intellectual and psychological, of which the Hebrew thought and spoke, and the heart was conceived of as the governing centre for all of these. It is the heart which makes a man, or a beast, what he is, and governs all his actions (Pr. 4:23). Character, personality, will, mind are modern terms which all reflect something of the meaning of ‘heart’ in its biblical usage.”¹

Proverbs 4:23

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

“If the great things of Christianity are rightly understood, they will affect the heart. The reason why men are not affected by such infinitely great, important, glorious, and wonderful things as they often hear and read of in the word of God, is undoubtedly, because they are blind; if they were not so, it would be impossible, and utterly inconsistent with human nature, that their hearts should be otherwise than strongly impressed, and greatly moved by such things” – Jonathan Edwards²

Brand new how?

- Declutter your heart
 - How do I love God with all my heart?

Q: What are some ways I can declutter my heart?

- Evaluate my time – Ephesians 5:16 *making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.*
- How am I stewarding/managing my energy?
- Does God get the leftovers or the first fruits?

2021 Action points

- Give God the first fruits of your week vs. Leftovers

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

- Reduce your commitments: To make room, I have to get rid of stuff and move things out of my schedule.
 - Demote the things in your life that don't matter as much. We make time for the things we value.
 - Reconsider your routines: Sunday morning starts on Saturday afternoon.
- Declutter the lie that church is optional to spiritual health.

¹ B. Banwell, "Heart," J. I. Packer ed., *New Bible Dictionary* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 456.

² Jonathan Edwards, *The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 243.