THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

Introduction

- 1) Mark 12:29-30; Matthew 22:34-40 Jesus discusses the "great commandment" "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength"
- 2) Jesus quotes from the *Shema* (Heb. "hear" Deut. 6:4-5)
- 3) Need more "hearing" of God's word today; man's wisdom is vain and empty
- 4) Two basic and important facts learned from the great commandment:
 - a) There is a God who can be loved
 - b) We can love God

I) There Is A GOD Who Can Be Loved

- A) He is there "I AM" (Gen. 1:1a)
- 1) Ex. 3:14; Jn. 1:1, 18; 8:24, 58 God exists, and has dwelt among men!
- B) He is not silent "Hear!" (Matt. 17:5; Heb. 1:1-2)
- C) Infinite Personal God
 - 1) Infinite Isa. 40:21-28
 - 2) Personal Gen. 1:27; Psa. 8:4-8
- D) Deserving of Love
 - 1) Near to us (Deut. 4:7; Acts 17:27; Jas. 4:7-8)
 - 2) He first loved us (1 Jn. 4:7-10, 19; Rom. 5:8)

II) We Can Love GOD

A) Pagan religions teach men to fear the gods, but we can love and reverence the true God

- B) Love with heart, soul, mind, and strength1) We are more than just animals man created to understand and love (duty, responsibility)
- C) Characteristics of this love
 - 1) Involves the whole man total commitment of affection, thinking, energy, and life a) Heart (Matt. 6:21)
 - b) Soul (Heb. 10:39)
 - c) Mind (Col. 3:1-2)
 - d) Strength (Eph. 3:16; Phil. 4:13)
 - 2) Undivided love (1 Jn. 2:15; Matt. 6:24)
 - 3) Public and open (Deut. 6:6-9; Matt. 10:32; Jn. 12:42-43)
 - 4) Tested by our obedience to God's will (Jn. 14:15, 21, 23-24; 1 Jn. 2:5)
 - 5) Attended by love for our neighbor and brother (Rom. 13:8-10; 1 Jn. 4:21)

Conclusion

Psalm 40:8 – "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart" **Luke 10:25-28** – the way unto life now and eternally – Loving God and our fellow man Let us love God with our *entire* being – it is the sum of our existence; everything else is of secondary importance.