

Loving God with Your Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength

Mark 12:28-31 *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."*

Soul

Biblical meaning: "soul" (Greek: *psyche*, Hebrew: *nephesh*) often refers to your **life, identity, and inner self**—the part of you that is eternal and personal.

So when Jesus says to love God with "all your soul," He's saying:

Love God with your whole being—your life, your desires, your identity, your deepest self.

1. **Your inner life** – emotions, will, and affections.
2. **Your identity** – who you are at your core, not just what you think or feel.
3. **Your very life** – as in, your breath or existence; being willing to lay down your life if necessary.

Old Testament basis:

Deuteronomy 6:5 *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

There, "soul" refers to the **whole person**. It includes passions, desires, and your essential self. Loving God with all your soul means loving Him **fully, sincerely, and from the deepest part of who you are.**

Meaning: Your life, identity, and inner self—your very being.

Example: Finding your worth in being a child of God, not in status, work, or other identities.

Heart

Biblical Meaning: The center of your emotions, desires, and will.

1. In Hebrew thought, the heart (*lev*) was the control center—where choices, feelings, and commitments flowed from.
2. Loving God with your **heart** means loving Him with **passion, affection, and sincerity**.
3. Wanting to please God because you *delight* in Him, not just because you *should*.

Mind

Meaning: Your intellect, thoughts, and understanding.

1. This is the love of **intentional thought**, reflection, study, and alignment of your thinking with God's truth.
2. Loving God with your **mind** means learning about Him, meditating on His Word, and submitting your reasoning to His wisdom.
3. Loving God with your mind causes you to *search* for God's truth, *agree* with God's truth, and *align* your life with God's truth.

Example: Studying Scripture to know God more deeply and letting that shape how you think and live.

Strength

Biblical Meaning: The use of your time, talent, and treasure to worship God, honor God, serve God, and share God.

1. We invest our strengths into our relationship with God.
2. We see our strengths as graces of God to be used for his glory.
3. God can take a little and make it a lot. Remember the loaves and fishes story!

Summary Table:

Part	What It Represents	How You Love God With It
Heart	Emotions, desires, will	With passion, joy, and sincerity
Soul	Identity, inner self, life itself	With total devotion and personal surrender
Mind	Intellect, understanding, reasoning	With thoughtful study, wisdom, and discernment
Strength	Dedication of all your influence for God's glory	Using your resources as an avenue for loving God and others

All four together point to this: **Love God with everything you've got—emotionally, spiritually, intellectually, and personally.**

How to cultivate love for God in each area

Loving God with Your *Heart* (Emotions, desires, and will)

1. **How to cultivate it:**

- **Worship deeply:** Sing or listen to worship that stirs your affection for God.
- **Pray honestly:** Share your real feelings with God—not just formal prayers.
- **Repent sincerely:** Let your heart be soft toward conviction and quick to return to Him.
- **Serve joyfully:** Let your love show through action (Galatians 5:13).

2. **Goal:** Align your desires with God's desires so you delight in what pleases Him.

Loving God with Your *Soul* (Your identity, life, and inner being)1. **How to cultivate it:**

- **Surrender daily:** Begin your day offering your life to God (Romans 12:1).
 - **Rest in your identity:** Meditate on verses like Galatians 2:20 or Colossians 3:3—your life is “hidden in Christ.”
 - **Stay anchored in trials:** Trust God even in suffering; it deepens soul-level love (Psalm 42:11).
 - **Live for eternal things:** Prioritize God’s kingdom over temporary goals (Matthew 6:33).
2. **Goal:** Root your whole being and sense of self in God's presence, not circumstances.

Loving God with Your *Mind* (Thoughts, intellect, understanding)1. **How to cultivate it:**

- **Study Scripture:** Not just reading, but reflecting, asking questions, memorizing truth.
 - **Think theologically:** Read books or listen to teachings that stretch your understanding of God.
 - **Renew your mind:** Replace worldly thinking with God’s truth (Romans 12:2).
 - **Ask hard questions:** Engage doubts and explore answers in prayer and community.
2. **Goal:** Let truth shape your thoughts, values, and worldview to reflect God’s wisdom.

Loving God with Your *Strength* (Time, talent, treasures)1. **How to cultivate it:**

- **Tithe:** Make offerings to the Lord, be a good steward
- **Fast:** Resources by giving charitably of time, talents, and treasures
- **Fast:** Your time by praying

Sign Posts for Loving God

1. Increasing **awareness of his presence** (Matt. 28:20)
2. Deepening **faith in his involvement** (Phil. 2:13)
3. Developing **ears to hear his voice** (John 10:27)
4. Developing **eyes to see his activity** (Phil. 1:6)
5. Cultivating a **heart to discern his will** (Col. 1:9)