

Matthew 10:37

He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

Some people read today's verse and think that Jesus is tell us to hate our parents, which is the furthest thing from the truth. We know that because one of the Ten Commandments is to **"honor your Father and Mother"**, and any hatred towards them would not be honoring to them at all.

† **Exodus 20:12** *Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*

So, then what was Jesus saying? I like what Dr David Jeremiah says about this, *"Is it possible to love your children to much? No, but it is possible to love the Lord to little."*

The same would hold true for today's devotional verse. It's not a matter of hating your parents, but loving them more then the Lord, or even making them equal with the Lord.

But it's not just our parents, it could be our kids, or spouse, or best friend, or church, or church family. It can even be our ministry, or our possessions, like our home or car or clothes or TV or music or food or alcohol, or _____ you fill in the blank.

Jesus went on to say, *"And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."*

Matthew 10:38-39 yet the world tells us the opposite and has put so much emphasis on people and stuff, that some people feel guilty or bad if they put the Lord before some of those things, because they are really more important to them then the Lord is, yet they wont admit it.

- ☹ How many would rather sleep in on Sunday, then go to church, so they do?
- ☹ How many would rather buy that thing, or things, then give back (tithe) to the Lord?
- ☹ How many have sex or even live with someone outside of marriage, instead of being obedient to the Lord and waiting until marriage.
- ☹ How many can sit and watch a 2 or 3 hour movie, but can't even spend 30 minutes reading their bible, or even 3 minutes praying?
- ☹ How many see others in need, yet quickly ignore them, because they are more concerned with their own wants?
- ☹ How many want to go to heaven, yet live like they are going to hell?
- ☹ How many are more concerned with others think about them on Social Media, then what the Lord thinks about them?

Yes it is a matter of priorities, but more then that, it's a matter of who, or what has your heart.

In church we sing the song that says,

*I love You Lord,
and I lift my voice.
To worship You,
Oh my soul, rejoice.
Take joy my King,
in what You hear.
May it be a sweet, sweet sound,
in Your ears”*

But in reality sometimes we sing it, but we are thinking other thoughts, with the same tune,
*“I love You Lord,
but I wanna go eat.
Maybe steak and eggs,
a hamburger, or BBQ.
A chocolate shake,
or just some ice cream.
I’ll think that I will get, out of hear,
during the last song.”*

Maybe not those exact word, but we all (including me) get distracted sometimes when we are at church listening to the message, or reading the bible or praying. And sad to say, it’s because there are things, and people, that we put before the Lord, and the truth is, when let those things take control of our thoughts over the Lord, then we have put someone, or something before the Lord.

We know that Jesus confronted Peter after He rose from the dead, because Peter denied that he knew the Lord, not once but three times that same night. And afterwards Jesus asked him, ***“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.” John 21:15b***

So, who or what have you been allowing to be more important to you then the Lord lately. If Jesus were to ask you in regard to it ***“_____, do you love Me more than these?”*** Would your response be like Peter’s, ***“Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”***

You see, when Jesus asked Peter this same question three times, I think it was a matter of Peter really coming to the realization that he needed to confront the Lord and repent of what he did, and that was putting himself before Jesus. I believe that by the third time Peter answered Jesus, he really meant it, and with those words of love and repentance to the Lord, Peter truly returned wholeheartedly to Jesus,

† **John 21:17 (NLT2)** *A third time he asked him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Then feed my sheep.”*

and Jesus saw Peter's repentant heart and lovingly forgave him.

Peter was in a backslidden state, because anytime you put anything, or anyone, including ourselves, before the Lord, even if it is for a moment, we are in a backslidden state. So with repentant hearts, we should say what Peter said to Jesus, "***Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.***" simply because we know we put something or someone before the Lord, and we have chosen to repent of it and make Jesus first in our lives.

† **Isaiah 44:22 (NLT2)** *I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Oh, return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free.*

† **Zechariah 1:3** *Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Return to Me," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts.*