

# All In

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Happy New Year! Even though today is actually the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the year, it really does mark for us the official start of 2011. Yesterday several of you gathered here at the church to pull down and put away the décor of last year's Christmas season which always marks the end of the old year and the beginning of the new for us.

The concept for today's message came from the Saturday when we actually decorated for Christmas last year. I was walking back over to the sleigh to finish putting it together when I saw Rob Schmidt's t-shirt.

\*\*\*Deuteronomy 6:5 says, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."

So the challenge for us in 2011 is "Am I All In for Him?"

Today we are going to examine that question and take a look at what it really means to be "All In" for Jesus.

There are several passages in the New Testament that quote this Old Testament commandment, but I'd like to focus on one in particular. Luke 10 has the account of the religious leaders of the day trying to trick Jesus into making a mistake with the Law, because they had dedicated themselves to the study of the Law. Up until this point in time, the way to eternal life was through rule-keeping. And these guys had come to find out that the ones that knew the rules were the ones with the power.

So they used that knowledge of the rules to control the Jewish people of the day, and here they tried to use that knowledge to manipulate Jesus.

So In verse 25 we read the account of the question put to Jesus by one of these guys.

\*\*\*25 And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

26 And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"

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27 And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

28 And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."

Jesus' response to the lawyer and His response to us today is DO THIS!

Now as we examine what it is that Jesus is admonishing us to do, we have to look at first the action of the commandment, Love.

\*\*\*The original Greek word of this verse from Luke for Love is the word "agapeo."

Cognate: 25 agapáō – properly, to prefer, to love; for the believer, preferring to "live through Christ", a "discriminating affection which involves choice and selection"

In other words, God is asking us to choose or make a decision to Love Him the way He is asking.

This same Greek word is used in several other passages in the NT, 2 of which are

\*\*\*John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

\*\*\*Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

With agapeo, there is always the concept of giving involved and I believe that God will challenge each of us and all of us as a church as He never has to give in 2011.

So what is He asking to give in this commandment? Well let's break it down into each of its components.

\*\*\*First, God says to love Him with all of our Heart.

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The heart speaks of the affection of a person. So the challenge for us is how do we love God by giving our affections to Him.

The bible talks a lot about a divided heart, but no where does it paint it more clearly than when Jesus teaches on our stuff.

\*\*\*Matthew 6:24

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

Loving God with all our heart will require us to remove everything in our life that has our affection other than Him.

\*\*\* Second, God says to love Him with all of our soul.

The soul speaks of the will and emotions of a person.

\*\*\*Psalm 103:1

Bless the LORD, O my soul, And all that is within me, bless His holy name.

Loving God with all our soul involves giving over our "right" to feel how we want. Many of us live a Christian walk directed by our feelings. If I don't feel good about it, then it must not be God. That's a dangerous place to be, since it puts us at the center of every decision we make by putting our feelings first.

By doing this many of us live our entire life avoiding feeling bad instead of giving over our feelings to God and allowing Him to direct us, even when it doesn't necessarily feel good.

\*\*\* Third God asks us to love Him with all our strength.

The strength of a person speaks to the physical abilities and talents we possess.

\*\*\*Colossians 3:23

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,

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What we do for a living and what we do for enjoyment is to be given over to and subjected to the will of the Father.

\*\*\* Finally and forth, God asks us to love Him with all our Minds.

The mind of a person indicates what that person thinks on.

\*\*\* Proverbs 23:7a says

For as he thinks within himself, so he is.

The point here being made is that what a man or woman thinks on regularly is what that person is on a journey towards.

What is it we ponder, what is it we think on, what is it we meditate on?  
That, according to scripture, is the direction you are headed.

This is why it is so important for you to have a systematic approach to memorizing the word of God. Every week we provide for you a new passage of scripture to meditate on and memorize.

\*\*\* Psalm 119:11 says

Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

In other words, if you have made the decision to All In, If you have decided to love God with everything, you will hide His word in your heart to prevent you from sinning against him.

So just for a moment, dream with me

What would it look like if we loved God with everything. All of our heart, all of our soul, all of our strength and all of our minds? What kind of marriage would we have? What kind of parents would we become? What kind of family would we have? What kind of work place would we have? What kind of church would we have?

This is what God has for us in 2011.

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Are you in? Are you All In?

Let's pray