

Series: New Year Reminders

Sermon: Love God Above All Else

Passage: Various

Illustration:

Need: God, who loves us so much, still commands and desires that we love Him with all our heart, soul and might!

I. Josiah, the 16th King of Judah

- **2Kings 22:1-2** Unlike his father & grandfather, Josiah was a king with a heart after his God.
- (22:3-7) At age 26 he began to restore the temple like his great grandfather King Hezekiah.
- **2Kings 22:8-10** The Book of the Law (prob Deuteronomy) was found and read to the king.
- (22:11-20) The king's heart was broken by what he heard, he sought God's will and God promised to withhold His judgement until after Josiah's reign (4 years after).
- **2Kings 23:1-3** He read the Word to the people, recommitted to God's covenant, and all agreed.
- (23:4-24) Removed and destroyed all pagan worship and returned the worship of Yahweh alone.
- **2Kings 23:25** King Josiah turned to the LORD with all his heart, soul and might.

II. The Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)

- Yahweh is one in essence and He alone is God, there is no other. (Deut. 4:35, 39)
- Heart = the seat of intellect, equivalent to the mind or rational part of human kind.
- Soul = the being or essential person, referring to the invisible parts including the will & sensibilities.
- Might = the body with its strength, functions & capabilities. (Eugene Merrill)
- Heart, Soul, Might = all that is within me (Psalm 103:1)!
- Josiah reminds us that love for God means exposure, submission and obedience to His Word.
- Josiah reminds us that love for God removes the things that compete or distract us from Him.
- As Israel's great representative Savior-Messiah, Jesus demonstrated an unreserved, wholehearted commitment to God expressed through undivided love and unwavering obedience.
- Loving God looks like loving Jesus and ordering our life according to His word, submitting to and relying on the Holy Spirit - with all that is within us!

III. 2023 Reminder #5: Love God Above All Else!

- Do you love God with all your heart, soul & might?
- What are the idols that compete for your love & devotion?
- What things need to be removed from your life because they hinder or distract you from God?