

Motives to Love Jesus

by Thomas Doolittle

Jesus is the most excellent object for your love, and you should love him supremely because he is the greatest good and has done the most for you.

Scripture: 2 Kings 5:13, Proverbs 23:5, Ecclesiastes 5:10, Ecclesiastes 5:15, Matthew 16:26, Luke 19:10, John 1:14, Colossians 2:9, Hebrews 7:25, 1 John 1:7

Topics: "Loving Jesus", "Christian Devotion"

Description

Thomas Doolittle preaches about the unparalleled excellence, suitability, satisfaction, durability, and necessity of loving Jesus above all else. He emphasizes how Jesus is the most special, profitable, delightful, sure, and deserving object of love, having suffered, done, given, purchased, promised, and prepared everything for believers. Doolittle challenges listeners to consider the wisdom, nobility, endurance, and universality of loving Jesus, highlighting how love for Him helps resist temptations, persevere in the Christian race, and find ultimate fulfillment and joy.

Transcript

#1. CAN YOU FIND A MORE EXCELLENT OBJECT FOR YOUR LOVE THAN JESUS? If you search through the whole creation, could you find any like him? Are riches, honors, pleasures, or other relationships comparable to Jesus, whom you ought to love supremely? Should not the highest good be the best object of your love? Can you love lesser things, and not the greatest good? Is not all the goodness in the creature but as a drop to the sea, as a candle to the sun, as a speck of sand to a mountain- when compared to the goodness that is in Jesus? If David were worth ten thousand other men, is not Jesus, David's Lord, better than all the world?

#2. IS NOT JESUS THE MOST SUITABLE GOOD FOR YOU? Is liberty so suitable to a captive man, or bread to a hungry man, or health to a sick man, or ease to a suffering man, as Jesus is to a sinful man? Were you not lost, undone and in danger to be damned? Jesus was your saviour, your keeper and your redeemer. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost," (Luke 19:10). "Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him..." (Heb. 7:25). Jesus is "Mighty to save!"

Were you not ignorant, dark, and blind, not knowing the way to heaven and eternal happiness? Didn't you weary yourself trying to find the gate of life, and yet missed it when you had done all you could? Jesus became your Teacher and your Guide, to infallibly direct you to heaven. He anointed your eyes with his eye-salve, even though you were born blind, and then he gave you spiritual sight. Now you are able to see

your lost estate, the beauty of Jesus, and the way of salvation.

Were you not sick, and full of spiritual diseases? abounding with soul-ailments? even sick unto death? near to eternal death? Jesus was your able and skillful Physician. None whom he has undertaken to cure has ever yet died under his hands. For rather than you justly die of your soul's disease, he made a potion for you, out of his own blood, which, when you drank it, you were made totally well. Therefore he came to be your soul-physician, that he might cure desperate sinners like yourself.

Were you not indebted to God? Didn't you owe millions to him, yet did not have a penny to pay? If God were to demand payment from you, would it not have proven your damnation? If his justice were to pursue you, and death arrest you, would not the demons have seized your soul, and thrown it into the prison of hell, from where you should never have been delivered, until you had paid the last penny you owe, which would never be? But now that Jesus has loved you, he has become your Surety, made payment for your debt, and given you freedom.

Were you not spiritually polluted and unclean? Had not the leprosy of sin spread over your understanding, your will, your conscience, your memory and all your affections? So that you were defiled all over, and lay wallowing in your blood, cast out because you were so loathsome to God? And in this filthy state, you could never enter into the holy kingdom of God. But Jesus loved you, took away your filthy rags, and gave you a change of clothing made of his righteousness. You said to him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."

He in love said to you, "I will, be clean". He bathed you in his own blood, and cleansed you from all your sins (1 John 1:7). Yes, though your sins were as scarlet, they became as white as snow; though they were red like crimson, they became as white as wool. Were you not a captive to Satan and to sin? Drudging elbow deep in the loathsome service of sin? Was not your bondage worse than that of the Israelites in Egypt? And were not Satan and sin as cruel and tyrannical as Pharaoh and his task-masters?

Didn't you love your chains of sin? Weren't you at ease in your shackles? Do you remember how Jesus released you from your fetters? Jesus became your Redeemer, and made you free- and then you were free indeed! Were you not an enemy to God? You were born his enemy, and then continued to live as his adversary. Had you died in this condition, your soul would have been alienated from God forever. But now Jesus has become your blessed peacemaker, and by the blood of his cross he reconciled you to God.

Were you not spiritually dead? Had you not lost the holy image of God? Though you were dead, Jesus gave you spiritual life and eternal glory. Now, if this was your desperate condition, and Jesus helped you in every respect- then how suitable is he to you? Is not his suitableness to you a foundation for love, and a motive to love him? What an argument is this to win your heart to Jesus! You were lost, but Jesus saved you! You were ignorant, but Jesus taught you! You were sick, but Jesus healed you!

You were polluted, but Jesus cleansed you! You were a captive to sin and Satan, and Jesus freed you! You were an enemy of God, and Jesus reconciled you! You were dead, and Jesus gave you spiritual life! Oh, you never found one so suitable for you! Now, even now, he should be loved by you. O, Jesus is the most excellent object for your love, and you should no longer withhold your devotion from him.

#3. IS NOT JESUS THE MOST SATISFYING GOOD TO YOU? You were destitute, and he supplied you. You were empty, and he filled you. You were poor, and he enriched you. O to love such a Saviour!

#4. IS NOT JESUS THE MOST DURABLE GOOD TO YOU? When your riches, pleasures, honors and friends shall fail you- Jesus will never fail you.

#5. IS NOT JESUS A SPECIAL GOOD TO YOU? He was given by special love, to a particular people, and brings with him incredible privileges! All other things you might love are as common to lost people, as well as to the saved. Though a worldly man, whose heart and hands and house, are full of the world, might say, 'Riches are mine'- yet he cannot truly say, 'Jesus is mine'. Let Jesus have the best of your love, because you are the object of his special, electing, redemptive love!

#6. IS NOT JESUS THE MOST NECESSARY GOOD TO YOU? Do you need food so much when you are hungry, or liberty so much when you are in prison, or medicine so much when you are sick-- as much as Jesus when you are a sinner? You could never have been truly happy, pardoned, reconciled, and forever saved without Jesus. Jesus is needful, because without him, your sin-sick soul would have no cure. He gave you the choicest and the richest cordial. And when you die, he will secure your departing soul. And after death, he will be your forever friend. When all worldly things shall leave you at your grave, Jesus will be yours forever.

#7. IS NOT JESUS THE MOST PROFITABLE GOOD TO YOU? For when you have him, you have all. Then God is yours, and the Spirit is yours, and the promises are yours, and all the privileges of the bible are yours, and heaven itself shall be forever yours.

#8. IS NOT JESUS THE MOST DELIGHTFUL GOOD? Some people delight in what they see, some in what they hear, some in what they taste, and some in recreation or amusements. But the delight of knowing Jesus surpasses them all! He is altogether and supremely delightful.

#9. IS NOT JESUS A SURE GOOD? Other things God may give, and afterwards call for them back again- "Therefore I will take away my grain when it ripens, and my new wine when it is ready. I will take back my wool and my linen..." Hosea 2:9. But God never said, 'I gave such a man my Jesus, but I will take him away.' God may take riches out of your hand, but if you once receive the Lord Jesus, God will never take Jesus out of your heart.

#10. HAS NOT JESUS DESERVED YOUR LOVE, BY WHAT HE HAS SUFFERED, DONE, GIVEN, PURCHASED, PROMISED AND PREPARED FOR YOU? Behold the wounds which he has endured for you! Behold the crown of thorns on his head, that there may be a crown of glory upon your head! Behold him dying, that you might live! Behold him suffering, that you may be saved! Behold him poor, that you may be made rich with the best, surest and most durable of riches. Behold him condemned, that you may be absolved! Behold him in an agony, that you might have rest and ease in glory. Behold him bearing the cross, and the cross bearing him, that you might not bear the curse! Behold him bearing the Father's wrath, that you might be made the subject of his grace, and the object of his love.

And now tell me-- does not this Jesus deserve your love? Should you love any other like him, when none other has done so much for you like he has done? Does the small kindness of a fellow creature draw out your love, and shall not all these great things that Jesus has done for you, kindle a fire of love towards him? How can you bear not to love him?

#11. IS NOT THE LOVE OF JESUS THE BEST LOVE YOU CAN ATTAIN? It is a pity, that any other object should have your greatest love.

#12. LOVE TO JESUS IS THE SWEETEST LOVE. The one that loves other things, instead of Jesus, loves nothing but vanity-- and to love vanity will prove troublesome. He that loves riches has disturbing sorrow with this love, fretting fears, and perplexing, anxious cares.

So without love to Jesus, love to other things will always be a bitter love. Oh now, how sorry I am that ever I loved the world as I have done- my pleasures, my sin as I have done. But you will never have cause to say, I am sorry that ever I loved Jesus. Never was such a word ever heard. Those who never repent of their love to the world and sin- their worldly love will certainly end in sorrow, and with bitterness of soul be sadly lamented in hell. But what contentment, satisfaction, delight, comfort and joy is there in the loving of Jesus! None can tell so well as you who love him.

#13. LOVE TO JESUS IS THE SAFEST LOVE. You cannot sin in loving Jesus, except it be in the smallness of it, and not loving him more. You might have fear and trembling in loving other things, and say, 'Do not I sin in this?' But you can never love Jesus too much.

#14. LOVE TO JESUS IS THE SUREST LOVE. Love to other things is often turned into hatred- love today, and hate tomorrow. But love to Jesus remains firm. Jesus is the surest object of your love- neither men, nor death, nor demons, can take him away from you. Though others might keep us from reading his word, none can keep us from loving Jesus.

#15. LOVE TO JESUS IS THE NOBLEST LOVE. Love to pleasures, to the world and to sin are base and polluted loves. Love to Jesus is most sublime and lofty. Jesus is the most noble object for your love.

#16. LOVE TO JESUS IS THE MOST ENDURING LOVE. It is a love that shall never end. Before long, everyone will be done loving this world, even those who love it most and have their hearts most set upon it. Those who now have their hearts full of earth, shall soon have their mouths full of earth, when their bodies lie rotting in the earth- then they will be done loving it. Death, which ends their life in this world, shall end their love to this world.

But you, the true lover of Jesus, shall never be done loving him. It is sweet to love Jesus, but this makes it even more sweet-- to think you shall ALWAYS love him- love him in life, love him in death and love him after death. Oh blessed love, that shall never be lost, but last forever!

While I was contemplating this, it came into my mind to consider, what those who never love Jesus in this world can love in the next world-- and I could not imagine anything which damned souls in hell can love. I thought, can they love God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, angels or believers? No, their hatred to all these is, and shall be, more deeply rooted in them, than it ever was while upon earth. Can they love their 'location' in hell? No, they will wish they never had come there. Can they love the 'pains' of hell? No, they grieve and groan under these torments, and are weary to bear them. Can they love the 'devils' in hell? No, they curse them for tempting them to the sin which brought them to their place in hell. Can they love their 'companions' in hell? No, they are an aggravation of one another's misery. Can they love their 'sin' in hell? Alas! all that was pleasurable in sin is gone, and only the pain and sting of sin remain. Can they love their 'being' in hell? They had rather die than live, and cease to be at all, than to continue to be in hell. I do not know what it is that they can love in hell. Oh loathsome place, where there is, and can be, no love!

But Oh how lovely is heaven to us! Where love reigns and where love lives! Our life shall be forever a life of love! Dear Lord! save me from hell, because in hell there is no love to you, nor to anything that is good. Sweet Saviour! lead me in the way to heaven, and bring me there, where love to you shall live and last

forever.

#17. ISN'T IT THE WISEST CHOICE TO LOVE JESUS, AND NOT THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD? Everyone loves something. And do those act as rational creatures, as men endued with reason, who do not love Jesus, but give their affections to the world and sin? They love that which cannot love them back, nor satisfy them, and which they must soon part with. "He that loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loves abundance with increase. This is also meaningless," (Eccles. 5:10). "Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand." (Eccl. 5:15). "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out".

Might you not be rich today, and poor tomorrow? Healthy today, and sick tomorrow? In honor today, and in disgrace tomorrow? Was it not so with Haman? When you have riches and love them, you are not sure to keep them- Will you set your eyes, your heart and your love, "upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings, and fly away as an eagle towards heaven" (Prov. 23:5). Death carries the lovers of this world far away from the things they love. The pleasures of sin, and also the profits of the world, are but for a season, (Heb. 11:25); and when the season is over, they are gone. But Jesus will never leave you, nor forsake you.

#18. CAN YOU DO ANYTHING LESS THAN LOVE JESUS, AND CAN YOU DO ANYTHING MORE? Jesus has done such great things for you, is it not a small thing that Jesus should have your love in return? If Jesus had asked you to lay down your life for him, had he called you to give your bodies to be burned for him, should you not have done it? How much more when he says, "just let your hearts but burn in love unto me" -when that burning will not be painful, but delightful! When Naaman came to the prophet to be cleansed of his leprosy, being directed to go and wash in the Jordan, that he should be clean, in anger he went away. But his servant came to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much rather, then, when he says unto you- wash, and be clean?" (2 Kings 5:13). If Jesus had required some great thing, that you might escape great torments, and be partaker of his great salvation, would you not have gladly done it? How much rather, then, when he says, 'Love me, and be saved?'

When you have received a great kindness from a friend whom you cannot repay, don't you say, 'I cannot do less than love him'. Yet this small thing of loving Jesus is of greater value to him than all else. You pray to him, but to love him is better. A heart full of love means more to Jesus than a thousand prayers, full of the most eloquent expressions, without love. You hear his word, but to love him is better. You might suffer for him, but to love to him is better. Should you give all your goods to the poor, and your body to the fire for him- yet to give your heart and to love him is still better. And, indeed, except all the former things proceed from love, and are accompanied with love, they are not pleasing to Jesus.

#19. WILL YOU LOVE WORLDLY THINGS, WHICH YOU MIGHT EASILY LOVE TOO MUCH, AND NOT JESUS WHOM YOU CAN NEVER LOVE TOO MUCH? You might love your riches, your relations, your pleasures, yourself, your liberty and your life too much. In these things your love might easily be too much, and transgress the lawful bounds. And indeed, so much love as you give to these things, more than to Jesus, is too much love. But if you were able to bear it, and could you love Jesus with as much love as all the angels in heaven love him, it would not be too much love for him. Many have complained they loved Christ too little, but no one ever said that Jesus had too much of their love. God blames you, and your conscience accuses you, for your inordinate love to things on earth. But neither God nor conscience will

condemn you for the highest degrees of love to Jesus, and things that are above.

#20. TO TRULY LOVE YOURSELVES, YOU MUST LOVE JESUS SUPREME. Does that man truly love himself, who does not regard the salvation of his soul? who ruins himself, and damns himself, and shuts himself out of heaven? Does that man truly love himself, who exposes himself to the wrath of God, to the damnation of hell, and to banishment from the glorious presence of the blessed God? All these things a man brings upon himself for lack of love to Jesus. If then you desire to truly love yourself, you must love Jesus supremely.

#21. ARE NOT ALL THE DUTIES OF RELIGION SOMETIMES TEDIOUS TO YOU, FOR LACK OF LOVE TO JESUS? Do you find it a burden to pray? a burden to hear or read the word of God? Is it a burden to you to meditate upon God and Christ, and things above? It is all because of smallness of love to Jesus. For love makes hard things easy, and heavy labor to be light.

#22. DOES NOT JESUS DESERVE YOUR LOVE? Do you not owe it to him? Is it not due to him by virtue of creation? Did not he give your being to you?

By virtue of preservation, has not Jesus kept you out of the grave and hell until this day? Justice would have hewn you down, and wrath would have condemned you long ago. And who has procured a pardon for you but Christ? That you are on this side the torments of the damned, not beyond praying, and hearing, and hoping, is all through Christ's securing for you longer time. Except by virtue of Jesus' provision for you, you would not have had a rag for your back, nor a morsel for your mouth, nor sleep for your eyes. By virtue of redemption, when you were worse than nothing, did not he lay down his soul, his life, his blood, as a ransom price for you?

If your love is due to him in so many ways, what injustice will it be for you to deny Jesus that which is his due? Are you not careful to give to everyone what you owe them? And does it not ease your mind, that though you are not rich, yet you have given every one his due? Do you not work, and care, and save to give to all what you owe them, and shall Jesus be the only one to whom you will be unjust? If you have not enough to satisfy all your creditors, yet if there is one, whom you love and bear more respect unto- how sure you will be to repay that one first. You should say, 'Though I cannot do as much as I would like, yet Jesus shall not be a loser by me. He shall have my heart and love.'

#23. IS IT NOT GREAT CONDESCENSION IN JESUS, THAT HE WILL SO KINDLY ACCEPT YOUR LOVE? One so great, accept of the love of one so inferior? One so holy, accept the love of one that is so sinful? One so glorious, accept the love of one so vile? Do great men value the love of beggars? Do princes value the love of peasants? Would a man of noble birth and wealth allow one clothed in rags to love and marry him? Or would he not scorn and reject her love? I think, considering what Jesus is, and what you are-- that you should say, 'If Jesus will allow me, I will love him.' Allow you! Not only so, but he gives you a command to love him, and that upon pain and peril of everlasting damnation. He does not allow you to live without love to him, though for your long refusal he might have justly left you to live without love to him.

#24. YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE ANY CAUSE OR REASON TO BE ASHAMED TO LOVE JESUS. Is not the time coming, and the day hastening, when covetous men shall be ashamed of loving the world, and voluptuous men ashamed of loving their pleasures, and ambitious men ashamed of loving their honors? For is it not a horrid shame, that a rational creature should be such a sot as to love sin which is most loathsome, and not to love Jesus who is most lovely? to love deformity, and not beauty?

Oh shame, shame! It is a shame that sin should have such esteem, and Jesus such great contempt put upon him. But shame shall before long confound these now shameless wretches, when they shall cry out, "We are ashamed that we loved profits, and not Jesus- houses, lands, lusts, and not Jesus. This is the confusion of our faces, and shame covers us-- that we should be so foolish, and so blind, that we had not sense, nor reason, to distinguish between sin, which is the greatest and most odious evil, and Jesus who is the greatest and most lovely good." But the time will never come, the day will never be, that a gracious soul shall be ashamed of his sincere love to Jesus Christ.

#25. IS THERE ANY LOVE SO PROFITABLE AS LOVE TO JESUS? "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26). By loving Jesus you shall have such a gain that no man can value, that no mind can estimate, that no mathematician, by all his numbers and figures, can compute-- even pardon of innumerable sins, the favor of an infinite and holy God, deliverance from inconceivable torments, possession of endless bliss, and more than I, or any man, can describe or comprehend.

#26. IS THERE ANY LOVE SO UNIVERSALLY NECESSARY AS LOVE TO JESUS? One man loves one thing, and a second another, and a third another. But there is no necessity that all men should love any one thing except for Jesus, and things pertaining to our having and enjoying him. Love to Jesus is absolutely necessary for poor and rich, for great and small, for noble and lowborn, for learned and unlearned, for slave and free.

#27. LOVE TO JESUS IS THE ONE GREAT HELP AGAINST THE TEMPTATIONS OF SATAN. Is not Satan your enemy? Is not your heart sometimes anxious to yield to him? But love to Jesus would garrison your hearts, fortify your souls, and make you courageous and resolute against all the batteries of Satan and the assaults of sin. It would make you watchful against the allurements and amusements of the world, so that you would say, 'Shall I offend my dearest Lord? Shall I displease him who has done me such good, such everlasting good? Oh! how can I do this great evil, and sin against him whom I love!' Do you not find that love forbids, and exceedingly restrains, from grieving, offending or wronging the one whom you entirely love?

#28. LOVE TO JESUS WILL HELP US TO PERSEVERE IN THE CHRISTIAN RACE. When trials, suffering and persecution come, only those who truly love Jesus will be able to endure.

CONCLUSION-- What shall I say to advance Jesus in your esteem, that you might love him? Is he not a 'comprehensive' good? Eminently all? There is no goodness in the creature, but it is formally, or virtually, in Jesus. Is there wisdom in the creature? -there is more in Jesus. Is there beauty or power in the creature? -there is much more in Jesus. "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell" (Col. 5:19). Jesus is "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This is the One whom I beg you to love. This is he who is altogether lovely and desirable. Consider now, I plead with you-- can you ever imagine a better offer than Jesus? Can you find a better match for your soul? Can you say all this, the one half of this, any one of all these things, concerning the objects you have loved previous to Jesus? Oh then say, 'I never understood the loveliness of Christ before this!' How has sin fooled me! How has the world bewitched me! And how has my foolish wicked heart deceived me, that I have lavished my love upon the creature, and sin, when there was a Christ to love! Such a Christ to love! Such a good as is not to be found in all the world! Now he alone shall have my love, my heart-- my all.

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