

### **A Call and Response Affirmation, inspired by Mark 12:28-34**

A teacher of the law approached Jesus one day with a very important and relevant question. As relevant as it was then, still, it remains now. He asked, "Which of the commands is the most important?" Jesus' response was simple. He replied, "The most important command is this: love the Lord, your God, with all of your heart, all of your soul, and all of your mind, and all of your strength." Jesus continued and said, "The second most important command is that you love your neighbor as yourself." Friends, do you see how important love is to God?

**“L” – I must love the LORD, my God,  
With all of my heart, my soul, my mind, and my strength.  
Every ounce of my body offered unto God as a living  
sacrifice  
- A holy and acceptable one.  
I long for an insatiable desire to spend time in God's  
presence,  
And gifts, skills, talents, and abilities to be used in God's  
service.  
I want the kind of love that makes God smile.  
The world lights up when God smiles.**

“O” – I must love OTHERS as myself. I must not be self-consumed and arrogant. I ask God for the desire to connect with others—to pray for them and to serve them, to be willing to give of myself with joy—using my time, money, and energy for a common good. I remember that God has fearfully and wonderfully made all people and that he has specialized plan for each of us. I join the Christian family in longing for the day when we will look at everyone as a brother or a sister – realizing that we are all equal assets to the kingdom of God.

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**“V” – I must VALUE the cost of love.**

**I refuse to forget that Jesus paid the ultimate love-price for my salvation.**

**His love served as payment for the sins of the world.**

**I shall not dismiss the fact that Christ suffered, bled, and died because He 'so' loved us.**

**I realize that authentic love is valuable, worthwhile, and necessary**

**- Especially when all else fails.**

**The costly price of love liberates me to see why I should love others.**

**Just as Jesus loved a foolish wretch like me, I can do nothing less than love my neighbor.**

“E” – I must EXEMPLIFY Christ's Love. The world should be able to tell that I am a follower of Jesus Christ. I will not be tricked into thinking that just because I have memorized a few Bible passages, or just because I lead a song in the choir, or just because I usher on some Sundays, or just because I have a pew and parking spot at church with my name on it that I truly exemplify the love of Jesus Christ. I will ask myself, daily, how am I representing Christ outside of the church's four walls? Have I denied myself and accepted the will of God for my life today? Do my actions teach the world how to be more like Jesus or do they suggest that I am still of the world?

**Today, I proclaim that I am an ambassador for Christ. May the world forever witness the love of Christ as displayed through me!**

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