**Love the Lord Your God**

**The Word**

Read together Deuteronomy 6:1-9

**The Big Idea**

Our primary purpose and goal in life is to experience the love of God and love him with everything we’ve got. We are called to pursue a holistic lifestyle by which we cultivate that love for God in all areas of life.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. As we consider the very familiar “shema,” is there anything about the love command that struck you in a fresh way this week?

2. As you consider the metaphor of the trellis and the vine, where do you think the church tends to err these days? In focusing too much on the trellis or in not having enough trellis to support the vine?

3. What is one practical trellis you want to implement this summer that will help cultivate your love for and commitment to God?

4. As you consider the trellis already in your life, what is one practice or discipline that has lost its life and vitality? What is one area where you want God to bring new life? Any ideas on how you might make some changes in that area?

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. The Shema (v. 4-5)

A. Statement and response: God is “one,” so you want to love that one God with everything you’ve got (your heart, soul, and “very-ness”)

B. Statement and response: God is “your” God (a personal God), so you should love him with your heart and soul (in the core of who you are)

II. How do we become lovers of God?

 A. These commands are to be on your heart (v. 6)

 B. Yet, we are called to engage in external actions, habits, and disciplines (v. 7-9)

 C. The vine and the trellis

 1. The vine: a heart-love and commitment to God

2. The trellis: the habits, disciplines, and structures we put in place to help cultivate the vine (to help our forgetful hearts stay centered on God)

3. As with a trellis and vine in a garden, so also in our spiritual lives: our focus is ultimately on the vine (our relationship with God) but we need a trellis that helps cultivate and grow that vine.

 4. Two dangers in the spiritual life

 a. To only focus on the trellis (this is what the Pharisees did)

b. To not have a trellis that effectively helps cultivate the vine (the danger of the contemporary church)

III. Conclusion

 A. What trellis can we put in place to help cultivate the vine?

1. Individual disciplines (morning times, evening times, in between times, weekly rhythms)

 2. Relational disciplines (spiritual friendships, small groups, church)

 3. External disciplines (generosity, hospitality, service)

B. How can we make sure our trellis is still accomplishing the ultimate goal of growing the vine?