Dear Open Door Family,

I have a confession to make. I have played cards. There are many variations of games with many different kinds of cards but I enjoy many of them. I have never played for money and I have never really played poker, though I have read enough westerns and watched enough John Wayne movies so that I think I have an idea of what poker is about. I suppose it is not surprising that a new style of poker has become quite popular in our country today. I must admit to pausing briefly to watch players with stacks of chips in front of them as they bet against each other. I don't understand much about the game but one thing I have picked up is that when a player decides he is going to bet everything he has they say that they are ***"ALL IN."*** So when a player says they are ***"ALL IN"*** they are saying that they are ***holding nothing back;*** they are betting every chip they have. That phrase "ALL IN" came to mind as I was thinking through the kind of Commitment Jesus Christ was asking His disciples to make when He answered the question about which was the most important commandment.

***Mark 12:29-30*** *(NLT) ...The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. [30] And YOU MUST love the Lord your God with ALL your HEART, ALL your SOUL, ALL your MIND, and ALL your STRENGTH.'*

It is a rather amazing statement. Jesus makes it clear that ALL our heart, soul, mind, and strength should be involved in loving God. He is not interested in half-hearted commitment or love that is focused on Him one day and on ourselves the next. Jesus is saying in a very clear way that God wants ALL of us. He is not interested in part of our heart, part of our soul, part of our mind, or part of our strength. If I am to follow Jesus in a way that honors Him, it will mean that I am *"ALL IN."* I am holding nothing back; I want to Love Him with ALL my Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength.

John Piper comments on these verses in this way: *"...the point is that every faculty and capacity that we have should display at every moment that God is our supreme treasure."* pg. 81 He goes on to say that Jesus command *"...to love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength means that every impulse and every act of every sense and every ability should be an expression of treasuring God above all things."* pg. 82

**PRAYER:** Lord Jesus, please help me to treasure YOU above all things. Please Lord, help me to be more and more captivated by Your Word. Lord God, help me to hold NOTHING back but to give you ALL my heart, soul, mind, and strength to be used by You as You choose.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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