

Worship and Love God with All Your Heart

(Bible Study)

Roger Kendall—July 11, 2015

Matthew 22:37: “And Jesus said to him, **‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’** This is *the* first and greatest commandment; and *the* second *one is* like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”” (vs 37-39).

Love is a most powerful and wonderful attribute of God that we can relate to. But this very Scripture is the very foundation, the very element that we need to have to have a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father. That is to be able to put our total being into worshipping and loving God.

As we know, this is something that the world does not know. The world does not know God. The world does not really know Him as the Creator God, the One Who truly is a God of love. They think they know Jesus Christ; they think they know Him and salvation, but they are kept in the dark and do not know how to really worship Him.

Satan the devil has done a very good job in deceiving the whole world and Who God is and how to worship Him.

As God’s children we are to love, serve and worship God **from the heart**. What does that mean? In the Bible study today we’re going to take a closer look at what it means **to truly love God from the heart**, as well as how we can manifest that love from our heart to God.

This is something that may be obvious to all of us. We understand what it means from all the heart, but the fact is have you really studied and looked into this aspect to what it really means **to love God with all your heart**? It’s a topic that, as I prepared this Bible study, I started out with just this concept and by the time I got done it was an amazing revelation.

Because we’re human and in the flesh, we have so many concerns about our own selfishness and the things that are going on around us that this kind of interferes, blocks, and kind of competes with our very love for God.

Today we’re going to look at this subject and hopefully we can walk away with an appreciation that God wants our heart. He wants us to love Him with all our being, with all our strength—all that is within us—and that we do not give options to the world or to any person, or any other thing. **He is primary and first in our lives!** We must walk in that way and keep that in the very foremost of our thinking and all that we do.

Loving God with all of our heart and strength is really talking about commitment, a total commitment. Not just partial, but total; a 100% commitment to the God of creation, the very God Who has called us, given us His Holy Spirit and sent Jesus Christ as His Son to this earth to live and to die for us! What greater manifestation of love is than that? We cannot compare that to any other aspect of the love of God for us.

God truly wants our heart. He wants us to love Him back, to reciprocate in a total committed way, and if we can truly understand. We understand the words, but many times we need to understand in a deeper way, a deeper devotion and the deeper things we need to be doing in our lives, as we not only obey His voice, but that we also walk in the way of God and righteousness.

Let’s recognize that this is New Testament theology, but the same message was in the Old Testament. God is the ‘same yesterday, today and tomorrow.’ Even in dealing with the children of Israel, God basically gave them the same commitment to love Him with all their being, with all their heart, and to be able to serve Him and not have anything else get in the way or to block their worship and love for Him.

Deuteronomy 10:12: “And now, Israel, **what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God...**” To stand in awe of His Majesty, to absolutely appreciate the magnitude and power of Almighty God with the ability to not only bless, but also to judge. To recognize that He is the omnipotent Creator God.

“...to walk in all His ways... [not some, but **all** His ways] **...and to love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, to keep the commandments...**” (vs 12-13). They are locked together. You cannot love God and not keep His commandments. They go together one-to-one. Loving God with all your hearts means that you’re keeping the commandments of God with all your heart.

That’s one aspect we can learn how to love God, **by obeying His voice and keeping His commandments!**

“...of the LORD, and His statutes which I command you today for your good?” (v 13). This is a tremendous verse because it clearly points out that God did not give His commandments to be a burden, to be an anvil around our necks and to be just a complete stress and burden. NO! It’s for our good,

for our blessings! Yet, so many people in the world today are casting away the commandments of God as a curse. Nothing could be further from the Truth.

We're going to start with some introductory Scriptures, and fully appreciate that this is a message about serving God from the heart. It's all through the Bible.

Psalm 119:1: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD. Blessed are they who keep His testimonies and who **seek Him with the whole heart**" (vs 1-2)—total, absolute focus and commitment. David says elsewhere, 'I fix my heart on God; I just focus and fix my heart on God.'

Verse 3: "They also do no iniquity; they walk in His ways. You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently" (vs 3-4).

Verse 10: With all my heart I have sought You; O let me not wander from Your commandments." Let's focus on the fact that if you set your heart on God, this will help you not to wander toward the things of the world, the things of your own desires. In other words, you seek God on a daily basis so that you don't wander away from keeping His ways and His laws.

Verse 11: "**Your Word I have laid up in my heart**, so that I might not sin against You. Blessed are You, O LORD; teach me Your statutes" (vs 11-12).

This Psalm is just a rich ground of the very words that Christ may have felt toward the very laws of God, and how Christ looked at the Word of God and how wonderful and comprehensive it really is.

Joshua was a loyal and faithful servant of God; Moses laid hands on him and he continued to lead the children of Israel on into the 'promised land' to the very land that God had promised them.

Let's see how Joshua wept before the children of Israel and said, 'Do not forget the Lord your God and set Him in the very center of your heart.

Joshua 22:4: "And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as He spoke to them. And now turn and go to your tents, to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD has given to you beyond the Jordan. Only, **diligently... [with absolute holding fast] ...take heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.**" (vs 4-5). The message is clear; God wants the hearts of His

people, to love Him and have that close, personal loving relationship that we need to have with God on a continual basis.

Toward the end of Joshua's life he, again, tells the children of Israel, Joshua 24:14: "Now, therefore, fear the LORD, and serve Him **in sincerity and Truth**..."—key aspects of loving God from the heart. It has to be genuine! Sincerity means *to be genuine, nothing artificial, authentic!* There are no elements of factiousness or insincerity, but in Truth we worship God, in Spirit and in Truth (John 4).

"...And put away the gods, which your fathers served on the other side of the River, and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, **choose this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD**" (vs 14-15).

We know that the children of Israel were not faithful in loving God from the heart and from their inner-core being, because they did not have God's Spirit, but they also did not hold fast to the commandments of God and the very words of God. They took upon them their own thinking, their own reasoning.

Did that just happen to those in those days? *No! It's even happening today!* Many times we many know of people who come to first know the Truth about Jesus Christ and about God and the Bible, and at first they worship God with zeal and determination. They worship God with passion, but over time their zeal and enthusiasm for God begins to wane and begins to fall away. They begin to substitute their own ideas, think upon their own ways to worship God and become complacent. They take God for granted and they no longer put God first in their lives.

That's a sad thing, because once you start thinking these ways or doing these things, you may be off just a few degrees, but over time you're going to become further and further away from the God of creation, the God Who truly loves us very much. We need to hold fast.

We can see in the churches in Rev. 2 & 3 this very same problem of which I'm talking about. We can see the history in the true Church of God where individuals, zealous at first, but over time they began to fall away from worshiping God from the heart. This is a warning to all of us. We know that if we're not careful, if we're not diligent, if we start making excuses for this, that, or the other thing, we, too, can fall prey to this very, very thing that I'm talking about.

These are words to myself, to all of us, to truly recognize that this is a full-time profession that we live by and it's not a part-time activity. It's got to be 24/7!

Ephesian Church:

Jesus Christ talking to the Eph. Era, and we know this represents a number of things.

Revelation 2:2: "I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars; and *that* you have borne *much* and have endured, and for My name's sake have labored and have not grown weary" (vs 2-3).

He complimenting them that in the beginning they were zealous, they were holding fast and did not allow false preachers and teachers to come in.

Verse 4: "Nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that **you have left your first love.**" There's a lot in that.

- What did they leave?
- What love did they leave?
- What happened?

It's not clear here, but the point is they got their eyes focused off from serving God in a pure way, in a totally committed way and began doing their own thing. They allowed certain alternative thinking or reasoning to come into the Church. They let down on worshiping God in the way that He said. Over time they *lost their first love* for God and His way.

Verse 5: "Therefore, remember from where you have fallen... [remember the beginning, how you had that passion and zeal] ...and repent, and do the first works; for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent." Brethren, the warning is here; the warning is for us! ***We need to hear and listen to what Christ says to the Churches!***

Laodicean Church:

Another example of the churches where we find that perhaps in the beginning the Laodiceans were very zealous, but notice what Christ says about the Laodiceans. We know that they became lukewarm and almost indifferent to the spiritual things in their lives, and they began to look at the physical aspects within their lives, and took eyes off the true riches of God.

Revelation 3:15: "I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot." When you're lukewarm—one

foot in the Church and one foot in the world—you're kind of ambivalent, swaying back and forth and God says, 'I wish you were really zealous, right in there strong.' You're in the middle and it's a very bad place to be, lukewarm.

Verse 16: "So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth.... [here we see some of the problems that came about]: ...For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'..." (vs 16-17). I have all these good things, I believe in the *prosperity* gospel. If I'm "...rich and increased with goods..." I must be doing very well spiritually. ***Nothing*** could be further from the Truth! That's a satanical lie! Physical goods do not measure your spiritual state of mind with God; ***not at all!*** It's not wrong to be rich.

If we're not consistent in really serving and loving God all the time because of certain physical limitations, fatigue, lack energy, weak and stressed out, that's very true, that's part of the problem about trying to worship God with all of our heart and mind, because we get beaten down by the things in the world.

"...and you do not understand that you are wretched... [blinded to their own spiritual status] ...and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (v 17). They were so deceived in their own minds that they did not even recognize their own spiritual deficiencies.

Hopefully we can stay close to God that we don't get to this state. If you don't see your own spiritual deficiencies, admit that and go to God and repent before Him, He can't help you. Pray that God will open your eyes to be able to see yourself more as God sees you. If you do that, be prepared for a battle, be prepared for work because it sometimes it's not going to be all that pleasant to see.

All of this is looking at the Word of God tells us about this. If we could just understand the situation and realize this battle that's going on, and we do know there's a battle, but it's so easy sometimes to let down. When we let down we make ourselves a prey for Satan and the elements of this world. In today's world we've got to remain strong and focused.

Verse 18: "I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich..." Truly seek the gold, the character and righteousness of the Holy Spirit and the character that comes from keeping the fruits of the Holy Spirit. "...purified by fire..." means that we grow in character by trial, difficulties, struggle. It's not necessarily an easy time of it, but the end result is that *we become rich because we're wearing the white garments.*

“...and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see” (v 18).

There’s a lot in this Scripture. Recognize that all of these are areas we need to examine ourselves and ask ourselves: Are we truly dealing with some of these issues in our lives? Are we loving God totally, with all our being?

Verse 19: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock...” (vs 19-20).

What a situation! Christ is on the outside looking into the hearts of the Laodiceans. He’s not even within their hearts. This pictures Him standing outside wanting to enter. There is a situation here where the elements of not loving God with their whole heart, they’re just paying lip service almost.

For us, brethren, this is not a choice; this is not an alternative. We need to recognize that. Even if things go bad for us, even though we go through trials and difficulties, ***always know that:***

- God loves you
- God is there for you
- you can call upon him

But He needs to know that we’re doing our part and loving God back. We’re doing what He has told us to do and striving against all competition, all things that are going in our lives, to love and serve Him with a pure heart.

Brethren, this is not an easy topic in some respects, because am I perfected in this? *Not at all!* One of the things that an elder realizes is that when he preaches a sermon or Bible study, he’s talking to himself more than he’s talking to you. I’m not here saying that I’m doing these things perfectly. The fact is, this is our goal, what we want to try to achieve, and to do it in a way that’s pleasing to God. Serving God with a full devotion of love, total commitment, zeal and passion; that nothing else matters as long as I love God and serve Him as He has commanded me to do.

No lukewarm attitudes are allowed, no hypocrisy, no half-heartedness; *total commitment*. That’s what these words say, and to me, it’s a challenge that we all face every day of our lives.

Even Paul in 2-Cor. asked some very important questions. Paul admonishes us to check the genuineness, the sincerity of your love.

2-Corinthians 8:8: “I am not saying *this* as a command, but *I am exhorting you* through the diligence of others in order **to prove the genuineness of your love.**” He’s admonishing us to

check the *genuineness of our love for God!*

Sidebar: There was an ad that I remember seeing; it think it was advertising a credit card. The line was that the guy who wanted to use the credit card couldn’t get what he really wanted to buy with it. Then this other company with ‘a better credit card’ asks: What’s in your wallet?

I thought about that and we need to ask: What’s in your heart? Not so much what is in your wallet, not the money or credit cards that you have. Yes, we have to live and do things, but what’s more important is *what is in your heart!*

The word that *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* uses is “genuineness.” Another word for it is *sincerity*. It’s a word that means *honest, authentic, without any adulteration or hypocrisy*. There’s a lot in that word. The English word *sincere* is derived from the Latin and that is based on two words: ‘sine’ and ‘cere’ meaning *without wax*.

How does *without wax* be translated into ‘sincerity’? What happened is within Roman times if you had a very expensive vase or porcelain work, and let’s say it had a few imperfections in it, what somebody could do is take some hot wax and you could put it on this piece of work and that wax would just fill in all the imperfections so that it would look perfect. Yet, it was not perfect because the wax was covering all of the blemishes or *the insincerity* that’s in the vessel.

Well, to say that a particular piece of pottery that you have is *sincere*, what you mean is *this vase is without wax*. There’s no wax, this is authentic, real, no hidden things that are going into this.

So, when we say *sincere* we’re really saying without wax, there’s no wax to cover any of the imperfections or any of the adulterations that may be present. It’s just a better understanding of the word *sincere*.

This is the way that we should be loving God; without wax, but totally sincere based upon Truth, worshiping Him in Spirit and in Truth, doing what He requires us to do. ***To obey His voice!*** One way that is emphasized that we love God is:

- by keeping His commandments
- by obeying His voice
- by loving our neighbor as ourselves
- by keeping all of His commandments, statutes

Matthew 4:4—Christ said, “...‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God.’” That’s to live it faithfully. That’s our calling, the high calling of what it means to be a true servant and a disciple of Jesus Christ.

God leaves so much up to us how we are to live our lives. He doesn't come down and control our lives. He doesn't come down and force us to do anything unless we do it from the heart.

We should think about the physical anatomy of the heart. The Bible points out that the heart is really the center of a person's being, the center of what forms his emotions, the attitude and even character. One might think it's the brain, but not so. Even our thoughts are basically controlled through our heart.

Proverbs 23:7^[transcriber's correction]: "For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he..." *We think in our heart!* What this indicates and now research has shown that this is true, the heart is hard-wired to the brain and there is communication and an intricate pathway of neuro-transmitters of molecular molecules that basically work back and forth, and the heart, which is an organ, physically has a lot to do with your emotions, feelings and how you deal with other people.

Interestingly enough, the heart is like a second brain, which acts as a control center for how we respond to things and how we conduct our lives. It can be the center of a person's belief system as well as his hopes and desires. Psychology and research into how the body functions is beginning to see that this is physically, but it is also true spiritually. There is absolutely a connection here.

Christ even pointed out very clearly pointed out that good or evil centers on the heart, not the mind.

Luke 6:44: "For every tree is known by its own fruit; for they do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather a bunch of grapes from a bramble. The good man out of the **good treasure of his heart** brings forth that which *is* good; and the wicked man out of the **wicked treasure of his heart** brings forth that which *is* wicked; for **out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks**" (vs 44-45). Pretty profound understanding!

Is this just an analogy? The point is that *the heart* is the center core of who you are. That's the point I think that these Scriptures are pointing out.

The *law of sin and death* is in every single person. That is called 'raw human carnal nature.' God saw that because it was good, he left it in there at baptism so we can daily fight that element within us. If you really want to understand the battle, read Rom 7 and you'll understand the battle that Paul had with *the law of sin and death*. This was after 20-30 years that he was an apostle for Jesus Christ. The battle against the law of sin and death continually goes on.

In Jeremiah 17:9 we understand an aspect of

human nature and the human heart in its raw sense: "The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins... [the mind] ...even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings" (vs 9-10). ***Our God is a heart-knowing God!*** He knows our heart, our thoughts and our very being.

For us we can be thankful that God called us, He gave us His Holy Spirit. He gave us a part of Himself to be in us so that not only can we fight against this *law of sin and death*, but that through the Word of God and through the Spirit of God we can fight and win against this fleshly carnal nature that is still within us. We can overcome the evil way and produce righteousness in our lives because of the fact of what it says in:

Hebrew 10:15: "And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said..." The Holy Spirit is in us, it's the very nature and attributes of God, which is there and allows us to really worship and to know God, discern the Truth of God and to be able to walk in the Truth. Without the Holy Spirit we would not be able to do that.

Verse 16: "'This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,' says *the* Lord, **I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds.**" That's a beautiful Scripture.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit and God dwelling in us He has put within us His very laws and commandments. They're part of us. They're there, we just have to activate them, make sure that we're connecting every day and acknowledging that we are to walk in the way of God, to walk in the way of His commandments.

He's put that there so we can truly win and defeat the carnal nature that still remains.

Matthew 5:8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This points out that we are to love and serve God with a pure and repentant heart. What does it mean to have a *pure heart*? ***It's cleansed, free of sin, free of the blemishes and things of this world*** that basically is part of this world, which is the way of sin!

We are to be purified, cleansed. For us that process starts at baptism, which represents *the spiritual circumcision of the heart!*

We see this picture of always going back to the human heart. God is consistent all the way through about the nature of the human heart and our relationship with God. God wants us to circumcise not the foreskins in males, but the for male and female to circumcise our hearts.

Romans 2:28 “For he is not a Jew who is *one* outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is external in *the* flesh; rather, he is **a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart**, in the spirit *and* not in *the* letter; whose praise is not from men but from God” (vs 28-29). Powerful Scriptures showing that the circumcision of the flesh is the Old Testament teaching, and now we are to circumcise our hearts.

We do that by repenting, by acknowledging Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and being baptized into the water so that our sins and all of that is washed away. When we come up out of the water we commit our lives to walking in newness of life. We are to walk in the way of God with a pure heart and free of hypocrisy, free of evil thoughts and free of, especially, the arch enemy of us: *pride!* We have to be free of these things, because once they get into our heart they destroy the heart and lead us in the wrong direction.

The Apostle James does not mince words. He is one of the most focused and straightforward of the epistles that we can read. There is one way, James points out, and there is no wiggle room.

James 4:5: “Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The spirit that dwells in us lusts with envy?’” What is James talking about? *He’s talking about the human spirit, the very nature that is within us that wants to lust after, go after that which is evil!*

It’s there, but what does he now say, v 6: But He [God] gives greater grace....” God, through His grace, has enabled us to overcome this spirit that is within us.

“...This is the reason it says, ‘God sets Himself against *the* proud... [the chief, the top-dog] ...but He gives grace to *the* humble.’ Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, **and purify your hearts**, you double-minded! Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you” (vs 6-10).

The principle here in worshiping God with all of our heart, we need to do it with a cleansed heart, with a pure heart, with one that indeed we’re dealing with sin. Since we are the temple of the living God through the Holy Spirit that dwells in us, we must eliminate... The temple in us is a Holy place, a place where there is no sin, so therefore, we must work be able to build within our own being a sinless inner being. Remove all presumptuous sins, and idols of the mind. Sometimes they’re still in us from the way we’re brought up. There are things in

there that we continually need to cleanse out of our mind and heart. Here is the admonition that Paul gives to the Corinthians, and they had a lot of problems that they were dealing with. Paul reminds them that if they are truly a true Christian, this is what they need to be doing:

2-Corinthians 6:16: “And what agreement is *there between* a temple of God and idols?...” If anybody has one foot in the world and one foot in God’s Church, they’re duplicitous, they’re not truly walking in the way of God. They’re walking betwixt and between.

“...For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’” (v 16). This is what God is looking for. ‘I want to be there and part of your life, your thoughts, all your actions and I will dwell in you.’

Verse 17: “‘Therefore, come out from the midst of them... [the world, the things of wickedness and evil] ...and be separate,’ says *the* Lord, ‘and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you.’” God cannot dwell where sin is.

Brethren, if we want to be close to God, then we must approach God with a cleansed heart. That why every day in our prayers we go before God and say, ‘Forgive me my sins and grant me repentance, O God, that I may approach You with a *clean heart*.’ God will hear that prayer and will cleanse you by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. We have to do that on a daily basis because of ‘the law of sin and death’ within us. It’s on going, but this is what we must do!

Verse 18: “‘And I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,’ says *the* Lord Almighty.”

2-Corinthians 7:1: Now then, beloved, since we have these promises... [fantastic, wonderful promises that God will dwell in us] ...we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, perfecting Holiness in *the* fear of God.” Very, very strong words and profound!

2-Timothy 2:21: “Therefore, if anyone has purged himself from these, he will be a vessel for honor, having been sanctified and *made* serviceable to the Master, *and* having been prepared for every good work. But flee youthful lusts; and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace with those who are calling on the Lord out of a pure heart” (vs 21-22).

1-Peter 1:21: “*Even for you* who through Him do believe in God, Who raised Him from *the* dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God. Having purified your lives by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, love one another fervently with a

pure heart” (vs 21-22).

These Scriptures talk about being cleansed of heart so you can go to God with purity and righteousness. Both of these point out that we are to love God and one another. The point is to love God and keep His commandments, and the other thing is to love one another in the same way that Christ loves us, in the very same manner.

David was an individual that was a shepherd boy and he had a chance to know and understand God as he could see the wonderful thing of God’s creation. David had a very repentant heart and understood that sin separates us from God. After his grievous sin with Bathsheba, David sought God’s forgiveness and *specifically that God would cleanse his heart* so he then could approach God in righteousness. This is the idea that we have think about everyday to get ‘your laundry’ done, washed, to be cleaned up.

Psalms 51 is a Psalm that David wrote regarding repentance, about being cleansed and being pure before God.

Psalms 51:11: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge” (1-4).

David recognized that it was sinning against God and that he was separated from God. He was hurt and he felt needed to be cleansed. He went before God, and God heard His prayer and forgave David.

Verse 9: “Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me” (vs 9-11).

These are emotional words that are from the inner core of a person’s seeking God in Truth and in Spirit. Brethren, these words help us to appreciate the way that we need to approach God with true feeling of love and emotion toward God.

It’s interesting to look at David’s life. When God was looking for a man to replace Saul, God chose David, the youngest son of Jesse. You know the story. Samuel didn’t know which son of Jesse so he started with the oldest and went through the big, hulky guys, the sons who were mature and strong and impressive to the eye. God says, no, *no no*, and then after a while Samuel asked if there was

anybody else. ‘Yeah, I’ve got my young son out in the field.’ *Go get him!*

David came in and Samuel said, ‘Yes, this is the man that God was looking for.’ Even though David was short in stature at that time and did not look like appearance of a king. Well, God rejected his older brothers because God was not looking at the outer appearance of the man. *God was looking upon the heart!* God looked upon David’s heart and saw that here was a man that He could work with, ‘who will love Me and serve Me with all His being.’

This is the clearest Scripture I could find regarding God’s choice of David; Acts 13:21: “And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, son of Cis, a man of *the* tribe of Benjamin, *for* forty years. And after removing him, He raised up David to be their king; to whom He also gave testimony, saying, ‘I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will perform all My will” (vs 21-22).

Brethren, this points out what God looks for, and David was faithful, humble, and he put his total trust in God. Yes, he fell down with Bathsheba, but God forgave him. You know, that to me is a wonderful testimony that gives us a lot of hope. Here’s a man who was strong, but sometimes we fall down. David fell down and took his eyes off of God. David ^[transcriber’s correction] tied up with all the emotions of things for a while and he sinned grievously. But God forgave and he forgives us, too, upon repentance.

David expressed his feelings for God in the Psalms. You can go through and read many occasions where God praised God with all his heart and all his being.

This is a wonderful way to start your prayers, Psalms 18:1: “I love You, O LORD, my strength.” It’s not wrong in your prayers to just say, ‘God, I love You! Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior, I love You!’ God wants to hear those words from you. He does! He wants to know what’s in your heart.

Verse 2: “The LORD is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my Rock in Whom I take refuge; He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower. I will call on the LORD, Who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from my enemies” (vs 2-3).

David points out that if you’re close to God and come before His throne and have this close personal relationship; He hears your prayers and will be there for you. You’re not alone! You’re never, never alone, even in your darkest trial and trouble you’re going through.

David’s example was to worship God by

engaging the whole being. I wish that I could approach it as David expressed it: *to engage God with my whole being*. I'm striving for that more and more. It's a battle! ***Engage God with your whole heart, with passion and deep feeling!*** It's part of the battle that we fight.

In looking at the action of loving God from the whole heart, it may be a question that is kind of strange to ask, but:

- What is our motivation to love God with all of our heart, mind and being?
- What's our motivation?
- What's the reason?
- Why should we do this?

You could probably come up with a hundred reasons why we should love God, but ***I feel the primary reason what motivates us to love God is because of God's love for us!*** God loves us so much He looks upon us as being His children!

- because of His grace
- because of His love for us
- because of His mercy

Above all else, ***we should love Him in return, and as deeply as we can!***

Think of your own parents. You love your parents because they bore us, they raised us, they loved us with unconditional love, they provided the things we needed when we were helpless. We pray that they raised you in a way so that you could be responsible adults.

All of this they did in a physical sense and God does that many, many multiple times in a spiritual way and a physical way—both! God provides us with everything that we have. We have nothing we have not receive! Therefore, should we not love God with all our being? ***Absolutely!***

God is love; He sent His Son to die for us on the cross, the most despicable death that one could see. He sent His Son to lay His life down so that our sins could be forgiven, and that we could have a relationship with God and even the potential for eternal life. ***My 'o my, the incredible love that He has for us we cannot even begin to measure!***

1-John 4:8: "The one who does not love does not know God because **God is love.**" We can see that this factor of love is the key central aspect of Who God is, but also if we do not love, then we do not know God and we do not know anything about Who God is.

Verse 9: "In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him." Christ lives in us, the Father lives in us, and we live through Him.

Verse 10: "In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God..." He loved us when we were still enemies, when we didn't know that God loved us, because He knew that He was going to call us and draw us into His begotten family.

"...rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another" (vs 10-11). Not only do we love God with all our heart, soul and being, but we are to love one another as we love ourselves. Pretty profound!

God loves us so much that He wants to come to the point so that He would dwell in us and we in Him, so that we can be one with the God of the universe! That blows my mind away to think about this! To be at one with God! To be part of the very basis of Who and what God is! This is the prayer that Christ gave up to God the Father just prior to His crucifixion, and look what He prayed to the Father, praying for us and for all those who would know and love God:

John 17:21: "That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me. And I have given them the glory that You gave *to* Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, **and have loved them as You have loved Me**" (vs 21-23).

No greater love is there than this, for this very fact, we should be motivated to love God with all our being. These are things we know and appreciate. When we really look at it in a deeper way, what an incredible love God has for us.

I want to talk about how we confirm our love for God. I want to give you some key points that in my own mind I dwelt and prayed about this: How do we demonstrate and manifest our love for God with our whole heart? There are many ways we can do this. You can add to this list.

1. **Put God first in your life**

That's showing your love for God from the heart.

Matthew 6:33: "But *as for* you, **seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness...** [it's two parts] ...and all these things shall be added to you."

This is what God wants first in our lives, our first priority. This means that we don't want to let the priorities of the world, other things in the world distract us from that goal. We confirm our love for

God by putting Him first in our lives. God has to be first in our lives to the point that we are willing to give up everything for God. That's what this really means:

Matthew 10:37: The one who loves father or mother more than Me **is not worthy of Me**; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." God is first in your love, and no one else gets more love than the love you have for God.

Not that we don't love our father, moth, children, wives, but if we love them more than God they become an idol, they come before God. *Nothing comes before God!*

Verse 38: "And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me **is not worthy of Me**." That's a lot there in terms of taking up the trials and difficulties of this life. We must be willing to do that.

Verse 39: "The one who has found his life shall lose it... [if you think things are going just great, then you're probably going to lose your life] ...and **the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it**"—or will preserve it.

What this means is that God comes first in our lives! That shows love to God in a very deep way!

2. **By doing God's will and not your will**

Know what God's will is in your life.

Romans 12:2: "Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed **by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what is well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God.**"

By doing that and knowing the true will of God and following that will, you're demonstrating your love for God. It just overlaps completely!

3. **By keeping His Word and commandments faithfully**

John 14:21: "**The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me**... [straightforward; no wiggle-room here] ...and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him."

Verse 23: Jesus answered and said to him [Judas (not Iscariot)], 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.'" By keeping God's Word and commandments we are loving God from the heart.

4. **By giving God praise, thanksgiving, glory and honor in the same way the angels in heaven do**

In the heavenly realm they praise God, worship God and they bowed down to God and they love God and showed it and demonstrate by:

Revelation 7:11: "Then all the angels stood around the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, 'Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and strength *be* to our God into the ages of eternity. Amen'" (vs 11-12).

This shows loyalty, faithfulness, being thankful to our Creator God from the heart.

5. **By loving one another in the same way Christ loves us**

John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you: **that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you**, that *is how* you are to love one another. By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another" (vs 34-35).

We can't love God if we don't love our neighbor from the heart, with no exceptions.

6. **By spending time with God**

Don't you spend time with people you love and want to be around? *Absolutely!* In the same way, by spending time with God in prayer and study and meditating on His Word, we are demonstrating our love for God. Especially on the Sabbath, we fellowship with Him, with Christ and God the Father, and we reflect that love we have for Him from the heart.

7. **By repenting daily of our sins with sincerity from the heart**

We must come before God with a cleansed heart, with a repentant heart. By doing so in sincerity, we're demonstrating our profound love for God by repenting of our sins.

You may not have thought about it this way, but this is very true. By repenting of your sins, you are showing that you're obeying the voice of God, but also you love God because you want to become more like He is. That's what worship is all about. You worship that which you want to become like.

8. **By forgiving one another their offenses and sins against you from the heart**

Matthew 6:14: "For, if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive

you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (vs 14-15).

Matthew 18:35: “Likewise shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not **forgive his brother’s offenses from the heart**”—without any exception. It must be from your inner being and from your heart. Not to be halfway, but you must forgive others the offenses done against you from the heart.

9. By your willingness to be growing in the mind of Christ

You willingness to strive for perfection in our life through the love of God.

Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” To be able to grow in His Divine character. As we submit and yield to God and follow God, and that we will be able to grow in the mind of Christ and His Divine character.

Romans 8:28: “And we know that **all things work together for good to those who love God**, to those who are called according to *His* purpose, because those whom He did foreknow **He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His own Son**, that He might be *the* Firstborn among many brethren” (vs 28-29).

We are being changed into the very image of Jesus Christ if we are loving God with our whole heart, if we are striving with all our mind and being to be like He is.

In conclusion, brethren, meditate on these things and recognize that we love God dearly. We need to recognize that we can truly look deeper and love God deeper with more feeling and efforts to truly love God with all our heart, soul and being. As we worship and love God with all of our heart, we will grow in conversion and we will become more like God is. That’s profound. In this process our hearts becomes more like God’s heart.

In a sense and I can sort of picture this, that when we enter into the Kingdom of God, we will see God face-to-face and He will look into our eyes and He may say, ‘Welcome into My Kingdom, you have become after My own heart and one who will perform all My will.’

We could hear no greater words than that. Let us truly worship and praise God today and every day and love God with all our being, because we have some wonderful things ahead for us. We want to all be there and be strong and doing God’s will. To me this is one way that we can surely begin to appreciate God working in us, ***if we can truly love Him back with all our heart, strength and being!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 22: 37-39
- 2) Deuteronomy 10:12-13
- 3) Psalm 119:1-4, 10-12
- 4) Joshua 22:4-5
- 5) Joshua 24:14-15
- 6) Revelation 2:2-5
- 7) Revelation 3:15-20
- 8) 2 Corinthians 8:8
- 9) Matthew 4:4
- 10) Proverbs 23:7
- 11) Luke 6:44-45
- 12) Jeremiah 17:9-10
- 13) Hebrews 10:15-16
- 14) Matthew 5:8
- 15) Romans 2:28-29
- 16) James 4:5-10
- 17) 2 Corinthians 6:16-18
- 18) 2 Corinthians 7:1
- 19) 2 Timothy 2:21-22
- 20) 1 Peter 1:21-22
- 21) Psalm 51:1-4, 9-11
- 22) Acts 13:21-22
- 23) Psalm 18:1-3
- 24) 1 John 4:8-11
- 25) John 17:21-23
- 26) Matthew 6:33
- 27) Matthew 10:37-39
- 28) Romans 12:2
- 29) John 14:21, 23
- 30) Revelation 7:11-12
- 31) John 13:34-35
- 32) Matthew 6:14-15
- 33) Matthew 18:35
- 34) Philippians 2:5
- 35) Romans 8:28-29

Scripture referenced, not quoted:

- John 4
- Romans 7

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