



Empowering People to Change the World

The Wholehearted Disciple

Part VIII

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The Wholeheart Disciple: Loving God with All your Strength

Next week is our 24 Hour War Room...

**The greatest man who ever lived
gave us
The greatest command ever given
that we might experience
The greatest life ever offered.**

Mark 12:28-30

²⁸Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the first commandment of all?”

²⁹Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.

- Ultimately this is the irreducible minimum of being a wholeheart disciple!
- This is the stirring of our hearts, this is true revival. Revival is when we start contending for the 1st commandment in our lives.
- This is how we overcome lust, anger, fear in our life.
- This is our place of freedom.
- If we decide to grow in this, we will see victory in these other areas.
- When you struggle with anger, lust or bitterness, turn and focus on this commandment.

God wants us preoccupied with this commandment. John 14 says if you love me you will keep my commandments. The spirit of obedience does not quit. If you love Me, you will not quit.

- The key to greatness in this life is all found right here! We have grown accustomed to evaluating our life according to our accomplishments and achievements but Jesus says “Beloved, this is it! This is the greatest commandment. If you follow this, everything just lines up. This is success, this is greatness.

The Focused life:

4 Focused Ways to Love Him. We have to Laser Focus on this!

- The first 3 of the 10 Commandments begin with our relationship with God, it all starts here. But then the last 6 are about our relationship with people and relationships with society.
- In the same way, the first 3 ways we love God is about our relationship with God. Loving Him with all of our heart, soul and mind.
- So, we have covered this over the past 2 months: loving God with all our heart, soul and mind.
- But we have a shift in the Great Commandment. Jesus goes outward, horizontal.
- Loving God with all our strength?

Verse 30 talks of loving God with all your strength.

- Loving God with what makes us strong, with what gives us strength in our lives. We are being commanded to love God with what makes us strong.
 - Strength is the capacity of being strong, the power to accomplish and influence.
- Strength is defined by our Talents, Treasure and Time.
- Your most important asset in this life is how you use your time, energy and money.

- How you use your time—what you do with your time—loving God with how you use your time.
- How you utilize your energy—your physical resource of energy is what gets us up in the morning.
- How you focus your money—FBI once said that if they could get a hold of a man's check book they could tell you within 90% accuracy what the values and vision were for that person.

Matthew 25: 14-25

¹⁴ “***For the kingdom of heaven is*** like a man traveling to a far country, ***who*** called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. ¹⁵ And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. ¹⁶ Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. ¹⁷ And likewise he who ***had received*** two gained two more also. ¹⁸ But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. ¹⁹ After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

²⁰ “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ ²¹ His lord said to him, ‘Well ***done***, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ ²² He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ ²³ His lord said to him, ‘Well ***done***, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

²⁴ “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.²⁵ And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, ***there*** you have ***what is*** yours.’

²⁶ “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. ²⁷ So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. ²⁸ Therefore take the talent from him, and give *it* to him who has ten talents.

²⁹ ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

- God is vitally interested in how you use your strength.

3 Ways we Love God with our Strength

- 1. Talents**
- 2. Time**
- 3. Treasure**

We Love God with our Strength through Loving Him with our Talents

Everyone in this room is gifted and talented. I have personally never been around so many smart, talented and gifted people.

I would categorize our talents into 3 categories:

- 1. Natural Talents**
- 2. Spiritual Gifts**
- 3. Acquired Skills**

- From the natural talents you were born with, to the spiritual gifts you were sovereignly given when you came to Christ, to the skills you have acquired through training and schooling.
- All your capacities have been given to you as a gift from God.

- Our hearts come alive with something! What causes your heart to come alive? This says something of who you are and what you were made to do with your life.
- Have you dedicated your talents, gifts and skills to the Lord?
- The world is longing for Christians, Jesus disciples who truly live the life of Christ at their work, in their family or at the grocery store.
- Revival is when we see our jobs, our talents and our skills as the basis for loving God.
 - When we dedicate our lives to loving God with our talents, gifts, and skills, God breathes on them and multiplies what we have.

Secondly, we Love God with our Strength by Loving Him with our Use of Time

- For example, when you got ready for our worship service, you got your kids ready, you drove here, you're sitting here. That is loving God with your strength.
 - When you come early and study in Outlier University.
 - When you become a servant leader and work with the kids in the nursery, NexGen and NexGen Jr.
 - Hospitality in the lobby.
 - Greet people at the door.
 - Practice on the worship team.
 - Help out with Teleios, Flagship.
- For example, when you go on the Springs Initiative and paint those houses. That is loving God with your strength.
- Get up and come to 6am Morning Fire.
- Attend a Bible study.

- God sees that. The Son says to the Father, “they are loving us with their wholeheart! Isn’t that awesome!” This is how God measures success.
- For example, when you come to the facility and lay down gravel, cut the grass, move boxes or clean up.
- God notices that! Man may not notice what you are doing; I may not notice what you are doing. But God notices.
- For example, I believe that what God noticed in David’s life was the secret history of intimacy and service that David developed on the hills of Bethlehem that no one else noticed.
- Do you have a secret history with God of service? Serving for an audience of One!

Thirdly, Loving God with our Strength is Loving God with our Treasure: our money, our resources, our possessions.

Someone has said, “You can place people into two categories: either their possessions possess them or they possess their possessions.

Matthew 19: 16-24

¹⁶ Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good^[a] Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

¹⁷ So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good?^[f] No one is good but One, that is, God.^[g] But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

¹⁸ He said to Him, “Which ones?”

Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ ¹⁹ ‘Honor your father and your mother,’^[h] and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”^[i]

²⁰ The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth.^[1] What do I still lack?”

²¹ Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

²³ Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

Jesus, in speaking of possessions said it this way, in

Matthew 6: 19-21,24

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...²⁴No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Jesus is saying: It's all about investments. Where we are investing our Treasure defines the location of our heart.

- Money is the currency of Christian happiness and joy!

- Paul in writing to Timothy said in **1Timothy 6: 9-19**

⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. ¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

- Money, used properly, God's way, is the greatest long term gain for your future. How we use our money secures our future.
- For example, I have been doing something I call **"Tithing Plus"** for the last 30 years. What I mean is that I Tithe 10% of my income plus I give more to special needs. I give 10% of my income to the local church for this is the spiritual body that equips me, challenges me, and it is the local branch of the Kingdom of God in my life. But then I also give to other ministries, that's the Plus part. We give to Compassion, other missionaries, etc.
- Look what I am doing!! As in **1Timothy 6:19**
"storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

- The root of all evil is not just that we love money so much. It is that we love God so little! The key to joy is using your treasure to love God! Folks, that is true freedom.
 - I have known many lean times. Times we did not know where our finances would come from and I could call out to God, “Lord I’ve put my investment into your Kingdom, your Kingdom 401k, and I need to draw down some right now!”
- For example, in the book, 10 Golden Rules to Financial Success by Gary Moore and forward by Sir John Templeton. First Golden Rule—Give away 10% of your income.
- Sir John Templeton, one of the richest men in the world gives this advice, “The first step is to give the first 10% of what we are blessed with, including our time and talent. The giving is an indication of true that God will provide for our needs and evidence that we are willing to leave that fruit and have our priorities straight. That makes it the surest initial wealth in all its forms. In all my 52 years before I retired as an investment counselor, we were helping people, literally hundreds of thousands of people, with their wealth. In all of those years, there was only one investment that never proved faulty, and that was tithing—giving at least 10% of your income to church and charities. In all my history, I’ve never seen a family who tithes for as long as at least 10 years, that didn’t become prosperous and happy. That is the best investment any one can select.”
- So, in 10 years you can become happy, prosperous and financially stable by generously and joyfully giving away 10%. Folks, that’s the upside-down kingdom—it’s counterintuitive. It is what Jesus is saying in **Matthew 6:20**

- ***“²⁰lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...”***
- A wholehearted, a set-free heart, is tapping into God's unlimited prosperity and creative energy!

Loving God with all your strength means

- Loving God with your Talents.
- Loving God with your Time.
- Loving God with your Treasures.