



## Season 1, Episode 8: “Wholehearted Part 2”

Hi friends and c'mon in! This is part two of our message, Wholehearted. Last week we unpacked what that looks like biblically and what's laid out for us in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, where God gives us the 1<sup>ST</sup> Priority Command, which is to love him wholeheartedly– with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Really to *love him first, most and best* what I like to say. And we also unpacked the fact that loving God has got to become a *lifestyle*. It's got to become the way we live our life. It's the healthy way to live. It's the sane way to live. It is the safe way to live. And it's the way that promises us the most peace in life when we recalibrate and when we dethrone all the little idols on our heart and put God in his right position. I really feel like that's got to be a daily thing for us, y'all. It really has to be that *daily choice to put God first*, to seek him first, and to love him first, most and best.

That's not going to happen by accident, we've got to be intentional, just as we're intentional about so many other things in life, we've got to be intentional about prioritizing God. I'll just say this, we live in a world that has no intention of helping us follow Jesus or keep God as the priority love of our life. In fact, it's the exact opposite. The world is telling us, do this, go here, and turn away from God and walk as far and as fast as you can. We're really swimming upstream y'all. There's pushback all the time because we're cutting cross grain of the culture and it's flying back in our face, so we've got to be intentional and we've got to be intentional with one another.

That's another reason why I am hopeful that you'll take the messages of this podcast and share them among your group of friends. Get a group of your girlfriends over, sit around and have coffee and talk about these things and really hash them out. Talk about the struggles you have with keeping God first, and what really is the priority love in your life. And then talk about the ways that y'all can encourage one another and support each other in this. Really think it through together. This is what running together and walking it out together looks like, y'all. It's not just talking about what we learned, but actually talking about *how what we learned can change our lives*. Because, like I said last week (or the week before maybe, I forget) but true learning really only happens when it changes the way you live your lives. So let's think through ways that we can apply this and run it out together.

I believe it comes down to this: to choosing to live our lives by and according to God's priorities, and then establishing boundaries, boundaries to safeguard or jealously guard our relationship with Jesus. First of all, I know I've said this before, we will never love

whom we do not know. We'll never trust whom we do not know. And the scriptures tell us this. In John 17:3, and this is eternal life, that they may know you, the one true God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. Ephesians 1:17 says, I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know him better. And in Isaiah 43:10, the Lord says, you are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he.

So it's true, over and over in scripture, God wants us to know him, because the more we know him the more we love him, and the more we will want to know and love him. It's know God, love God. Know God, love God more. Know God more, love God more. And on and on and on. And we do that through his written word, the Bible. That's the primary way we're going to get to know him and love him, and through his living word, his son, Jesus Christ. And then through experiencing his activity in your life through the Holy Spirit.

There's even more at stake with knowing and loving God than even our own personal life and experience with him. It's what we're showing to the next generation. It's what we're showing our children. It's what we're teaching them. In fact, if you go back to Deuteronomy 6, that we looked at last week, the Shema, when Moses says to the Israelites, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. In Verse 20 he says, in the future, when your children ask you what is the meaning of these laws, these decrees and regulations that the Lord our God has commanded us today, then you must tell them. So what are we telling them? Again, what are we telling them with what we talk about, what we pray about, how we live our lives, what we prioritize.

And then in Joshua 4:21, as the Israelites are about to make their way across the Jordan. The Jordan is at flood stage and they are afraid to cross because they'll be swept away. And so they pray and the Lord says, go and stand in the middle of the water and I will part the water, which he does, and then they make it to the other side. But he instructs the leaders, the priests, to go back into the river and collect stones from in the middle of the river bed where they crossed over, and then he says, pile these stones up and make a memorial, they're stones of remembrance. And then he says this in Verse 21, in the future, when your children ask you, what do these stones mean, then you can tell them.

Alright y'all, it begs the question, are our children even asking us about the God we love? The God we say we love. The God we go to church and worship. Are we talking about him? Again, we talk about the things we love. Are our children asking us to tell them about the wonders of who God is? And that goes for spiritual children as well. Do we have young women coming to us, asking us to tell them about the God that we love? Do we know God and love God so very much that we want others to know him and love him? And are they coming to us because they can see that we know him and love him deeply?

Alright, so back to prioritizing God in our own lives. Because loving God has got to become a lifestyle for us. What does that look like in our everyday life? Imagine there's a great big circle on a piece of paper, just a big circle, and in the middle of that there's a smaller circle. If that circle represents your life, and in the center of that circle represents what the most

important thing in your life is, what would you put in that circle? Let me ask it another way. Where would you put God in that circle? Would he be in the middle of the center circle? Would he be on the outside?

Now, if you were to section that circle off, kind of like spokes on a wheel, and each of those spokes, those sections, represented a part of your life, where would God be? Is he just a part of your life or is he in the center holding everything together and bringing purpose and driving and fueling everything with his love and with his power? Because that's the way it's got to be. He's got to be in the center, and what's in the center gives meaning and purpose to everything else. We have to be sure that whoever and whatever is in the center can support the rest of our life. Because if that thing is gone, the whole thing collapses. But the only way it will never fall apart, the only way it will never collapse. The way to keep it stronger is to keep God at the center and his love and our love for him emanating through every other part of our life. Our social life, emotional life, physical, relational life, and yes, our spiritual life. He has to be encompassed in all of that. He wants to be a part of all of it. He wants us to ask him about all those areas of our life.

Do we make vacation plans with him? Do we ask him what he thinks about how to spend our money, how to save our money? Do we ask him how to raise our children? Do we ask him about our career choice, a job change? Do we ask him about family matters? And do we really invite him into our marriages and to our social relationships? He wants to be involved in every aspect of our life. And as we continue to put God at the center and to love him first, most, and best, and to place him in that priority position in our life, then his life is reproduced in us and gives purpose and meaning and brings healing and strength as he invades every area of our life. And that center is where you draw the strength and nourishment you need for your life to truly flourish. It's where you get your wisdom, your discernment, your love, your joy, your peace, and your hope. Also, every area of our life that's represented on that drawing presents us with needs and desires and longings and frustrations and struggles that only Jesus has the answer for.

So what do we do? We go back and we remember and we remind ourselves not to forget to remember to love God first. We do whatever it takes to help us remember. We go by sticky notes and we post them all over the house with reminders, don't forget to love God first. Don't forget to love God first, most and best. Set a reminder alarm on your phone to go off to remind you to take a little time right then and spend with the Lord, just to say something simple to him like, I love you Lord, and I just want to love you more. But it's going to take establishing of priority first, and priorities usually mean that we've got to eliminate something. We've got to sacrifice something. So yeah, it's going to take a sacrifice. Something is going to have to be removed in order to take some time for God. It doesn't matter when it is, whenever you can fit it in in the day. Just start there, but just do it. Just do it.

Again, y'all, we're not going to come at this by accident. We're not going to accidentally fall in love with Jesus. We're not going to accidentally put God in the priority love position in our life. We're going to have to make it happen, and you can do it. And guess what, God is for you, and he's going to help you do it.

Alright, in closing, I want to share something with you. I heard a song a long, long time ago, and the first time I heard it, it just gripped my heart and I've never been able to shake it. It's called One Pure and Holy Passion, and it goes like this: Lord, give me one pure and Holy passion. Give me one magnificent obsession. Give me one glorious ambition for my life, to know and follow hard after you.

So pray that with me. Pray that God would be your one true and Holy passion. Pray that God would be your magnificent obsession. And pray that he would be your one glorious ambition of your life. And then go know him, and fall in love with him, and follow him all the days of your life. That's what loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength looks like.



OK, that's that for that. And don't forget that you are greatly and dearly loved by The King!

xo P