

With All Your Heart

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (New American Standard Bible 1995)

⁴ “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

Introduction

Over the past few weeks, we've been learning about the heart.

Here's a recap. We learned that the heart is the innermost seat of emotion, intellect, will, conscience, and even appetites. God has appointed each one of us as the caretaker of our own heart. If you don't, no one will. The quality of life depends on the well-being of our heart, and the well-being of the heart relies on the care we provide to our hearts. In fact, heart care is so critical that God commands us to guard our heart above all guarding (Proverbs 4:23). There are three ways to take care of our hearts (3 S's): **screen out negative thoughts, store up God's Word, and stay on anything that is honorable and good.**

Content

This morning, we turn to one phrase that lies at the very center of our relationship with God: **With all your heart.** It is a phrase many of us know by memory. But do we truly understand it? Do we truly live it?

The Great Commandment

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 is known as the Shema. It was the daily confession of Israel.

“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” Jesus later said that all the Law and the Prophets hang on this commandment (Matthew 22:40).

This is not a small command. This is the command.

When Scripture says, “**with all your heart**,” it means total, undivided loyalty—no backups, no secondary allegiances, no divided devotion. Consider your marriage does not work on partial commitment. Neither does love for God.

I am going to share with you what I have discovered in the Bible on this topic in the form of Q & A.

Q1: Does God Ask for Something He Does Not Give?

Love with all our heart: Does this principle apply only to us? No. God also applies the same principle to Himself. In Jeremiah 32:41, God says: “*I will rejoice over them to do them good... and I will faithfully plant them in this land with all My heart and with all My soul.*”

Think about it. God commits Himself to loving us with all His heart and with all His soul. He loves us “all in.” Then, He asks the same commitment from us. He never asks from us what He has not already given. Imagine a master musician handing a violin to a student. He doesn't just say, “Play perfectly.” First, he plays a masterpiece with every ounce of his soul to show the student what is possible. Then, he hands over the instrument and says, “Now, you try.” God isn't a demanding boss barking orders from a desk; He is the Father who stepped out of heaven and gave everything at the Cross to show us what “all in” looks like. Like a loving parent, He demonstrates wholehearted love first—then calls us to respond in the same manner. We aren't trying to reach a standard; we are echoing a Love that already reached us.

Q2: Why are we to love God ‘with all our heart’? What's wrong with half-hearted?

Why does God insist on wholehearted love? Because it is good for us. It benefits us. Here's what happens when we love Him with all our heart. It enriches our life and serves best in our relationship with Him. To those who love Him with all their hearts, God promises **prosperity and longevity** (Deuteronomy 6:18, 30:6). He commands us to pass this attitude onto the next generation, because It is **good for our children** as well (Deuteronomy 6:2).

Here's one more advantage: when our heart is completely His, then God will show His strong **support** on our behalf: “*For The eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His*” (2 Chronicles 16:9, NASB). In other words, when our heart is totally towards Him, God **protects our heart and holds our life tight in His Mighty Hands!** You can't ask for more than that!

Look at Daniel's three friends. They stood before the fiery furnace and said: “Even if He does not [deliver us], we will not serve your gods” (Daniel 3:18). That is wholehearted love.

You may ask: why is the half-hearted love to God not good? Because it will lead us to a compromised faith. Think of a **Compass and a Magnet**. A compass is designed to point North, no matter where you are. But if you place a small magnet next to that compass, the needle begins to shiver. It's no longer true. It might still point mostly North, but “mostly North” gets you lost at sea.

Consider the case of King Solomon. He began with the Lord but ended up with idolatry. He didn't wake up one day and decide to hate God. He just allowed "small magnets" (diplomatic compromises) to sit next to his heart. Eventually, those small pulls dragged his entire life off course. Here yourself the Word of God: "Now **King Solomon loved many foreign women ... , Solomon held fast to these in love.**³ He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and **his wives turned his heart away.**⁴ For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and **his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been**" (1 Kings 11:1-4, NASB).

The lesson is clear: If we don't love God with all our heart, we will compromise and end up turning away from the Lord.

Q3: What Does It Mean to Love God?

Jesus gives a simple answer: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" (John 14:15). To love God means to obey Him. We don't obey God to earn His love. Through our obedience, we show our love to our heavenly Father. Love that never shows itself in action is not love—it is only sentiment. Let's understand. God's love language is obedience. Therefore, to love God with all our heart means to keep His Word with undivided devotion. In a **Marriage**, if a husband tells his wife "I love you with all my heart" every morning, but then never helps at home, ignores her requests, and spends all his time on his own hobbies, she will eventually stop believing his words. Why? Because in a relationship of love, **actions are the vocabulary**. If we say we love God but ignore His Word, we are speaking a language He doesn't recognize. Obedience is simply telling God "I love you" in a way He can see.

Q4: What are the specific things that we are commanded to do with our heart? What Does Wholehearted Love Look Like?

Scripture describes it in many ways, but we can summarize it in three movements:

1. Turn to God with all your heart.

When in trouble, turn to Him with all your heart (Deuteronomy 30:10).
When you sin, return to Him with all your heart (1 Samuel 7:3).
When you cry onto Him, do it with all your heart (Psalm 119:145).

Wholehearted love does not wander long—it returns quickly.

2. Walk with God with all your heart.

Keep His commandments with all your heart (Psalm 119:34).
Trust Him with all your heart (Proverbs 3:5).
Walk before Him in truth (2 Chronicles 6:14).

Love is not a moment—it is a daily walk.

3. Give Thanks/ Rejoice in the Lord with all your heart.

Give thanks (Psalm 9:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:18) and rejoice in the Lord with all your heart (Zephaniah 3:14). E.g., The late Rev. Richard Wurmbrant was in solitary confinement in prison for years, depressed and dejected. Yet, one day, Jesus reminded him of His command 'to leap for joy' in the day of persecution! (Luke 6:22-23). So, he started jumping for joy dancing around in his cell. When the guards saw that, they shook their heads and said, "Finally, he went crazy!" But he didn't. On the contrary, this 'rejoicing with all his heart' kept him strong and sane in the Lord until he was freed.

Wholehearted love is not cold duty—it is joyful devotion.

Q5: Why can't my heart naturally give the whole-hearted love to the Lord?

If wholehearted love is so good, why is it so difficult? Because of the condition of our heart. It is deceitful above all else (Jeremiah 17:9). Sin has corrupted our heart so that it always wanders off from purity, innocence, and devotion. A boat does not need an engine to drift—only neglect. Likewise, our hearts drift. Left unguarded, our heart will slowly attach itself to the world.

John the Apostle warns us as follows: "¹⁵ Do not love the world nor the things in the world. **If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.** ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:15-17, NASB).

Left un-disciplined, our heart turns away from the Lord and follows the world. Think of **Garden Maintenance**. You never have to pray for weeds to grow. You never have to "discipline" a garden to produce thorns. If you do nothing, the thorns win. A beautiful garden is the result of a "disciplined" shovel and intentional planting. Loving God with all your heart is a "Spirit-led gardening project." We don't have the power to kill the weeds of sin on our own (that's the Holy Spirit's job), but we are the ones who must show up every

day and say, "Lord, pull the weeds. I want this soil to be Yours." That leads us to the next question.

Q6: What do I need to do so as to love the Lord with all my heart?

Discipline of your heart. Remember? Whole-hearted love of the Lord doesn't come automatically. Therefore, we need to work on our heart diligently and bring it to an undivided commitment to God. It requires our willingness and discipline. Desire first, then the power to discipline will follow. The Holy Spirit works with those who are willing. He is our coach. He is our teacher. He is the spiritual heart surgeon who can make our heart attentive to God's instructions.

Q7: Does God test our hearts to see if we truly love Him with all our heart?

Yes. He does. For instance, God tested Abraham. God said to Abraham one day, "*Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you*" (Genesis 22:2). Remember. God never tests your faith to destroy it, but to reveal the true faith. His tests expose whether our heart truly belongs to Him. May all of us pass the test with flying colors.

But we must be careful not to confuse **wholeheartedness** with **perfection**.

If wholeheartedness meant never failing, then King David could never be called a 'man after God's own heart.' He failed—he fell into deep sin and made terrible choices.

The difference is **orientation**. Think of that compass again. A compass can be knocked off balance by a storm, but as soon as the storm passes, it begins to swing back toward the North. David's life was oriented toward God. When he fell, he didn't stay down; he repented and pointed his heart back toward his Father. God isn't looking for people who never stumble; He is looking for people whose hearts always know which way is Home.

Conclusion

Let me close with the story of David in 2 Samuel 6:12-23. One day, King David was bringing up the ark of the LORD into Jerusalem with shouting and the sound of the trumpet (v. 15). He was leading the people and dancing before the LORD **with all his might** (v. 14). Michal (his wife) looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. She told him, "How the king of Israel distinguished himself today! He uncovered himself today in the eyes of his servants' maids as one of

the foolish ones shamelessly uncovers himself!" (v. 20). So, David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; therefore, I will celebrate before the LORD" (v. 21). David was not performing for people. He was worshiping before God. That is wholehearted love. Undivided. All-in. No reservations.

Let me ask this question: Are you more worried about the 'window watchers' in your life, or the 'Heart Watcher' in heaven?

Let's take a moment of silence to ask ourselves: Which way is my compass pointing right now? May we love the Lord our God with all our heart—with undivided loyalty, with joyful obedience, with courageous devotion. And may God approve of us as He approved of David.

Amen.