

Building God's Way 3

In the current series we have been doing, we have been looking at building God's way. Today I want to make it personal and look at how we should build our personal lives, God's way. If we look at how Jesus indicated we are to build our lives, we discover that He clearly specified the most important foundation and principle for us to build upon and with. Love. The foundation upon which we build our lives, if we are to build God's way and live in His will, is love. Love never fails.

Jesus linked the two commandments (Deu 6:5; Lev 19:18) by a common key word: "Love." This was the measure by which Jesus identified the greatest commandments.

Deu 6:5 (NKJV) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Lev 19:18 (NKJV) You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD.

*Mar 12:28-33 (NKJV) Then 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?" [29] Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE. [30] AND **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. [31] And the second, like it, is this: '**YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.**' There is no other commandment greater than these." [32] So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. [33] And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."*

The scribes declared that there were 248 affirmative precepts, as many as the members of the human body; and 365 negative precepts, as many as the days in the year; the total being 613. Of these they called some light and some heavy. Some thought that the law about the fringes on the garments was the greatest; some that

the omission of washings was as bad as homicide; some that the third commandment was the greatest. It was in view of this kind of distinction that the Jesus answered... not stating which commandment was greatest *per se* but giving the basis upon which, a commandment was to be regarded as greatest.

Jesus seems to have been saying something like: "Here is all Scripture in a nutshell; the whole range of human duty in a portable pocket form." The whole Law is gathered up in that one word, *love!* Love. The foundation upon which we build our lives, if we are to live in God's will, is love. That is what we will be exploring.

Today we will explore the first commandment Jesus mentioned, loving the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Next time we will explore the second commandment he mentioned – loving our neighbour as ourselves.

I. Love the Lord with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, all your strength

We are going to explore these four ways of loving the Lord today. The *heart* stands for our emotions; the *soul* for our will and general individuality; the *mind* for our intellect; and *strength* for the activities and energies of our service. In the Hebrew culture it wasn't so distinct, and Jesus was indicating we are to love the Lord with everything of ourselves. However, for explanatory purposes it will help to break it down.

Love the Lord with everything you are and do. How do I love Him? Is it a feeling? Is it a commitment? Is it a disposition? Many of our current worship songs have a general theme regarding the Lord, sort of like He is my boyfriend, or He is someone romantic I am involved in... 'Jesus my boyfriend' type of songs. Songs that express emotions like that. Nothing wrong with that *per se*, but it is a bit concerning.

It is not uncommon in the charismatic church today to have believers caught up in a hyped up emotional experience with the Presence of God, feeling, declaring or singing their love for God so passionately, and yet they leave unchanged and quite frankly still as disobedient to God's Word as ever. Is this what loving the Lord is? Enjoying His Presence? Passionately singing and prostrating myself before Him? Getting goosebumps? Getting slain in the spirit? Is it a feeling? Is it about feeling led

to give a great sacrifice to someone or some church for him? Doing something? Is it about giving all your riches to the poor and becoming some monk or someone who spends all their time in meditation or solitude or prayer or giving your life to evangelize in a place no one else wants to go to? Nothing wrong with these things per se. But let's look at exactly how Jesus explains it.

Joh 14:15 (AMP) If you [really] love Me, you will keep (obey) My commands.

Joh 14:21 (AMP) The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me; and whoever [really] loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I [too] will love him and will show (reveal, manifest) Myself to him. [I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and make Myself real to him.]

Joh 14:23-24 (AMP) Jesus answered, if a person [really] loves Me, he will keep My word [obey My teaching]; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home (abode, special dwelling place) with him. [24] Anyone who does not [really] love Me does not observe and obey My teaching. And the teaching which you hear, and heed is not Mine, but [comes] from the Father Who sent Me.

Ecc 12:13 (NIV) Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.

In my life, in your life, when we build upon this foundation, because the graces and callings upon our lives are different, it will look slightly different. However the principles in God's Word that we apply to our lives and live in obedience to remain the same.

What about the charismatic who feels incredible love or incredibly in love with the Lord but continues to live in willful sin. Is that love according to the Bible? Quite honestly, no. How can you say you love the Lord on a Sunday morning in worship and really mean it from the bottom of your heart when you know you are living in willful sin? Living with your boyfriend or girlfriend? Lying, stealing, cheating? No. You don't love the Lord, you are passionately and emotionally devoted to your idea of God and the emotional kick you get from that.

In the charismatic church we can become very unclear and hazy in our thinking around what the Lord expects of us. Many believers have a problem with “felt led poisoning”. I felt led to do this. I didn’t feel led to do that. I only pray when I feel led. I only do x or y or z when I feel led. Well honey, God’s word is clear that you are to do that. So make sure you feel led very regularly! And if not, then you have a very serious problem! His Word is clear on His principles, standards, and will. The measure of our love of God, is our day-to day obedience in everyday situations to the principles and teaching as revealed in the Bible, his Word. This is God’s foundation for us to build our lives upon.

Too often in the charismatic church today we have believers seeking the Lord for prophetic words and direction around situations where the Bible already has clear principles and direction. The word is God’s revealed will. You don’t need a prophetic word to step out and do this. He has already laid out the principle or his heart on the matter!

So he is not a believer, or she is not a believer and you are seeking God about whether to get into a relationship with them. The Lord has already revealed His will in His Word. And the answer is no, in case you weren’t aware. And if you go ahead anyway because you somehow felt led, there may be consequences because you did not build your life on God’s Word.

And my primary ministry is in the prophetic. So I am not slamming the prophetic. I am just cautioning the church around its use, abuse and misuse. As the charismatic church we need to take care how we build our lives and build them on the Word of God which is revealed in the Bible which is the ONLY infallible Word!

In the body of Christ in general, I believe we are immature in handling the prophetic. We can get prophetic words, and lots of them. But we don’t fully know how to handle them, how to interpret them, how to apply them, how to discern what the source of the prophetic is, how to know whether it is a word to declare publicly and for what group of people, or whether it is to pray about, or whether it is simply the Lord revealing His secrets to you for His purposes which He will reveal as you seek Him. Our safe place is to obey His written word. That will never change. Obey what He has already laid out in His Word. Obey the principle contained therein. And then He

will guide you. Perhaps with the prophetic, perhaps through other people, perhaps through your children, perhaps through the still small voice, perhaps through your leaders, and perhaps through none of those. And that's OK. Because he has already laid out the principles in His Word. Obey what he has revealed already in his word!

What are some of the ways I can love the Lord with all my heart, soul and mind and strength?

Col 3:17 (NKJV) And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Col 3:17 (TPT) Let every activity of your lives and every word that comes from your lips be drenched with the beauty of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. And bring your constant praise to God the Father because of what Christ has done for you!

1. Heart

*1Pe 3:15 (NIV) But in your hearts **revere Christ as Lord**. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

Rom 12:1 (AMP) I APPEAL to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.

Psa 19:14 (NKJV) Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

Words

The Words that proceed from our mouths are often indicators of where our hearts are, what our hearts are preoccupied with, who or what we idolise or worship.

Mat 12:34-37 (NKJV) Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. [35] A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil

treasure brings forth evil things. [36] But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. [37] For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Mat 15:18-19 (NKJV) But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. [19] For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

Psa 19:14 (NKJV) Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

Luk 6:45 (NKJV) A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

- If I had to record what you say. 24/7. Most especially to those in your inner circle.... What would be the general themes coming through?
- How comfortable would we be to have someone we admire spiritually, even Jesus Himself listen in on our self-talk, our conversations with our spouses, children, parents, workers, including people we don't like or have wronged us, or are incompetent, or irritate us?

Finances

Jesus was clear around finances and our heart condition.

Luk 16:13 (NKJV) "No servant 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."

Mat 6:19-21 (NKJV) "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.

Mal 3:10 (NKJV) Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the

windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.

Pro 19:17 (NKJV) He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given.

Pro 11:24-25 (NKJV) There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty. [25] The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.

- If Jesus had a good look at your bank balance with your inflows and outflows, where would He conclude your heart was?

2. Mind and soul

Our mind: where we think. Our soul: Our will and general individuality. Some would include our emotions here. Some our mind too. That's why I have put them together. Thayer defines the Greek Word that Jesus used here for soul to mean: the seat of the feelings, desires, affections and aversions.

*2Co 10:4-5 (NIV) The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. [5] We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to **make it obedient to Christ**.*

Rom 12:2 (AMP) Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

1Pe 3:15 (NIV) But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...

2Ti 2:15 (NKJV) Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Col 4:6 (TPT) Let every word you speak be drenched with grace and tempered with truth and clarity. For then you will be prepared to give a respectful answer to anyone who asks about your faith.

How can we measure our thought life?

Heb 4:12 (NKJV) For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- How do your thoughts measure up to the standard of the Word?
- Are you quick to root out stinking thinking and lies?
- Are you quick to release anger and unforgiveness?
- Are you quick to stop negative thoughts about people?
- Is your thinking in line with a biblical worldview?
- Are you able to explain what you believe and why concerning a biblical worldview, and are you studying so that you will be able to?

3. Strength and Deed

Col 3:17 (NKJV) And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Col 3:17 (TPT) Let every activity of your lives and every word that comes from your lips be drenched with the beauty of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. And bring your constant praise to God the Father because of what Christ has done for you!

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Do I value what God values? Do I apply all my strength to the things I do and do them as unto God?

Is this demonstrated in all these areas:

- Pursuing goals
- How I utilize my time
- How I conduct myself
- How I dress
- Who I am when no-one is looking or when no-one can see

Conclusion

Today we continued our series on building God's way. Jesus stated what the 2 greatest commandments are, and we explored the first one as it applies to us today.

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1. Heart

- Meditations of our hearts
- Words
- Finances

2. Mind and soul

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- How I dress
- Who I am when no-one is looking

At the end of the day, we have explored how loving God means we obey His written Word. These foundations are the most solid foundations upon which we can build our lives. Loving God is not a feeling, and it is not about feeling led. Jesus made this clear.

Joh 14:15 (AMP) If you [really] love Me, you will keep (obey) My commands.

Joh 14:21 (AMP) The person who has My commands and keeps them is the one who [really] loves Me; and whoever [really] loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I [too] will love him and will show (reveal, manifest) Myself to him. [I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and make Myself real to him.]

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Let's build our lives on the solid rock of Christ and His teaching.