

# Only One Desire

## Loving God with all your Heart Part 6

Mark 12:28-31 7-17-11

Summary: Our relationship with God is to be like a marriage, not an employee arrangement, (emotion required). We are to have one desire (meaning all our enjoyment of earthly things must be enjoyment of God - by seeing the meaning of them like an engagement ring). Love God with all your strength (ability) - use obedience not to repay Him, but to express your love for Him. Commitment can also be used to keep the relationship on life support while you work at restarting the heart.

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**Mark 12:28-31 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."**

## Review: Love God with your heart

### Employer vs. Marriage Relationship

Think for a moment about the difference between an employer-employee arrangement and the husband-wife relationship. The arrangement with your employer is very simple - you do the work, he gives you a paycheck. Your feelings about him really do not matter as long as they do not interfere with your job performance. The measure of how good an employee you are is based only on how well you serve your employer. If you do great work, you are a great employee. That is really the only requirement on your end – do good work.

But what happens if you approach your marriage that way? Usually divorce. When a marriage becomes an arrangement – “I will earn an income, provide for the family, do my chores, and be pleasant and civil and nice to you...” but there is no desire to be with your spouse, no love, no enjoyment – the marriage is dead in the water.

The wife who says, “I will do whatever I’m required to do, but I have no desire to be with you” is not functioning as a wife. It is fine to have that attitude toward an employer, but not a spouse.

So, which one serves as a model for the Christian life? Do we relate to God the way we relate to an employer, or the way we relate to a spouse? Which comparison do you see in Scripture? The comparison is always with marriage. In fact, that is the reason marriage exists – to have a living example of the relationship between God and His people. That is why God designed the marriage relationship to be so different from all other human relationships.

So ask yourself right now – “Is my relationship with God more like the ideal employer/employee arrangement, or more like the ideal marriage?” For so many Christians it is an arrangement, not a relationship. “I will serve You and obey You and be committed to You; You forgive my sins and take me to heaven.” That is the arrangement. And they measure their relationship with God in terms of their performance in serving Him. But when Jesus gave the Great Commandment, the command that not only summarizes the whole law but also serves as the principle upon which the entire Bible depends, it was not, “Serve the Lord your God.” It was “Love the Lord your God.” If you try your hardest to serve and obey God with all your strength every day, but there is no emotional component to your love, that is woefully inadequate.

### **Emotion Required**

Even if you put the Greek word *agape* on the rack and twist it beyond recognition so that it has no emotional component to it, you still have to deal with all the other emotional aspects of the faith – like joy, and delight, and hope. What do you do with **Psalm 33:1 Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous ... 3 shout for joy?** Do you read that and say, “Oh, that’s not literal. That’s a figure of speech that really means Mumble ‘thank you’ once in a while to God”? Shout for joy means shout for joy, and there is no asterisk with a note saying, “Unless, of course, you’re the non-emotional personality type.” Just like there is no asterisk in John 3:16 that says, “Unless of course you’re the non-trusting type.” You may very well have non-trusting kind of personality, but you are still required to trust God. You may have a non-friendly kind of personality, but that does not excuse you from the command to be kind. You may have a pessimistic personality but that does not exempt you from the command to hope in the Lord. Personality type is never grounds for dismissing the clear command of God’s Word.

**Psalm 33:3 Shout for joy.**

**Psalm 98:6 Shout for joy before the LORD, the King.**

**Psalm 100:1 Shout for joy to the LORD**

**Isaiah 49:13 Shout for joy ... burst into song**

And if you fail to obey that command:

**Deuteronomy 28:47 Because you did not serve the Lord your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity, 48 therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the Lord sends against you. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you.**

There will be severe punishment for anyone who fails to serve God joyfully and gladly. That is what the priests were rebuked for in Malachi 1, that is what Martha was rebuked for in Luke 10, and it is the worthless thing in 1 Corinthians 13. The Great Command is to love God with your heart, and the heart is the seat of the emotions. And love is an emotion. So you cannot fulfill the Great Commandment without emotion – period. Does love also require commitment and devotion and doing things you do not feel like doing? Absolutely, and we will plan on talking about that when we get to loving God with all your strength. But first we need to finish with heart, soul, and mind.

## **Love God with Your Soul**

First and most important – love God with your heart (emotion). Second, we are to love God with

all our soul. The soul is the seat of appetites and desires, and so we are to make God the ultimate object of all our desires. And I realize that is a controversial statement as well – this idea of only desiring God and nothing else. But we have to take God’s Word seriously, and that is exactly what it says.

### **One Desire**

**Psalm 73:25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. 26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.**

**1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or anything in the world.**

**Psalm 27:4 One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.**

**Psalm 62:1 My soul finds rest in God alone**

**Psalm 16:2 I said to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good besides You."**

That sounds really spiritual and everything, but if you are like me you are probably thinking, “What about milkshakes?” If there is no desirability outside of God, why do millions of Christians go to Dairy Queen and pay ridiculous amounts of hard-earned cash for an Oreo Blizzard? Asaph says there is nothing on earth he desires besides God and you want to say, “Come on, Asaph – really? You don’t desire *anything* on earth? You don’t desire a meal when you’re hungry or a good night’s sleep when you’re exhausted?” Did Asaph desire earthly things? Yes, he did. I know he desired earthly things because he talks about them in that same psalm. He even asks God for them. Is that a contradiction? What about Psalm 16:2-3? See if this sounds like a contradiction:

**Psalm 16:2 I said to the Lord, "You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good."**

Then the next verse...

**3 As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight.**

In verse 2 he says he takes delight in nothing but God. And then in the very next verse he talks about how much delight he has in the saints! What happened? Did he write verse 2, then get up and have a snack, then come back later completely forgetting what he wrote in verse 2 before writing verse 3? Is that a contradiction?

We know it cannot be a contradiction because Jesus taught that the Bible is the very Word of God. So the only other possibility is it must be possible to enjoy the pleasures of this world in a way that is an enjoyment of God. There must be a way to desire my wife and my ministry and Oreo Blizzards in a way that is part of my one and only desire, which is God. But how? If God is our portion, and God is to be our one and only desire, how do we also enjoy God’s good gifts? Answer: you enjoy them in a way that is an act of fellowship with God. You see, enjoying a person’s love involves enjoying all his various expressions of love. If I tell Tracy that we are going away together and I am not bringing my computer – I am just going to focus only on her all weekend, and at some point in the weekend I tell her, “Man, I just love the sound of your voice. And I love it when you reach over and take my hand when we’re sitting together. And I so enjoyed snuggling on the couch with you. And I have really enjoyed all our long talks we’ve had this weekend when you were sharing your heart with me.” Is she going to say, “Why are you focusing on all those things? I thought you were going to

just focus on me this weekend - why are you focused on my voice and my affection and my conversation and my companionship?" No - if those are expressions of her love, and the reason I enjoy them is only because they are expressions of her love.., then my enjoyment of those things IS enjoyment of her.

On the other hand, though, it is also possible to enjoy the expression of someone's love in a way that is not an act of fellowship with that person. Picture a newly married couple, and the wife is so in love with her husband – she wants to express her love for him. So she wakes up one morning and cooks him his favorite breakfast. If he enjoys that as a gesture of her love, then the more he enjoys it the better because by enjoying it he IS enjoying her. He is enjoying the expression of her love. But what if the years go by and he gets to the point where he could not care less about her love? It does not matter to him if she is alive or dead – all he cares about is getting his breakfast. He still really enjoys the breakfast, but his enjoyment is in the food itself without reference to her. The meaning of the gift has no impact on him - all he cares about is the gift itself. Well, then there is a problem.

Oreo blizzards and money and good health and family and vacations and the beautiful mountains and all the wonderful gifts God has given us - they are like that breakfast. They can be enjoyed in a way that is an enjoyment of God Himself or they can be enjoyed without reference to God in a way that is not fellowship with Him at all. When the psalmists talk about having only one desire, and desiring nothing on earth besides God., it means all their enjoyments and desires are enjoyments of and desires for the expressions of God's love. And the chief reason why the pleasures of life are delightful to them is not the pleasure itself, but what that pleasure means - the fact that it is an expression of God's favor. And when you enjoy the pleasures of life that way, then the more you enjoy them the better.

### ***Idolatry and desire***

And that is great news. Most of the time people think the solution to idolatry is to dial back desire. For example, if you turn food into an idol they say the problem is you love food too much, and you just need to try to desire it a little less. It is OK to enjoy your job, or a relationship, or vacations or some other God-given gift, just as long as you don't enjoy it or desire it too much. So the goal becomes mediocre enjoyment of everything.

But think about it - does that make sense? If you give someone a gift do you want them to enjoy it just a little bit - or a lot? The more the better – right? If the husband sees that breakfast as a gesture of his wife's love.., and the main reason he enjoys it is because of that, then the more he enjoys it the better.

If a single man falls in love with a woman and presents her with an engagement ring, does he want her to be happy about that? It depends. If the only reason she is happy is because she collects diamonds, and she does not care about the man at all, that is not what he is looking for at all. But if she is happy because of what the ring means, then the happier she is the better. The happier she is the more it honors the man, because her happiness is in his love, not in the diamond.

When the psalmists say, "I only have one desire" what that means is every other desire derives from that one desire. So do they enjoy a good night's sleep? Yes, but not for the same reason an atheist enjoys a good night's sleep. The Christian sees a good night's sleep as a gift – like an engagement ring. And we delight in that gift not because of the appraised value of the gift, but because of what it means. The next morning we are not mostly saying, "I'm happy because now I'm well-rested." We are saying, "I am happy because God smiled on me last night. He turned His face toward me and showed me favor - and I love His favor." The delicious steak dinner, the wonderful friendship, the joy of having children, the thrill of waterskiing – all the pleasures of life are enjoyed because of what they mean – because of the fact that they are expressions of God's love to us.

### ***The test - which do you prefer?***

So how can you tell if you are a one-desire person like the psalmists, or if you are desiring the

pleasures of this world in a wrong way? There is a very simple test. Pick out your favorite earthly pleasure and ask yourself this question: Which would I prefer – having that pleasure but losing the favor of God, or having the favor of God but losing that pleasure? Which sounds more enjoyable to you? If God came to me tomorrow and said, “Darrell, you have a choice. You can keep your house and family, but I will be far from you and turn My face away from you, or you can lose your house and family but I will be near you and turn My face toward you,” you can tell if I am enjoying my house and family the right way by which one sounds more delightful to me.

If you do not think you could enjoy life if you lost every earthly pleasure and lost your marriage but still had the presence of God – if that would be miserable for you, then heaven will be miserable, because the central feature of heaven is the nearness of God’s presence, and your house and marriage will not be there.

### ***No limit on how much you can enjoy God’s gifts***

And you want to know the two fantastic things about enjoying earthly pleasures in this way? For one thing, when you enjoy earthly pleasures because they are gestures of God’s love, and you enjoy what they mean even more than the things themselves, then there is no limit to how much you are allowed enjoy them. The more the better. The more enjoyment you have the more it honors God. So if I am a one-desire person (like Asaph), I can actually love my wife more than a guy who is a multi-desire person. The guy who says, “I love God first, wife second, kids third, etc.” – that guy has to watch out to make sure wife stays #2. He has to be careful not to love her too much. If he fills out an accountability sheet each week, one week he might have to confess, “This week I blew it. I didn’t love my wife enough.” And then another week he might have to say, “This week I blew it – I loved her too much. Pray for me, that I can learn to have a medium love for my wife.”

But for a one-desire man, there is no limit to how much he can love his wife. If he desires his wife and enjoys his wife as an enjoyment of God’s love for him, then the greater his desire and enjoyment the better. The more he loves her the more it honors God. It would be impossible to love her too much.

### ***No danger of being cut off from happiness***

That is one great thing about it. Another great thing is this – you never have to fear losing your access to happiness. If all your happiness is ultimately derived from the Giver of the gifts and not the gifts themselves, then as long as the Giver is still around you still have access to happiness. If the reason I enjoy a special breakfast is because it is a gesture of my wife’s love for me, but then something happens and we cannot have those breakfasts anymore, as long as I still have her I am fine. If my joy was truly coming from her love and not the food itself, then I can still have that joy as long as she is around whether I get food or not. If the woman getting engaged is excited not because she is a diamond collector but because she is excited about what that ring means, then if something happens and she loses the ring – her joy remains (because she is still engaged).

### ***Mailman***

So the question is not “How much do you like God’s gifts?” (as if it were possible to enjoy them too much), the question is, “Why do you like them?” If you like them because of what they mean – then your enjoyment of them honors God. In fact, your enjoyment of them is acceptable worship that honors and pleases God. But if you like them in and of themselves – then your enjoyment of them is idolatry and dishonors God. That is why I have told you so many times – think of every earthly pleasure as a mailman, coming to deliver a letter from God that says, “I love you.” All your favorite things in this world are all mailmen, carrying a letter from God that expresses His love for you. Let me ask you this - are you reading the letter - interpreting the meaning of God’s gestures of love for you? Or are you more interested in the mailman?

A man gets drafted into military service, goes off overseas, and writes a love letter to his wife at home every week. Does that man want his wife to get excited when she sees the mailman coming

down the street? It depends on why she is excited. If she is excited about the fact that he is bringing a love letter from her dear husband, then yes – the more excited she is the more it honors the husband. But if she does not care about the letter – does not even read it, but she is excited because she is interested in the mailman himself, then her excitement is adulterous and it dishonors her husband.

Oreo Blizzards are a mailman. They are a mailman carrying a message from the Bridegroom that says, “This is a little gesture of my love for you.” My family, my house, my health, my bed, the Arkansas River, my cell phone, great music, white sand beaches at a Caribbean resort – all mailmen carrying another letter from God. If I open the letter and read it, and I am excited about those things because of what they mean, then the more excited I am the more I honor God. But at the same time – as much as I enjoy those things, I have no fear of losing them because even if I lose them all I have not lost God.

OK – so all of that as a clarification of what it means to have one desire, and to love God with all your soul.

## **Love God with your Strength**

I am going to jump out of order a little bit. When Jesus gave the list in Mark 12, it was heart first, then soul, then mind, then strength last. But I think we need to reserve a full sermon for loving God with all your mind..., so we are going to skip over that for now and spend the rest of our time this morning thinking through what it means to love God with all your strength.

### **Ability**

The word **strength** means ability. So loving God with all your strength means loving God with all the ability you have to do things. That includes physical ability, mental ability, emotional ability - every kind of ability. It refers to everything you are capable of doing. So this is the action part of love. I have made a big point about the role of emotion and desire in love, but make no mistake - where there is no action there is no love. Love that supposedly exists in the heart but that does not show up in the actions is a lie. Genuine love compels action. All true love results in the pouring out of self for the other person in an effort to express the love in the heart. There is no such thing as unexpressed love. Love always gives and serves.

### **Obedience as an Expression of Love**

But what if the one you love does not need anything? It does not matter. When you love someone you do not stop expressing that love just because the person does not need anything. If a man is head-over-heels in love with his wife he does not stop giving her hugs because she does not really need them. He does not withhold kisses or kind words or compassion and understanding because she does not really need them all that much. He expresses his love toward her not based on her need, but based on the love itself. Love in the heart has a way of insisting that it be expressed.

We do not serve God because He needs anything - He doesn't. We serve Him to express our love. We obey Him and serve Him and commit our lives to Him to express our love.

**John 14:15 If you love me, you will obey what I command.**

**21 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.**

**23 If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.**

**24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching.**

So the person who claims to love God but who lives in unrepentant disobedience to Him is deceived. He might have a whole lot of sentimental feelings in his heart toward Jesus, but if it does not translate into obedience (and repentance when there is disobedience), it is not love. "I realize the Bible does not technically allow this thing I am doing, I have my reasons for why I still need to go ahead and do it, but I still love God" - no, you don't. "I know this is forbidden in Scripture, but in my case God understands." God understands that you do not love Him. If you love Jesus you will obey Jesus. That is not to say obedience and love are identical. They are not. But obedience is the proper way to express love for God. Isn't that what Jesus taught Peter in John 21? "Do you love Me? Feed My lambs. Do you love Me? Take care of My sheep. Do you love Me? Feed My sheep." The best way to express your love for God by obeying Him and serving Him and especially by obeying His command to love and serve His people.

### ***Beware of the Debtor's Ethic***

Now, having said that let me give you an important caution. We need to watch out for what John Piper calls the "Debtor's Ethic." The Debtor's Ethic says, "Just think of all that God has done for you. The least you could do to pay Him back is serve Him and obey Him. It is a debt you can never fully pay, but you can at least chip away at it a little bit." That is not at all what I am talking about when I say you should express your love for God by obeying Him. The debtor's ethic is a very misguided and unchristian approach, because it assumes our service to God is a payment from us to Him. It is not. It is a gift from Him to us.

**Romans 11:35 Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" <sup>36</sup>For from him and through him and to him are all things.**

Everything comes from God so you cannot give anything to God without first borrowing it from Him - and that includes even your own service.

**Romans 15:18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me**

All the good things you have done have been things Jesus Christ has done through you. So your service to Him could never be repayment of a debt in any way because every single time you serve God that puts you further in debt to Him. Every time you obey Him you are borrowing more grace, and that makes your debt bigger, not smaller.

The idea that we can offer some payment to God that benefits Him in some way is a common misconception. You see it when people make deals with God like, "God, if you get me out of this mess I promise I will serve You the rest of my life." Or, "God, if you give me this thing I want, I promise I will obey you and devote my life to Your service." People who say things like that are confused. They actually think they have something to offer God. Serving God and obeying Him are not payments we offer to God; they are gifts God grants to us. Those people do not realize it, but what they are really saying is, "God, if you do this thing for me then I promise, You can do another thing for me."

That is what they are really saying, and it actually would not be such a bad thing if they realized that is what they are saying. It would be a lot closer to what the psalmist said:

**Psalms 116:12 How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me? <sup>13</sup> I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.**

The best way to pay God back when He has been generous to you is by lifting up your empty cup to Him and saying, "More, please." God delights in being water to our thirsty souls, so the best way to honor Him is to drink up, not by pretending we have something in ourselves to offer Him.

Are obedience and service to God good ways to respond to His kindness to us? Yes! Are they good expressions of gratitude and love? Absolutely! That is exactly the way we are told to express our love to God - just so long as we do not imagine that we are somehow paying off a debt, because it is God who supplies us with the grace to obey and serve Him. Obey Him and serve Him, not to pay Him back, but simply to express your love for Him.

### **The Role of Commitment when Feelings Die**

So, those people who claim to have feelings of love for God but have no action - they are deceived. But what about the other extreme - people who are all about obedience, but do not have any feeling? I told you before that if you are committed and devoted and you work your fingers to the bone for God, but there is not any emotion - that is not adequate either. So that brings up the question: What do you do when the feelings fade? Should we be like the world and just bail out as soon as the feelings fade - like the guy who says, "Oh, I don't have feelings for my wife anymore, I'll just get a divorce"? We saw last week that God does not need our service, right? When we serve God it is like a two-year-old giving his mom a present. She does not really gain anything from that because she has to supply the child with the resources for the present to begin with. And that is what God has to do with us, too. If I want to preach a sermon for God, that is a lot of work for God. He has to supply me with a mind and with motivation and desire, and with years of training and thousands of dollars worth of books and a microphone. Then He has to move in all your hearts to make you willing to listen. It would be a whole lot easier for Him to just eliminate me and teach you directly. He gains nothing from my service. He just allows me to do it so I can have the privilege of expressing my love for Him. But what if I do not feel any love? What should you do in those times when you just do not feel like doing ministry? Is it hypocrisy to go ahead and do it even when you do not feel anything in your heart?

It depends on whether you have a repentant heart. You see, what a lot of people do not realize is that God commands us to have certain feelings. When people say, "I'm not worried about feelings - I just want to obey God" that does not work because God commands all kinds of feelings. So if you do not have the feelings He commands you to have, you are disobeying Him.

So suppose you see a woman sprain an ankle in the middle of the street and fall to the ground. What does God command? Two things: Feel compassion for her and Go out in the street and help her. But what if you do not feel like helping her? You feel no compassion in your heart at all, and you have no desire to lift a finger to help her. Then what? Most people would say, "You should go out there and help her anyway." That answer is right as far as it goes, but it is only half of the answer. If that is all you do - just force yourself to get up and go help her in spite of how you feel - that is not enough. If you do that you are obeying command #2 but you are still disobeying command #1 - the command to be compassionate. So if you just go out in the street and help her and do nothing else, you are not obeying God. Is the solution to wait until the feelings are there before you help her? No! If you do not go out and help her you are disobeying both commands rather than just the first one. You do not solve the problem of disobeying the command to feel by also disobeying the command to act. So go ahead and act, but as you act make sure you are repenting over the sin of failing to feel.

If I get to the end of a long day, and I am really tired, and I settle in on the couch with my family and we are about to watch a nice family movie with a bowl of popcorn, and five minutes into the movie I get a call letting me know that you were in an accident and you are in the ICU, and my flesh says, "I don't feel like getting up. I don't feel like getting up and driving into town and dealing with a lot of sorrow and tears and tragedy. I just want to sit on the couch and watch my movie." What should I do? I should go ahead and get in the car and start driving, but the whole time I am driving I need to be praying and asking God for the grace to have proper affections. And I need to preach to my soul and remind myself what a high and holy privilege it is to be the one God laid His hand on to say, "You are the one I have chosen to deliver My love to that person in the hospital personally. Someday Jesus is going to reward you for this and say, "I was in the ICU and you came to visit me." I need to pray to God and preach to myself in the drive in so by the time I arrive at the hospital I really am really glad to



be there.

Should you go ahead and do the right thing when you do not feel like it? Yes, of course you should. Commitment is a wonderful part of love. But please understand - commitment is not a substitute for emotion. Commitment is the life-support machine that keeps the relationship alive when your heart has stopped and emotion is dead. When you do not feel like spending time with your spouse you do it anyway and serve her and give to her and sacrifice for her even though you do not feel like it. That is commitment, and that can work like a respirator or life-support machine to keep your marriage alive for a limited time while your heart is stopped. But do not try to go the rest of your life on life-support. That should only be a short term safety net to carry you for however long it takes to get your heart resuscitated. Give yourself some CPR and get the emotions and passion and desire restarted as soon as possible, because if you go on commitment and resolve alone for too long, it will not be very long before your spouse's heart also stops, and she does not have any desire for you anymore.

That is the role of commitment in marriage. Do not ever make commitment a permanent substitute for passion. And the same principle applies in our relationship with God. If we do not desire prayer, do not desire fellowship, do not feel like worshipping, do not feel like obeying His Word – commitment and resolve can temporarily carry us until we can get our desires and affections back on track. But if that process takes too long, look out, because you cannot live in opposition to the desires of your soul for very long.

All my life I have been told by various preachers that feelings are like the caboose on the train, and commitment is the engine. The engine powers the train, and if you just discipline yourself to do the right thing, feelings will eventually come along. I believed that, and I waited for that caboose to arrive for twenty-five years, and it never came. It was like waiting for a train in Longmont. You sit there forever waiting for it to go by, and when the end finally does arrive after what seems like forever, there is no caboose. I waited for the caboose of emotion for years and years, until finally it occurred to me that this promise I had always been taught - that the emotions will come automatically if you just follow through on commitment - the Bible does not actually ever say that. Someone just made that up. Doing the right thing when you do not feel like it does not automatically bring about the feelings. It can help, if you are also enjoying frequent experiences of the presence of God, and you are engaging in continual fellowship with Him, but by itself it is not enough.

So let's not pile onto commitment more than it was meant to bear. Commitment has two roles: It is the expression of the love in the heart. When love in the heart is lacking, it can serve as temporary life-support for the relationship until you resuscitate the emotions. Do not just obey God. Offer your obedience to Him as an expression of your love for Him. Because when you do that - knowingly, consciously, intentionally expressing love for Him through obedience, that is an act of fellowship with Almighty God and it draws you near to His presence.

**Benediction: Ephesians 6:23 Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.**