



VIDEO #3 – LOVING.

Life with Jesus is founded on a love and trust of Him who gave it all!

OVERVIEW

Life with Jesus is founded on a love and trust of Him who gave His life that we might experience life. Even as followers of Jesus we still fail in life and struggle with sin. Our battle against sin can cause doubts in our hearts and minds. The more we trust in the finished work of Jesus on the cross, the more it gives us freedom in life to love God with all we have. As we trust in His love for us, it will stir in us a wholehearted pursuit of Him. This Life Series video is aimed at helping you to live in that freedom.

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OBJECTIVES

By the end of this discussion it is our hope and prayer that everyone knows the following Truths:

- **GOD IS CALLING US TO PUT HIM ABOVE ALL ELSE IN OUR HEARTS.**
- **WE OFTEN FAIL TO LOVE GOD FULLY, BUT WHERE WE FAIL, HE IS FAITHFUL.**
- **THERE ARE COUNTLESS WAYS WE CAN EXPRESS OUR LOVE FOR GOD ABOVE ALL ELSE, WHICH IS WHAT WORSHIP REALLY IS.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After watching the video by yourself or as a group, please go through the following discussion/reflection questions to help these truths sink into your heart and mind. These questions are simply meant to guide you, so feel free to go off script and do not feel pressure to “get through” all the questions, they are simply meant to generate discussion and draw you closer to Jesus. Also, at the end of this section there will be some follow-up activities to help put these concepts into practice.

Objective #1 – God is calling us to put Him above all else in our hearts.

Read Matthew 22:34-38.

But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him [Jesus] a question to test him. “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. (Matthew 22:34-38 ESV)

Q: Sum up in your own words the greatest commandment that God gives to us, above all others. Why do you think that this one is more important than any others?

Q: What place in your heart does God desire? Why does God deserve to be in that place within our hearts?

Deep Thought: God calls us to put Him above all else in our hearts, but the way that He captures our hearts is by putting us above all else, which He proved through the death and suffering of Jesus. He inspires us to radically love and pursue Him above everything else, because He demonstrated that radical love to and for us!

Q: What has that top place in your heart? God, a person, a thing, yourself? Does this change for time to time or is it consistent?

Read 1st John 4:18-19.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us. (1st John 4:18-19 ESV)

Q: Does our love for God begin with us? What does this say about the importance of knowing the love of God for ourselves?

Q: If we know that God loves us perfectly, do we need to fear? How does this safety and security empower us in going “All-In” with our lives for Him?

Objective #2 – We often fail to love God fully, but where we fail, He is faithful.

Read Hebrews 4:14-16.

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16 ESV)

Note: This passage describes Jesus as our High Priest. The High Priest in the Old Testament was someone who went to God on behalf of the people to atone (pay or cover) with a sacrifice for our sins. When Jesus ascended into heaven after His Resurrection, He replaced all previous High Priests and became the eternal High Priest who goes before God on our behalf because of our sins continually!

Q: Why, is Jesus going through the same struggles we do, important for His role as our High Priest? What encouragement does that provide for us? How does it affect how we go to God with our sins and struggles?

Q: What does it mean “let us approach the throne of Grace with confidence”?

Read Luke 22:31-34.

And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.” But he said to Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.” Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.” (Luke 22:31-34 NKJV)

Note: In this passage Jesus is talking to one of His Disciples Peter shortly before He was to go to the cross and die. Here He is preparing His Disciples for that reality and other things that they will face in the upcoming difficult season. In the end, Peter ends up denying Jesus three times. When Peter fails, Jesus remains faithful. Jesus later restores Peter after His Resurrection and Peter goes on to preach the first Gospel sermon and thousands place faith in Jesus.

Q: Jesus didn't say that He would pray that Peter would escape trials or even sin, His prayer was the Peter's faith would not fail in the midst of the trials. What does this say about the importance of trusting God in trials and circumstances?

Q: Jesus tells Peter, "and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren (brothers)." (See Luke 22:32 in passage above). What does Jesus mean by "returned to Me"?

Q: When you sin do you tend to turn back to God or turn away with shame and feelings of guilt and inadequacy? Are there areas in your life you need to "turn again" to God?

Q: Once we have turned back, does Jesus want us to wallow in guilt over our sin or get back in the game?

Read James 5:16.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16 ESV)

Q: When we sin, what do we learn about the role others can play in our restoration from this verse? What role can we play in the life of others who sin?

Objective #3 – There are countless ways we can express our love for God above all else, which is what worship really is.

Read Romans 12:1.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1 ESV)

Q: What does it mean to present yourself as a living sacrifice? How does this demonstrate your love for God?

Q: It says that this act is our "spiritual worship". How is this different from what you normally think of as worship? What does this mean to you practically?

Read 1st John 4:10-12.

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. (1st John 4:10-12 ESV)

Q: Do you normally think about your love for others reflecting the love of God inside of us?

Q: Why would these be linked, the love of God and love of others (think about what other people mean to God)?

Q: How does this change how you think about the importance of loving others?

Read Hebrews 13:15-16.

Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. (Hebrews 13:15-16 ESV)

Q: What do we learn from this passage about other ways we can demonstrate love for God? How can you incorporate these into your life?

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

The following is a series of activities that you can do to help take the ideas you learned in this video and discussion and apply them to your life!

Activity PREP – Review the different ways of expressing the love you have for God in your heart and come up with any additional ones we might have missed. One of the best ways to communicate the love in our hearts for God is by praying or having a conversation with God. One simple way to remember some of the different aspects of prayer is through the P.R.A.Y. acronym.

Praise – Thanking God for who He is, what He has done, and what He has promised He will do!

Request – Requesting the things that you need and also for the needs of others, both spiritual and physical.

Admit – Confess and repent or turn from the things where your heart has strayed from loving God and others.

Yield – Embrace God's plan and will for your life and those around you, knowing and trusting that it is the best and an expression of love and sacrifice to Him. What areas do you need to yield/embrace God's plan in?

Activity #1 – Over the coming week commit to going through the PRAY outline once a day. Find a time: morning, midday, before bed? Also, find a place like in your room or on a walk. My favorite is longboarding at sunset...and when I get to a big hill, I pray like I have never prayed before!