



Introduction - Lessons for Loving God: The Heart

As a coming year unfolds, it feels like standing at the edge of a 'Promised Land' full of potential and fast-paced demands. Yet, before the busyness takes over, our new series, Lessons for Loving God, invites us to pause. To love God truly, we must begin exactly where He begins: at the center of our affections—the heart.

Scripture Focus:

Deuteronomy 6:4-9: The call to "Hear" (Shema) and love God with all your heart.

Proverbs 4:23: The command to guard your heart as the wellspring of life.

Luke 10:27: Jesus' expansion of the greatest commandment.

Discussion Questions:

1. The Heart Audit: In service, we looked through our 2025 photos. What was one moment where you clearly felt God's presence? What was a moment where your heart felt "distracted" or distant?
2. Defining "Shema": The Hebrew word Shema means "to hear and obey." In our noisy 2026 world, what are the biggest barriers to truly hearing God's voice?
3. The Control Center: Proverbs 4:23 says everything flows from the heart (affections, desires, decisions). How have you seen the "condition of your heart" affect your relationships with others recently?
4. Guarding the Well: What are some "sinful influences" or modern distractions that you need to "guard" your heart against this month to maintain intimacy with God?
5. First Love: Jesus warned the church in Ephesus about losing their "first love." How can we ensure our devotion to God stays emotional and vibrant, rather than just a duty?