

Matthew 22:37 – “I’ve Got SOUL and I Know How to Use It”

INTRO:

Good afternoon!

For those of you who are joining us online, our text number is (678) 960-9321. If you have any questions, comments, or prayer requests, we’d love to hear from you.

If you have any complaints about my message, you can text in and say, “I heard Pastor JAMES say this terrible thing today...”.

Today, we’ll be starting in Matthew 22:37 and quickly moving over to Deuteronomy 6... with a message titled, “**I’ve Got SOUL and I Know How to Use It**”.

Before we begin, I invite you to open your Bibles and follow along this morning... but if you don’t have a Bible, our ushers would be happy to bring one to you. Just lift up your hand this morning if you need a Bible.

PRAYER

When Pastor Sandy assigned this topic to us for today, he gave me soul because he said I’m a “soul man.”

Being the worship leader here at Calvary Chapel, he thought it appropriate that I share with you concerning worship and loving the Lord with all your soul.

But I’m going to extend that same thought to all of you here this morning. Each of you has a soul. You may or may not be able to keep a tune, but you can certainly worship the Lord by loving Him with all your soul as Jesus spoke of in Matthew 22.

This morning Pastor Andrew taught from this verse in first service on loving the Lord your God **with all your HEART**.

Pastor James taught in second service on loving the Lord your God **with all your MIND**.

NOW – “You’ve heard it said” of those in first and second service... but I say to you” here in third service... 😊 ... in the words of Jesus – the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God – with all your heart, mind... **and with all your SOUL**.

But what does that mean?

What does loving the Lord with “all my soul” look like?

How can we define that and live that out?

This morning, we’re going to explore what loving the Lord with all your soul looks like.

First, let’s take a quick look at these verses in Matthew 22. I’m going to warn you in advance – I’m going to use these verses as merely a platform, or a diving board, to take you into the Scriptures a little deeper this morning – in an attempt to explore what Jesus meant here by loving God with all your soul.

So, stick with me. I’ll reference a lot of verses and I’ll put them up on the screen. But I want you to pay close attention. Why?? Because this subject is part of the GREATEST commandment given by God! If this is the greatest commandment, don’t you want to know how to carry it out??

In Matthew 22:34-40, the religious leaders of Jesus's day gathered around Him to test Him and trap Him.

Let's take a look in the Scriptures:

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶ "Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?"

³⁷ Jesus said to him, "'***You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.***' ³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second *is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Jesus's words here in Matthew 22 are also a reference to [Deuteronomy 6:5](#).

The first eleven chapters of Deuteronomy are packed full of testimony after testimony of all that God has previously done for His people! And right in the heart of these wonderful passages is the call that Moses gives to the people:

⁴ "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

⁶ "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

This is one of my absolute favorite verses in all of Scripture! And here's why:

There is a command that is given here – and it's so serious that it bore repeating from Jesus's own mouth.

But here's what I love about this verse: In Deuteronomy 6:6, Moses said, "...these words I command you today shall be in your heart." "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Look at how "in your face" this commandment was... literally!

After reminding God's people of how wonderful He is and has been to them, Moses says, "Now, don't forget to LOVE Him in return!"

And how should we love Him? With all our heart. With all our soul. With all our strength. With all our mind. With everything within us. Let all that we are proclaim of all that He is.

The verses that follow here in Deuteronomy are so pivotal (in my opinion) concerning this verse, because they ring out so true.

For the sake of time this morning, I am not going to read all of them, but I do encourage you to do so in your own time this afternoon. Read **Deuteronomy chapter 6, verses 10-25 when you get home.**

These verses in the Bible FIRE me up! They get the blood flowing! And I think that's exactly what they're supposed to do! I'm getting fired up just thinking about them!

Moses points out the REASON we need to have these words in front of our eyes, and on our doorposts, and our fences, and mailboxes, and in our heart... and the REASON we need to teach them diligently to our children and think about them as often as we're sitting in our house, and walking up and down the street. He points out the time of day we should be thinking of these verses... whenever we lie down to go to sleep, and then the moment we wake up to rise and start our day! And then all THROUGHOUT the day!

Guys – this verse should (literally) never leave our heart. It should never depart from our thinking. It should become woven into the very inner parts of our being.

In fact – this portion of Scripture was so important that, in Hebrew, these verses became known as the **"Shema,"** or – literally – **"Hear"**.

The Shema is what begins the most important prayer in all of Judaism... and it is spoken DAILY in the Jewish tradition!

This is literally something they would recite every day! They took God at His Word and made this verse the most important thing on their mind and heart each day.

To take it one step further, they had what they called, “phylacteries,” or small, square leather boxes that contained portions of Scripture worn on both their left arm and, on their foreheads,... hence, “they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.” (Deut. 6:8)

To take it even further than that, the Jews kept a small piece of parchment with these verses on it called the “Mezuzah” in a small case or tube attached to the doorpost of their home. Hence, Deuteronomy 6:9, which says, “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Some might call this extreme, but I like it! I’m not saying I will go do this, but I like the *idea* of it... which is – putting these verses right in front of me so they are with me wherever I go.

If I am going to take God’s greatest commandment as serious as He meant for me to, I need to constantly REMIND myself of this verse as often as Deuteronomy 6 instructs me to: 24/7.

And, WHY put such emphasis on this verse and the importance of it being a constant reminder??

Because the verses that follow Deuteronomy 6:4-5 outline who we really are prone to be, as humans: **Forgetful.**

I love how real Moses is about it, too. He says, “When you suddenly realize how good life is... and you see that you have blessings, and possessions, and things that you value highly... first and foremost – don’t forget that it wasn’t YOU who made all that happen!”

You might THINK you had something to do with your “great success,” but not really.

Moses actually WARNS the people. He says, “Beware! Lest you forget the LORD who brought you [out of your past situation... your life of bondage... your sin... your heartache].”

If we are to love the Lord with all our soul, we need to answer a few questions about the soul first.

What is your soul, and why worship the Lord with your soul?

The word, “soul,” in the context of Matthew 22 and Deuteronomy 6 means, “that which breathes, the inner being of man,” it’s the “seat of the appetites, emotions, feelings, aversions, desires, affections, and passions,” and it includes the “activity of the mind, the will, and the character.”

Your soul is what houses your emotions, your will, your feelings.

Your soul is your inner being – it's kind of “who you are” all summed up into one word.

When you cross reference this word, soul, used here in Matthew 22 and Deuteronomy 6, you'll see it used over and over in reference to **life. It's vitality.**

Your soul is NOT your body. It is NOT your mind. It is NOT your heart. It is NOT an inner ghost.

The word Jesus used in Matthew 22 is the same word we use for **“psyche.” The soul is “an essence which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death.”**

The Jewish law had 613 commandments, of which 248 were positive “to-do” commands, while 365 of them were negative “don'ts”.

And, here, in the context of Matthew 22, Jesus reminded us of the Father's first and greatest commandment.

You are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your mind, and all your soul.

If your soul is the “seat of your emotions, feelings, desires, affections, and passions,” and it includes the “activity of the mind, the will, and the character...” then that means we must learn how to “funnel” or “channel” all of these things and use them in the proper manner.

It means I need to learn to separate my pit of thoughts, emotions, feelings, and my own will – from who God is... in order to channel these feelings in the proper way – and use them in a way that glorifies God. I need to learn to use these things in a way that shows my love for Him.

People today express themselves in so many ways; you know?

We must be careful not to bring our fleshly way of thinking into our love for the Lord. Rather than inviting God to meet me where I am in my misery or euphoria, I need to align my thoughts, feelings, hurts and pains, and my will with where God is. Worship is me coming to HIM – and aligning with HIM, not the other way around.

If I am to love the Lord my God with all my soul, that means I am to love Him with **everything inside of me!** With my very being!

I'm not sure if you've put two and two together yet, but when you apply meaning of "soul" to the command that Jesus gave to love Him with everything inside, you get a pretty good definition of **worship**.

My Worship – can be defined as, “*MY* love for the Lord – from my soul – from everything in me.”

Now, just to hopefully align our perspectives back up together again this morning – remember this:
Heaven is eternal.

Jesus is eternal. He lives “forever and ever.” (Rev 4:10) He is “Alpha and Omega.” He is “Beginning and End.” He is the “First and Last.” (Rev. 22:13) He is “from everlasting to everlasting.” (Psalm 90:2)

Worship is eternal. Revelation 4:8 says of the four living creatures that, “... they do not rest day or night, saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!’”

Which makes worship pretty important because – as we see in the book of Revelation – worship taking place 24/7 in Heaven, and guess where we're spending eternity as believers in Christ? Heaven, right?

Again – I'm speaking on behalf of the believer...

But, if worship is something we will be doing eternally in Heaven, it's no surprise Jesus told us that it's the most important thing we can do here on Earth, too.

Jesus was preparing our temporary lives here on Earth – for an eternal future. While everything around us is constantly reminding us of just how fleeting life really is... Jesus was constantly pointing us to Heaven.

This is a really interesting thought I want you to grab hold of this morning:

Everything on Earth is TEMPORARY. Except one thing – your **SOUL**. Isn't that interesting? Your soul is the only part of you (or this world, universe, etc.) that is ETERNAL.

Since our soul is the *only* eternal part of who we are, we should be focusing on, and investing our time in, things that are eternal.

Well, how do I do that?

How do I put my eyes on things that eternal, instead of things that are temporary?

How do I love the Lord my God with all my soul?

Here are a couple of real practical ways, which we'll discuss further this morning:

To love the Lord with all your soul, first:

(1) You must be born again

- a. *You worship what you know*
- b. *You cannot worship what you do not know*

(2) Develop an eternal perspective on your life

- a. *(think about things that are above)*
- b. *Look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith*
- c. *Line yourself up with His will*
- d. *Jesus is our Reward (Gen. 15:1)*

(3) Be obedient to God's Word – and His commands

- a. *Live a life pleasing to God*
- b. *Live out a life of obedience to God's Word & His commands*
- c. *Live out a life of worship – 24/7*

Let's go back to the Garden. When God first gave His breath to man...

In the book of Genesis, when God created man, we're told that "... God formed man of the dust of the ground, and ***breathed into*** his nostrils the ***breath of life***, and man became a living being." (Gen 2:7)

No offense to you animal-lovers, but God didn't do this for any of His other creations. This "breath of life" is what separates us from any other being. It distinguishes us as being His most special creation His most *prized* possession.

There are three significant things to note about the creation of man from Genesis 2:7:

- (1) **It was God, and God alone who created man.** There is no "From Monkey to Man" philosophy, nor any other explanation of how man came to be today. Contrary to **learning to paint with Bob Ross, with God – there are no "happy accidents."** God shaped man as the Master Potter who shapes clay, bearing His image, and then He gave him life.
- (2) **God breathed His own breath inside of man.** Which makes man so much MORE than just a physical being. Man is now spiritual. Picture Adam being formed from the dust of the ground. But yet there is no life. Just a body. Just the physical. It wasn't UNTIL God breathed into Adam that he had life. And the same is true of us, even spiritually. Apart from God, we are nothing. We see an additional side of this concept in **John 20:22 when Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."** He kindled a fire inside that could not be quenched. And Jesus is constantly and continually breathing new life into His believers.
- (3) **Man became a living soul.**

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The word, "breathed," in Genesis 2:7 speaks of "blowing into, inflating, or kindling."

When God formed man out of the dirt and dust of the ground, He kindled a life within him that would forever change history.

Psalm 139:13-14 tell us, "For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well."

When Jeremiah, the prophet, was called, the Lord said to him, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you." (Jeremiah 1:5)

These verses are intricate reminders of how precious life is to God. So much so, that not only does He form life out of dust, but He breathes His own breath into the life of every human.

Remember – the word, “soul,” means “breath, life.”

God has given each of us a part of Himself that will one day be reunited to Him. Our bodies are merely a housing for the spirit and the soul that He has given us.

Let’s take a look at our three points this morning on loving the Lord with all our soul.

First...

YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN:

I gave my life to the Lord when I was very young, probably 5-6 years old. I remember hearing my mom and my cousin talking about Jesus and what it meant to be “saved,” and I thought, “*Hey! I want that for my life!*”

So, I asked the Lord into my heart right then and there and prayed my prayer of salvation.

Years later, a friend of mine asked me, “Hey, have you been born again?” To which, I happily replied, “Yes!”

Then sometime later, another friend of mine asked, “Hey, are you saved?” To which I hesitantly answered, “Uhh... yeah, I’m saved.”

Then again sometime much later, I heard someone ask, “Have you ever been baptized?”

Well, by this point, I was just plain confused. What’s the difference between being saved, born again, and baptized??

Are they all the same? If so, why are there so many different ways of describing giving your life to Jesus??

If they're all different, then what must I do to just be "saved"?? 😊

I was like Nicodemus coming to Jesus with many questions on what it meant to be "born again."

Well, without going into a study this morning on salvation, let me tell you: If you've given your life to Jesus... if you've accepted Him into your life and prayed for His forgiveness and asked Him in to be your Lord and Savior... guess what?

You're saved!
You have been born again!
You're a Christian!

Baptism does not equal salvation. Water baptism is an outward proclamation of the inward decision you've *already made* to follow Jesus.

But, the next step after salvation is to now live it out. As Jesus said – now... make sure you *love the Lord your God with all your soul*.

In order to do that, we need to look at the *purpose* of the soul. Why do we have a soul? What importance does our soul bear in the grand scheme of things??

The human flesh (which we care an awful lot about) brings *physical pleasures*.

But the human soul – was *designed for worship*.

Think about this (and the Bible is very clear on this): Our human flesh will die. Sorry to spoil the ending there for you 😊.

Even though I was saved at a young age, I never quite understood salvation until someone once put it to me this way:

The Bible says in Romans 6:23 that "... the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

If the wages of sin is death, that means whoever sins has to pay up! And that penalty is death. God was very clear with Adam and Eve in the garden that because of their sin, they shall die. Not only did they experience a *spiritual* separation from God in their disobedience, but now they would one day experience a *physical* separation from this earth and from their bodies.

And while that sounds very terrible and completely depressing, we need to know that as Christians – this is not the end. In fact, it's only the beginning. Our last physical breath is the first breath of eternity with Jesus Christ.

Again – eternity in Heaven is for the *believer* – for the ones who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as both their Lord and Savior.

If the wages of sin is death, and the Bible also tells us that "... all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Rom. 3:23) then uh oh. That means ALL – yes, all – are destined to die.

You, me, and everyone in between.

But there is good news.

Romans chapter 5 tells us (and I'm going to paraphrase for the sake of time. You're welcome to go read verses 12-20 in your own time.):

Through ONE man – which is Adam – sin entered the world. And death entered through that sin. And that same death spread to all men, as if it's genetic.

The commonality with the "genetics" of sin (if you will) is this: the *human* blood.

And then through ONE man – that is Jesus – righteousness entered the world.

And as sin has been trickling down from one man to the next, generation to generation, tainting the fleshly blood of all humans... there could only be one cure – the blood of One who is righteous.

The blood of God in exchange for the tainted blood of man.

ONE man brought sin into the world, and ONE Man took it away.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He [God] made Him [Jesus] who knew NO sin to be sin for us, that WE might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

On the Cross, Jesus clothed Himself in OUR sin – to pay that penalty of death that we owed – and He clothed US in HIS righteousness.

And God has promised that “... whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Joel 2:32)

Sin causes death, no exceptions.

But Jesus gives life for every believer, no exceptions.

Our flesh may fail – our bodies may wither – but our soul will live, literally... forever.

And that’s how God intended it! **Our soul is our connection point to God!**

No matter where you are at any given point of the day, you have unlimited access to God! God designed you in such a way that you’re not just some “robotic” blob of flesh wondering aimlessly around the earth “searching for the meaning of life.”

No, Jesus said in John 10:10, “I have come that [you] may have life, and that [you] may have it more abundantly.”

If He died to give me abundant life, then I owe that abundant life to Him.

I am who I am because **He** is who He is. I have life because He **gave** me life.

Forrest Gump so famously said, “Life is like a box of chocolates...”

But I suggest... “Life is like one big act of stewardship...”

And you know exactly what you’ve been given. And now God expects you to give it back to Him – in your everyday love for Him.

And... if our soul is the only eternal part of our lives, then that means I need to...

GAIN & DEVELOP AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE:

In the book of Revelation, worship is taking place 24/7 (which, ironically, there is no time-frame in Heaven, so it's even beyond what we would call "24/7"!).

Here's an interesting thought: maybe it's no coincidence at all that the Earth is revolving in such a way that on any given Sunday, all around the globe there literally is 24/7 worship. Every time one church ends a time of corporate praise and worship, another church is starting theirs.

But, *imagine* if we lived our lives in such a way that the same were true in our *private* worship.

Did you know you can live your life for God in such a way that it's possible to literally love the Lord your God with all your soul... to worship Him 24/7?

Worship is not about music. Although, we use it every Sunday in our corporate worship. Nothing wrong with that.

Worship is not about expressing ourselves. Although, David "danced before the Lord with all his might," which was an act of true worship.

Worship is not about singing, although the Old Testament is full of songs of praise to the Lord as an act of worship. It's Biblical, and we do it all the time.

TRUE worship... is always, and always will be, about one thing and one thing only... GOD.

In the 1991 film, *City Slickers*, Billy Crystal's character is at a pivotal point in his life where things got tough, and life didn't turn out quite like he thought it would be at middle-age. While on a two-week cattle drive to get away with his buddies and clear his head and search for life's meaning, their gritty cowboy guide, *Curly*, reveals to him the "true meaning" of life.

Curly asks him, “Do you know what the secret of life is?”, as he holds up one finger and says, “This.”

“One thing. Just one thing.”

Confused and curiously leaning in, Billy Crystal’s character asks, “But, what is the ‘one thing’?”

To which Curly smiles and replies, “That’s what *you* have to find out.”

Now, that meaningful message in 1991 rings truer than ever now in 2021. Except, the majority of people are forgetting the ONE thing that matters most.

People are constantly searching and seeking for what matters most – to THEM.

They’re asking themselves:

“What can I do that will ‘change the world’?”

“What lasting impact can I make on society?”

“What will make me ‘happiest’?”

“What will make me stand out from everyone else around me?”

“How can I be as different as possible?”

But there is one common factor in all those questions, and it’s the wrong factor: **ME**.

If you desire to love the Lord with all your soul, you must not forget the “one thing” that’s most important: **GOD**.

Worship – is a way of life, or – an active way of living. True worship is constant. It’s a behavior – built in to how we approach each day.

My SOUL is eternal.
JESUS is eternal.
And WORSHIP is eternal.

THEREFORE – my SOUL’s WORSHIP of JESUS – needs to be an eternal part of who I am and how I live my life. THIS is how I love the Lord with all my soul: ***A constant offering of who I am because of Who He is.***

You cannot love a God that you do not know.

We all worship something! You worship what you know and what you love.

How do I love God with all my soul? I am to ***give*** Him – all my soul. Everything within me. My every breath. My every word. My every thought. My every desire. My every emotion. My very life.

To give God all my soul is to give Him my undivided love. HE is now my priority. HE is now my reward. HE is now my portion. HE then becomes – the object of my affection, my praise, my worship.

Do you long for Him the way we read about in Psalm 42:1-2, “As the deer ***PANTS*** [longs, desires] for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.”

Have you tasted and seen that the Lord is good? (Psalm 34:8)

Like Mary of Bethany, are you taking time to sit at the Lord’s feet and take Him at His Word? (Luke 10:39)

The best way to LOVE Him – is to KNOW Him.

The best way to KNOW Him – is to LEARN of Him.

I’m convinced – if you take the time to know Him – you won’t be able to contain your love for Him.

Lastly, how can I love the Lord my God with all my soul?

I can choose to....

BE OBEDIENT TO GOD'S WORD:

When we center our lives on Who Christ is, we start to become more *like* Him. We talk about Him. We think about Him. We spend time with Him. We act like Him. We begin to love Him more and more. We desire to obey His commands – not because we have to, but because we WANT to. We will want to please Him.

Paul made known his life's desire in **Philippians 3:10**, "... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection."

In Psalm 27:4, David says, "One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple."

Do you desire to know Jesus and the power of His resurrection?
Do you have a desire to be with the Lord, and spend time with Him?
To behold His beauty?

Those who live their lives in such a way as to make Christ their center, make decisions based on the question of, "Will this please the Lord?" "Is this what the Lord wants from me?"

Not as a means of performing "good works," but as a means of obedience.

In the Old Testament, worshiping God with your life looked like the sacrifice of an animal and the pouring of blood on the altar.

In 1 Samuel 15, Saul tried to prove his worth and devotion to God by sacrifice. That's when Samuel, the prophet, replied, "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the VOICE of the Lord? Behold, to OBEY is better than sacrifice..."

We sometimes think our good works will display a love for God. When, almost on the contrary, obedience to His Word is better than any sacrifice.

Essentially, obedience to Jesus BECOMES our sacrifice... our offering... our worship.

What are some real, practical ways for me to be obedient to the Lord?

Well, for starters, you can love Him with your **SPEECH**.

Are the things you say pleasing to the Lord? Or are they a little on the raunchy side?

Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”

You know if your speech is pleasing to the Lord. And – if it’s not, clean it up!

James 3:9-12 says this concerning the tongue: “With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? [E] Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.”

Our tongue was made to praise the Lord, not wreak filth.

Hey – if you have bad breath, brush your teeth! Pop some mints! Gargle with mouthwash! Brush the filth off your tongue!

Likewise, our speech should be edifying – or building up – others around us! Are you a verbal-abuser of others? Would your spouse or children, or coworkers agree that you are edifying in the things that you say?

It might be time for some mouthwash.

With the same tongue, we bless God on Sunday mornings and tear others apart on Tuesday nights. James said, “My brethren, these things ought not to be so.”

Jesus said in Luke 6:45, "... out of the abundance of the heart [the] mouth speaks."

If your speech is not edifying to the Lord, or to others, it may be time to assess what has been planted deep in your heart. The good news is... God is the greatest heart-surgeon there is. And He can do miracles that no one else is capable of!

God said in Ezekiel 36:26-27; 28b, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you' I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgements and do them... you shall be My people, and I will be your God."

God can do a transforming power in your life – if you want Him to. And... if you'll *let* Him.

What about my **ACTIONS**?

Some of you are squirming in your seats right now. Good 😊.

Colossians 3 is very specific about the actions of those who profess to love God.

Paul outlines, "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is... Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth... Therefore put to death... fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry... Put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another... Put off the old man with his deeds... Put on the NEW man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him..."

Later in the same chapter, Paul continues, "... put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another... even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do [for others]... But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection..."

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.”

Your actions – can determine your LOVE for God.

Is Christ at the very center of Your speech? Your actions? Your life?

If you realize this morning that you haven't been loving the Lord with all your soul and you want to change that, guess what? You can.

Maybe you need to just start loving Him more.

Or perhaps you need to repent and make some changes.

1 John 1:9 says this: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

You can go home today with a renewed sense of love for the Lord, and you can walk it out in every area of your life today.

Romans 12:1 says this: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

It is NEVER too late to start over. When people look at you, they should never see YOU! They should see Jesus IN you.

Others can see the transforming work that Jesus has done in you today!

How do I love the Lord with all of my soul, according to Romans 12? Present yourself a living sacrifice. Holy. Acceptable to God.

That's what worship is: An offering of all that you are. Sacrifice. Surrender. Knowing that God will take your willingness and use it for His glory.

If that's you today, then YOU can make this your prayer this afternoon:

“Lord, make me more like You... in my marriage, in my friendships, in my responsibilities at work, at home, with my kids... with my very life.”

“Lord, forgive me where I've been living for myself, and not for you.”

“God, help me to love you with all my soul. With everything within me. With every breath I breathe.”

“Lord, come breathe on me AGAIN. Renew in me a right spirit – YOUR Spirit.”

It all comes down to one, single thing (“This one thing.” 😊): **Obedience.**

Hey – if this is the *greatest commandment*, then it requires our *greatest obedience!*

Either you're living a life of worship, or you're not.

CLOSING:

So.

First things first...

Have you been born again? If so, are you living your life for Jesus? If not, would you like to this morning?

If you need help living for Jesus, then start developing an eternal perspective on life – looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith – keeping eternity in your vision.

And do you desire to be obedient to God’s Word? If so, you will live it out – every single day. As Jesus said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commands.”

Let’s love Him today. With all that is within us. With all of our soul.

So that you can say, **“I’ve got soul – and I know how to use it.”**

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CLOSING PRAYER

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If you need special one-on-one prayer this morning, we would love to pray with you and ask the Lord to remind you of the truths we learned about today.

Don’t forget, for those of you watching online, you can text us at **(678) 960-9321**.

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CLOSING SONG

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