

## ***Session 1 Loving God: The First Commandment Restored to First Place***

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tonight, I am going to talk about the first commandment, which is also called the great commandment. The Lord is restoring the first commandment to first place in the Body of Christ across the whole earth. That is what is on the Holy Spirit's agenda. That is His agenda in your life. He is going to restore the first commandment in the Body of Christ worldwide like it was in the early church. As we understand this in our own personal lives, then we can give ourselves to this with more understanding. Even in our ministries, we will proclaim this.

We will equip people and help people to give themselves to the Holy Spirit in a greater way if we ourselves first understand that this is the Holy Spirit's agenda. Let's read Matthew 22:37–38: "Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all of your heart, with all of your soul, and all of your mind. This is the first and great commandment.'" Now, it is interesting that this is more than a commandment. It is a prophecy. This was Jesus' last public ministry in Jerusalem before He went to the cross. He ends His public teaching ministry by prophesying from Deuteronomy 30:6, because in Deuteronomy 30:6, Moses said that in the end times, Israel would love God with all their heart. They would walk out the great commandment.

### **THE CALL TO BE EQUALLY YOKED TO JESUS IN LOVE**

When Jesus gets ready to end His public ministry, as a week later He is going to the cross, He looks at Israel, and He prophesies, "You shall love Me. For the Father has promised Me a people who will love Me with all of their heart and that promise will not fall to the ground. You shall love Me with all of your heart, with all of your mind, and with all your strength, etc."

Then, He went on to identify this as the first commandment from God's point of view. This was the great commandment. This was the commandment that God saw as the top priority above everything else. We will look at that in a few moments. The thing that God is after are those who would be equally yoked in love to His Son. He wants to raise up people who loves Jesus with all of their heart in the way that Jesus loves them.

Imagine this: Jesus loves us with all of His mind and all of His strength. If you want to know how much God loves you, just look at the sky, or at the stars at night. God is really smart. I look up at the sky, and I say, "You love me with all of Your mind." That is intense. He is not only smart; He is powerful. Imagine God making the galaxies of the universe with all of the resource of His own strength, and imagine just how much He loves us.

### **EQUALLY YOKED IN LOVE: GOD WANTS US TO LOVE HIM THE WAY HE LOVES US**

He wants us to be equally yoked in love. Now when God says, "I love you with all of My heart," His all is bigger than our all, but we must still bring our all to that relationship. That is what it means to be equally yoked in love. Now the Father made a promise to His Son. The Father promised His Son an inheritance. He said, "Jesus, I am going to give You what I know You desire."

His inheritance is that He would have an eternal companion who would be equally yoked to Him in love. The Father knows what the Son desires. The Son wants an eternal companion who loves Him in the way He loves her. Now when I say her, I mean the whole Body of Christ, as we are the Bride of Christ and sons of God. So, the ladies are sons of God, and the men are the Bride of Christ and vice versa. Being the sons of God and being the Bride of Christ is not an issue of being masculine or feminine. It is describing a position of privilege. As the

sons of God, all of us—male and female—we have access to His power and to His throne. As the Bride of Christ, we have access to His heart; so male and female we have access to His heart. That is the bridal identity. We have access to His throne and His power—that is the sons of God identity, and it is true for male and female. It is true for the whole Body of Christ, so the Father promised His Son an inheritance. That inheritance has two different aspects. The first part is what I call the mandatory obedience of all creation. The Father is working in such a way where every single created being: angel, demon, believer, unbeliever—they will bow their knee and confess their obedience to Jesus.

### **MANDATORY OBEDIENCE VERSUS VOLUNTARY LOVE**

The demons will be in the lake of fire with the unbelievers. They do not get saved, but they will bow their knee. They will confess obedience. Obedience is mandatory. Nobody will live without obeying Jesus when it is all said and done. They will do it under the sentence of judgment, but it will be obedience nonetheless, but there is another dimension. There is another dimension to God's inheritance. It is what I call voluntary lovers.

It is those who say that it is more than the fact that they have to obey, but rather they choose to obey. This is what Jesus desires, and this is where we come into the picture. We are part of His inheritance. We are what He wants. He wants more than mandatory obedience. He wants voluntary lovers of God, people who say, "I love You because I want to love You, because of the way that You love me. I choose to love You with all of my strength."

### **GOD WILL SUPERNATURALLY EMPOWER US TO LOVE HIM**

That is what touches His heart in a very deep way. Romans 5:5: "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit has poured out the love of God in our hearts. Now, He is going to supernaturally empower us. It takes God to love God. This means that if we are going to love God in this way, we need to position our life to receive from the Holy Spirit as much as we can. I do not want to live out of the flesh because I do not want my strength diminished. I want to receive a greater increase in the Holy Spirit because it will take the power of God to love God this way.

This is how I want to love Him—with all of my heart. He is saying to each one of us, "I will give you the anointing to love Me with all of your heart. I will help you do it if you make it the premier desire of your life." Beloved, there is something bigger going on. There is something more important than some of the promises God has given us, or the mandates in ministry. Those are important. I love everything God has promised me. I love whatever mandate He has given me, and I want to do it. There is something bigger in His heart. He wants to release an anointing in us to receive the love of God and an anointing in us to love Him back. That is the dream of my heart. That is the number one thing that my life is focused on, and many of you in this room as well. That is the premier issue of what I am contending for. I want my ministry to do this and that. I want other promises to be released, but those are secondary. Part of my desire tonight is that some of you who are listening to this will say, "I am going to realign my heart and make the anointing of the first commandment the premier vision of my life."

I am going to make it the number one issue of my ministry; then all the other things that God has promised, I will take them, but I am going to take them only after this is my number one pursuit. Now, we have to love God. If we are going to love God with all of our heart, we have to love God on His terms—not on our terms, meaning, there are a lot of religions out there, and even a lot of different parts of the Body of Christ where they talk about loving God with what I call the greasy grace.

## **LOVING GOD ON HIS TERMS**

I am talking about loving God on His terms and by His definition according to the Word of God, rather than loving God by the definition of our culture, as there is a big difference. This will be a core issue in the generation that the Lord returns, and I believe we are in the days of that generation.

I believe the core battle will be the definition of how we define love, because there is a counterfeit definition of love that it has worked its way in the Church. We must love on God's terms. Jesus defined love as being rooted in a spirit of obedience. Now, we do not earn love by obedience, but when we love, we want to bring our life in agreement under His leadership because we love Him. Some of the issues that God wants me to obey Him in, in my flesh, I do not want to. I would rather just flesh out. But I tell God, "The problem is that I really do love you. I really do love you."

He answers, "If you love Me, I want you to express your love to Me through a spirit of obedience."

I say, "Ah. I want to obey, as I really love You, and I cannot live without loving You. I am going to do it. I do not want to do it, but I want to be connected and to love You. I want to give you a testimony when I stand before You on the last day that I loved You with all of my strength. That is more important to me than doing these other things."

## **JESUS DEFINED LOVING GOD AS BEING DEEPLY ROOTED IN A SPIRIT OF OBEDIENCE**

Jesus makes it clear. He says here in John 14:15, 21: "If you love Me, keep My commandments . . . He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me . . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word." It does not mean that we will not stumble. We will stumble. When we stumble, instead of rationalizing it to make our sin acceptable, we call it sin. We define it as sin. We repent of it. We declare war on it. We receive forgiveness. We push delete because it is forgiven, and we get back within the hour loving God with all of our heart.

What I am saying is that we do not just look at our sin and say, "Well, the grace of God will cover it." No. There is a remnant of the true sons of God, the true Bride of Christ, which is the Body of Christ worldwide—I am talking about those who are really born again. There are millions, hundreds of millions, maybe a billion on the earth who have a cry in their spirit to obey God. Let me be clear: there is no such thing as a loving Jesus without an intention and a spirit of obedience. If somebody says they love Jesus, and they are not contending in their spirit to love Him, there is falsehood and deception in their mind. I do not mean they will walk out obedience. I do not mean they will not stumble, but when they do stumble, it matters to them. When they do stumble, they say, "Hey, this is sin, and I am going to declare war on it within the hour. I am getting back up, running into Jesus, receiving His forgiveness, pushing delete, and having no condemnation. I am back in the race as a wholehearted lover of God." That is what I am talking about.

## **THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT DEFINES LOVE ON GOD'S TERMS AND NOT OUR TERMS**

Now, I have listed these in the study notes; I have here the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7. I am not going to go into this. This is the clearest definition of loving God. That is the measure of our maturity in love is walking out the Sermon on the Mount. It is also the measure of our true ministry impact. Your ministry or my ministry is not successful based on how many people like our ministry. It is based on how many people like you because of the influence of your ministry to walk out the Sermon on the Mount.

My goal is not to fill stadiums. My goal is to get people to love Jesus, as defined by the Sermon on the Mount. My ministry is only successful in the outward sense to the degree that the people I teach obey God in their private lives and are seeking to walk out the Sermon on the Mount. A lot of folks are interested in filling a building, or building 5,000 out of a 10,000-member church. That is cool. That is not the main issue for me. I care about what the people in the building are doing in their private lives, and what are you calling them to. That is what I care about in terms of my own life and the young people who are here. I want to train them in that. We want to have an anointed ministry; so we are anointed to call people to love Jesus, not to gather in big buildings.

We are seeking to love Jesus, and when they stumble, they admit it, they repent, and they get back in the race to love Him. The first and great commandment—Jesus did not call this the first option. It is called the first commandment. It is real. It is the number one priority to God. It is first. There is no priority bigger than this. Here is why I am saying this: some people say, “If I get involved in outreach, or if I give away my money, I will even fast and pray a few days a week or a few days a month. I will do anything as long as You let me disobey in this area.”

The Lord says, “I appreciate your heart to reach out, but I want your heart to just be with Me. There is no ministry. There is no sacrifice. There is no prayer commitment that is a substitute for the intention to obey.” I have had a fierce intention to obey the Lord and have stumbled many times. I am talking about the intention to obey, and you can have that in truth, the day you are born again. It is not something you grow into. You can have that intention from the very beginning.

### **THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT**

Roman numeral II. Now, it's not only the great commandment; I mean the first commandment is the great one. It is the commandment that has the greatest impact on God's heart. It is the great commandment. It impacts God more than any other commandment—it impacts His heart. It makes a great impact on His heart. It also makes a great impact on your heart. Jesus will change you, and the people you love will be in line for ministry. They will be far more effective in this mindset.

You will be in the greatest position to touch God and to touch people. It is called the greatest commandment because it brings a great impact. It is also the greatest calling. We have about 1,000 young people at our Bible school here and our music school. These 1,000 young people—fulltime and part-time students—I will talk to them sometimes, and I will ask them, “Hey, what is the calling of God on your life?” More times than not, they will talk about what they are supposed to do instead of what they are supposed to be.

I ask them. “What is your calling?”

They say, “Oh! I am called to go to the nations and fill stadiums.” They typically talk about the size of their ministry not the size of their heart.

I answer, “That is good. I hope all this happens for you. But, there is a greater calling on you that is even more important than what you do. It is what you become. The size of your heart is your first calling, and the size of your impact is very important.” I am not in anyway minimizing that. That is our second calling. My desire is to see a Bible school raised up where they understand the first and great calling on their life is to be faithful,

anointed lovers of God. It is a voluntary commitment; the biggest dream of their heart to love God with all their heart and strength. Let's look at now some of the four different facets of loving God.

### **SPHERE NUMBER 1: LOVE WITH ALL OUR HEART**

Roman numeral III. I have four different spheres: loving God with your heart, your mind, your soul, and your strength. We will just take a minute on each one. Now some of you, I trust, will be really stirred, meaning, you are saying, "You know I want to do this. I want more on this." I just want to mention that I have a teaching series. It is free on the website. All these notes, this teaching on DVD, the CD set—they are all free on the website. It is a twelve-part series on how to love God with all of your heart—the first commandment.

In this teaching series, I took the first commandment and took twelve sessions in our Bible school to break it down. By no means did I exhaust the subject, but for some of you, this is maybe the first time that you have ever heard a message on the first commandment. You think how you want more—I have handouts posted. I have posted a lot of four- to six-page handouts on each one of them, and if this stirs you, and you say, "I want more of this"—because in this conference, we are going to look at some other themes related to passion for Jesus, not just this one.

My goal is to see some of you leave this place equipped with resources to go study deeper. Again, our copyright is the right to copy. You can use any of it for your own teaching materials. Put it in your own documents. Do with it what you want. Put your name on it. Put your mother's name on it. That is great because I want you to go deep. I am just kind of sparking your interest in this short message tonight.

My prayer is that a few of you will say, "Yeah. This is what my life is about. Are you kidding? I have got to go deeper in this." Then I will think to myself, "Ah, good, I got you for Jesus' sake."

### **WE ENGAGE OUR EMOTIONS IN OUR LOVE FOR GOD**

Number one: sphere number one—loving God with all of your heart. We are to engage with our emotions in our love for God. It is more than just dutiful, responsible service. It is more than just gritting our teeth and being faithful; I appreciate faithfulness when we do not feel like it, but the Lord says, "I want your heart. I want your emotions to be touched. I want you to give me your heart, your emotions, and not just your service."

He wants our service too, but He wants more than that. We have a significant role in determining how our emotions develop over time. Whatever you set your mind on, your emotions will follow in a short amount of time because some people might think, "Well, I cannot influence my emotions. They are what they are." No. Your emotions are the fruit of what you have set your mind on and filled your mind with. Your emotions will always reflect your thoughts after a little bit of time.

Your emotions right now today are the fruit of what you set your heart on, what the dream of your heart is, and what you have fed your spirit on. Your emotions will reflect that. We change our mind; God will change our emotions. Psalm 18:1: "I will love You. O LORD, my strength." David made a choice. He said that he would love God. There is the setting of the heart. There is a fierce determination, whether we feel it or not. This is the number one reason I have life on the earth: to walk in the anointing to love Jesus. Then, everything comes after that. There is a place where we can actually make that decision, and it matters. It will change our spirit.

## **SPHERE NUMBER 2: LOVING WITH ALL OUR MIND**

Roman numeral IV. Loving God with all of our mind, we are going to go to the second sphere. You know, the Lord spoke to me by the audible voice of the Lord twenty-seven years ago, and He said in essence to start IHOP–KC. It was twenty-seven years ago. It was in May 1983, and He said this. I was twenty-seven years old, twenty-seven years ago. That makes me fifty-four years old. I was twenty-seven years old at a young adult church, and we are fasting and praying.

We are in a season of fasting and praying in May 1983 with about 500 young adults. I was one of the older guys of many guys in their early twenties, and the Lord spoke audibly and said, “Do twenty-four hour prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David.”

I had never even thought such a thought. I was thinking, “Twenty-four hour prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David.” The spirit of the tabernacle of David means to do twenty-four hour prayer with singers and musicians because David had a tabernacle that had 4,000 full-time singers and musicians.

So I came to understand it, and I thought, “OK.” So, we put a sign on the wall that said, “Twenty-four Hour Prayer in the Spirit of the Tabernacle of David.” So 1983–1984 passed, and in 1985, people would join our church and they would say, “What is that?” I did not really know. You know our church grew to 7,000 people, and the new people would all say, “What is that sign on the wall?”

I would answer, “I do not know.” I truly did not know. So in 1999, we started it, and now ten years later, there are 1,000 people doing this on our staff. So I have got my friends through the last twenty plus years, twenty-five years, twenty-seven years, they come up to me, and they visit IHOP–KC. You know that there are 1,000 Bible school students and 1,000 people on staff.

They are saying, “Wow. This is exciting!” Friends who I have not seen for awhile would come and drop in. They will say, “This is your dream. It has come true.”

I answer, “IHOP–KC is not my dream. This is not my dream.” They are a little bit confused.

They say, “What? I thought this was your dream!”

I answer, “No. This is my assignment. My dream is the anointing to love God with all of my heart. That is my dream.” If IHOP–KC gets really big, or if IHOP–KC gets really little, my dream is not affected at all. When IHOP–KC gets bigger, it could grow really big. My dream is not helped at all if IHOP–KC grows big. As a matter of fact, it threatens my dream a bit because it is more invasive on my life. I am serious in saying this. If IHOP–KC falls apart, my dream is not affected—that is my assignment. I want to do my assignment well, but I am clear: the dream of my heart is the anointing to walk out the first commandment, and when I stand before Jesus on that day, I will say that I sought the power of the Holy Spirit to love You with all my heart, my strength, my mind, and my soul. That is my great dream.

If in that day, He says, “Well done on this point,” then the highest dream of my life happened. If IHOP–KC is big or IHOP–KC is small that does not affect my dream at all.

## **SHIFTING THE PRIMARY DREAM OF OUR HEART TO LOVING THE LORD**

A lot of people need to shift the primary dream of their heart off of their assignment and make their assignment in ministry their secondary dream. Then, they make their primary goal in life to walk out the first commandment to love God with their whole heart.

I was in my twenties reading my Bible. I said, “If this is the first commandment, it must be the first priority to God. OK. If it is the first one to God, I do not even get it, but it is my first one from now on.” There was a literal day when I said, “It is now my first priority if it is your first priority.” I begin to tell people, and they say, “What does that mean?”

I say, “I do not even know what the first commandment is, but if it is first to God, it only makes sense to make it first to me. I am lining up with God. He has all the power. He is really smart. He loves me. I am going with His agenda. I am just going to go with His thing.”

The reason I am saying that is because when I began to give myself to this, I made a decision. It is not overly powerful. I just read it, and one day, it hit me. I thought, “First means first, and great means great. OK. The great commandment, I want to be great. The first commandment—I want to do the main thing. There you have it.” The moment was a little bit boring. It was not even a big exciting moment. I just said, “I am shifting over.” This is that. That is what it means to set God—to love Him with all of your heart, meaning that you make a decision. You shift the primary dream of your heart.

## **WE FILL OUR MIND WITH THAT WHICH INSPIRES LOVE FOR GOD**

Sphere number two: to love God with all of our mind. Now we fill our mind with that which inspires love for God instead of filling our mind with that which diminishes our love for God. We love Jesus. We express it by what we put in our mind. There are times I do not feel like certain things, but I will fill my mind with right things because I love God. I do not even feel like reading these certain things, but it is part of loving God. I tell God, “I want to love You with my mind. Loving God with our mind means we purposely invest the energy and what is involved to fill our mind with that which inspires our heart to love.”

Sometimes people will kind of get tired, or get in the flesh, and they fill their mind with things that diminish love, and the Holy Spirit says, “I love you, but that is diminishing your love for Jesus. You cannot love Him with Your mind doing this.” The Holy Spirit still is tender with us. He will give us 1,000 chances and 1,000 more, but the problem is we are diminishing our strength to love Him when we do this. What we do with our mind greatly affects our capacity to love Jesus.

If we fill our mind with right things—the Word of God—our capacity to love increases. We feel more, and we can give more back to Him. Our capacity increases to love Him. If we fill our mind with wrong things, even though we love Him, our capacity diminishes to feel love from Him. He still loves us, but we cannot feel it. Even to return it, we still love Him, but we do not love Him in the measure we could. It is because of what we put in our mind. Our mind is the doorway to our inner man.

I want you to think about this for a moment. Just take two to three minutes on this thing on the mind. Most of our life actually occurs in our mind. Out of twenty-four hours a day, seventy years on the earth, the vast majority of your life occurs in your mind, not even what you do with your hands and your words. The language of the human spirit is pictures and images. That is the language. If I say pink elephant, you think pink elephant.

## **OUR MIND IS AN INTERNAL MOVIE SCREEN**

Again, that is the language of the human spirit—pictures. Our mind is like an internal movie theater, or a movie screen. It is a movie studio inside of us. As a matter of fact, your mind will never ever stop showing pictures. A billion years from now, there will never be a second when your mind did not show pictures. There is not a minute when your spirit did not have pictures. You have pictures in you for billions and billions of years where there is no end—there is no end to eternity. You have an internal movie screen. You have a whole internal movie studio going on that will never go out of business.

The people who are in hell, or the lake of fire, their pictures will go on forever in their minds. Their minds are like a camera that store memories. It is the camera; it is the pictures through which we process life. We are the producer. We are the leading actor, and we are the number one consumer of our movies. I am the producer. I am the leading actor. I am the one who buys the movies. I am the number one consumer. I produce it, act in it, and watch it. So do you. We are both the hero and the villain. We are mostly the heroes. But sometimes, by listening to the spirit of condemnation, the villain comes up stronger than we think. There is a vast universe on the inside of us that will never be turned off—never. Now, we cannot shut that movie theater down, but we can redirect the script of the movie.

We can replace the dark thoughts. We can redirect them. We can rewrite the script by our meditation on the Word of God. When we do that, it rewrites the script because the movie will never ever stop. Our mind has so much potential. We have so much potential. The vastness of our mind—I mean, your mind will be growing. We compare our minds to a computer, with its storage capacity, and how much you have on the hard drive: billions of years from now, you will be having more memories. Your memory will get larger and larger. Billions and billions of years, can you fathom the capacity of your human spirit? This movie studio is intense. It is so powerful. The thing that burdens me is how many of God's people take this vast thing called the mind, and they are so casual about their mind.

## **AGREEMENT WITH TRUTH IS REFUSING LIES ABOUT HIS HEART**

Your mind is so powerful. It is eternal, and what you put in it—you can only change it through Jesus if you have negative in it. It is critical that we use our mind to love God in a right way. It is one of the number one things Jesus wants. He wants us to take time to fill our mind with truth. Whether we feel like it or not, it is an expression of love. I say, "Lord, I am going to fill my mind with this right now. I do not feel like it right now. I do not even feel that inspired. I love You. But my mind is so big." Our minds totally affect our emotions. I am not taking this mind and just throwing it to vanity and idleness. Why? I love God and I want to love God with my entire mind. Many of God's people live in vain imaginations.

They live in fantasy romances, fantasy ministries, and they live in the fantasy of who treated them wrongly. They relive the script. The fantasy of how bad they have been treated; they are the victim of all victims. Just get that fantasy out, put truth in, and play some different movies. It takes some time to do that. Most people live in the grip of fantasy their entire life because our life is lived inside of our mind. It really is. Well, we are going to love Him with all of our mind. Many have told me, "The whole world is shifting to more media and visuals, and handouts are going out of style."

I said, "I do not care. I am making them until the end." There you have it. I am just going to make the handouts to the end even if I am the only one who reads them. They say that no one is reading anymore. I respond,

“There are a few little guys like me out there who love stuff. They want to study. Well, a bunch of you showed up to this conference who are reading these handouts now.”

### **SPHERE NUMBER THREE: LOVING GOD WITH ALL OF OUR STRENGTH**

Roman numeral V. Sphere number three: loving God with all of our strength. To love God with all of our strength means with our natural resources and the things that give strength to us: our time, our money, our words, and our influence. I am not going to talk about that because I just wanted to make the point. Again, I have a book on that. It is called *The Rewards of Fasting*. I take the five areas of strength: our words, our energy, our money, our time, and I take these areas called the rewards of fasting—because fasting is investing our strength to love God and to help other people love God. That is really what fasting is. We can fast in money. We can fast our time. We can fast food. Prayer really is an investment of time and energy. It is fasting.

If I did not have to go to a prayer meeting, I could go do stuff, but I choose instead to go to the prayer meeting. I am turning my strength in so that I can grow in love for God, and I could help other people love God. That is what loving God with your strength is.

Again, we have got the book. You can get it in the bookstore, if you want a hard copy, but if you want it for free, it is on the website. It is called *The Rewards of Fasting*. It is the five areas that we invest our strength in intentionally because we love God. When I give God my time and prayer, I give Him my strength. When I fast food or I give Him my money, it is an exchange of love. I am doing this for one gigantic reason: I love You with my strength. Here it is, and He writes it in His book. He says, “I will remember that.”

I say, “I know. That is what excites me. You are going to remember this. That is what excites me.” I can take my strength, and maybe a lot of people do not care about your time, money, words, and energy, but He does. That is a miracle. He does. He says, “I care about your time, money and energy. I count it as love.”

I say to God, “I love it. Here is more time, more energy, more money, and more of me.”

God responds, “I am writing it in my book. It moves my heart. Oh! I love to be loved. I love to love You. I love this whole thing.” Though other people may know nothing about it, God loves it when you give your strength to Him to love Him and help other people love Him.

### **SPHERE NUMBER FOUR: LOVE WITH ALL OUR SOUL**

Roman numeral VI. Let’s go to sphere number four. Loving God with all of our soul: that is very important. When we love God with all of our soul, this has to do with our identity. It is how we view ourselves. We must realign our heart to where we get our value from our relationship with God instead of by what we accomplish, or if cool people recognize us. This is the hardest of the four because loving with the heart—our emotions, the mind, the strength, and the soul—is hard. Our sense of our identity, the way we see ourselves, this is the most difficult one to yield. It really matters because if I will realign my identity according to truth, I can change the emotional traffic that dominates our inner man when we get our identity from our ministry and from who likes us.

### **WE DEFINE SUCCESS AS BEING ONE WHO IS LOVED AND CHOSEN BY GOD**

We cannot get our identity by what we look like, by how many people listen to our ministry, or how many listen to our music. If our identity is from that, we will have so much rejection, jealousy, competition, anxiety, and

fear that it will be a storm of emotion on the inside. With that emotional storm, we are so distracted, and we cannot even love God. He says, “No. I want this area brought into alignment as well. I want you to find your identity in Me: the fact that I love you and the fact that you love Me—that is why you are successful.”

We are not successful because 100, 1,000, or a million people are involved in our business, ministry, our music, or because we have so much music here. Some of the musicians will get tempted to think they are more powerful if a lot more people like their music. That does not make you at all more successful. I am successful because He loves me and because by the grace of God, I love Him. I mean, out of the six billion plus people on the earth, there are probably a billion who love Him, and five plus billion who do not.

Beloved, you are in the minority of the human family, but somehow in the grace of God, you connected and received the grace of God to love Him. It moves Him. He looks at that, and it makes your life powerful in His sight. I am so excited that He is moved so much because a little guy like me loves Him so much. I ask God, “Why does me loving You matter that much?”

He answers, “Because I love you.” This is the way to live. However, we think that we are defined by what we accomplish in our economics, the size of our ministry, who recognizes you, the famous business leaders, the famous church leaders, or the cool people at the university. If the cool people recognize us, somehow we have got it made. Beloved, the coolest Person in existence is in love with you. He went to a cross. The coolest Person loves you already. He is absolutely in love with who you are. He loves you. So I will get into pain, turmoil, and things are not going well. I say, “Wait a second. Let me realign things. You love me. I love You. That is why I am successful.”

We can do our assignment in ministry from the place of success, not to gain success. A lot of people talk about burning out. We do not get burnt out because we work hard. We get burnt out because we work with a wrong spirit. We work to become successful instead of working because we are successful. I am already successful. He loves me. I love Him. I have got it made. With that energy and with that strength, I could labor to minister to people, and they could reject it, blow it off, not care what I do, but I am already beaming with success. I live for an audience of One.

### **MINISTRY TIME**

Amen. Let’s stand. We are going to talk about this more tomorrow the 2 o’clock sessions in the afternoon and then on Saturday again. We are going to work on the subject of passion for Jesus and loving God. I am going to lead the whole room, so please stand if you want to or get comfortable. I want to lead you just for a minute or two in a prayer, and then, we are going to have ministry time. Please feel free to leave, meaning we go until midnight. Then when the midnight team is done, they go all night.

Some guy says, “I am going to go to IHOP–KC until I drop.” I promise you, you will drop before IHOP–KC stops. I just want you to feel freedom because the goal is for you to be touched in your spirit—not to be in every meeting. Some complain, “There are too many meetings. IHOP–KC wears me out. I cannot be at all the meetings. I can only be at about a tenth of them. There are so many of them.” I want you to pace yourself even for these three days.

Close your eyes where you are just not distracted; you are focused on the Lord. Just talk to Jesus for about ten to fifteen seconds on each one. You are going to make a commitment to Him. He says, “I want you to love Me

with all of your heart. I want to be the primary dream of your heart—not your ministry, not your popularity, and not your wealth. I want to be the primary dream. I want you to possess the anointing to love Me. That is the first thing you live for.” I am going to give you about fifteen seconds to talk to God about that.

Say, “Lord, I am going to shift over. It is not my ministry. It is not my money. It is not my popularity. It is not my success in athletics, music, or arts. It is You, and I am shifting right now—tonight. I am shifting over. I am going to love You with my heart. You will be the dream of my heart Jesus—the number one dream. I have got other assignments, but You are number one.”

If you make that decision tonight, for the first time, your life will be radically different in the next five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years. You will be a completely different human being in a few years. Shift over. I did it in my twenties. Again, I did not even feel it. That was not even that anointed. I started praying, “Lord, I want the anointing to love You.” I did not even know what it meant. I just said it day after day after day. I want the anointing to love You, and whatever that means, help me. I want to be first and great.

Number two: love God with all your mind. God says, “I want your mind. I want you to quit so much of the fantasy stuff. The fantasy romances, the fantasy games, and the fantasy whatever. Some fantasies are really defiled. Some fantasies are not defiling; they are just empty. They are a waste of time. You are going to say, “I am going to love You with my mind. I am going to fill my mind intentionally with the Lord. I am going to go to a whole other level of commitment. I set my heart to put the Word of God in my mind because I love You. I am not just doing this out of obligation. I love You. I want to love You with my mind.”

I will give you ten or fifteen seconds to say, “I want to do this.” We are going to need help of course. I have made these commitments over and over; I have stumbled and fallen, but I just recommitment. I just recommit, and I push delete. I repent, push delete, and move on.

Number three: you are going to love God with your soul and your identity. I am going to shift over. When the pain hits me of rejection and fear, I am going to realign. I am going to confess it to You. I am successful because You love me, and I love You—not because of the people who like me, or the position I am in—that is not why. It is because You love me. I am going to realign to that. I am going to love You with my soul. Talk to Him for a minute.

Number four: you have got to love Him with your strength. That is your time, your money, and your words. Holy Spirit, I want to line up with my words, my money, my time, and my service. I want to love You with my natural strength. I want to put it at Your disposal, so that I can increase in love.

You do not earn love by it, but you position yourself to receive more by the Holy Spirit. You do not earn it, but you can put yourself in line to receive more, and that is what you do. So I am going to do this. I am going to do this. I am going to love You with my mind, my heart, my soul, and my strength. I am going to do this. I am going to teach others. That is the last thing I am going to lead you in.

You are saying, “I am going to teach others.” Maybe I only have three people in my children’s Bible study on Sunday morning. Teach those three. Start with three. I only have one friend that I drive to the university with. Teach that person. You do not need a microphone. I am going to start teaching people whether it is one on one or using email or whatever you call it, all the technology stuff.

I am going to start telling people this. I am going to do it. I am going to talk about it. I am going to pray about it. I am going to give people literature on it. I am going to move people to do this. Holy Spirit, we thank You. I am going to ask for the fire of the Lord to come right now. Holy Spirit, come with fire right now. We are weak and broken people, but we are whom You want. He wants the nations. We are going to wait for a few moments.

When you fail, admit it, confess it, push delete, and jump back right in the race before the hour is up. Go hard again. No condemnation. Do not waste a moment on condemnation. Push delete, and be there, confident before God in love. The guy says, "Oh. I like pornography." No. Call it sin, and repent of it. Confess it before God, and be back within the minute as a lover of God with confidence that He enjoys the worship you are giving Him. Do not wallow for three, four weeks, or a couple hours. Do not put yourself on probation. You have confidence before Him no matter what you did twenty minutes ago. Holy Spirit, I ask You to come right now with fire. There is some real setting of the heart going on with some of you tonight. It is a dynamic setting of your heart. It will change your life.