



*The Reason for Joel 2
Lifestyle
– Wholehearted Love*

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment."

Matt 22:36-38

LOVE

The Joel 2 Lifestyle

In the preceding two weeks, we talked about the individual and corporate responses that God requires and what the Joel 2 Lifestyle is about. This week we will explore deeper into why God requires the Joel 2 lifestyle.

Why does God insist on the Joel 2 lifestyle? What is God looking for? He is looking for relationship with His people. He is looking for us to develop a deep relationship with Him and to love Him wholeheartedly. More than anything else, God wants our heart (Matt. 22:37).

God desires wholehearted love that is expressed through a lifestyle of fasting and praying. When we fast and pray, we are cultivating intimacy with God and intensely engaging His heart in love.

Through living out the Joel 2 lifestyle, we are seeking to love the Lord wholeheartedly and we are growing our love.

Hence it is for the good of our hearts.

If we truly understand and live out the Joel 2 lifestyle, our hearts will come alive and be vibrant!

Why does God desire wholehearted love?

God is jealous for our hearts. We are made for Him, created with a vacuum that can only be filled when we find our complete satisfaction in Him and Him alone.

God has everything. Yet, He is searching for something. What could God possibly want? What is He looking for? Only when we discover what He wants, will we realize what we are longing for and understand the meaning of life.

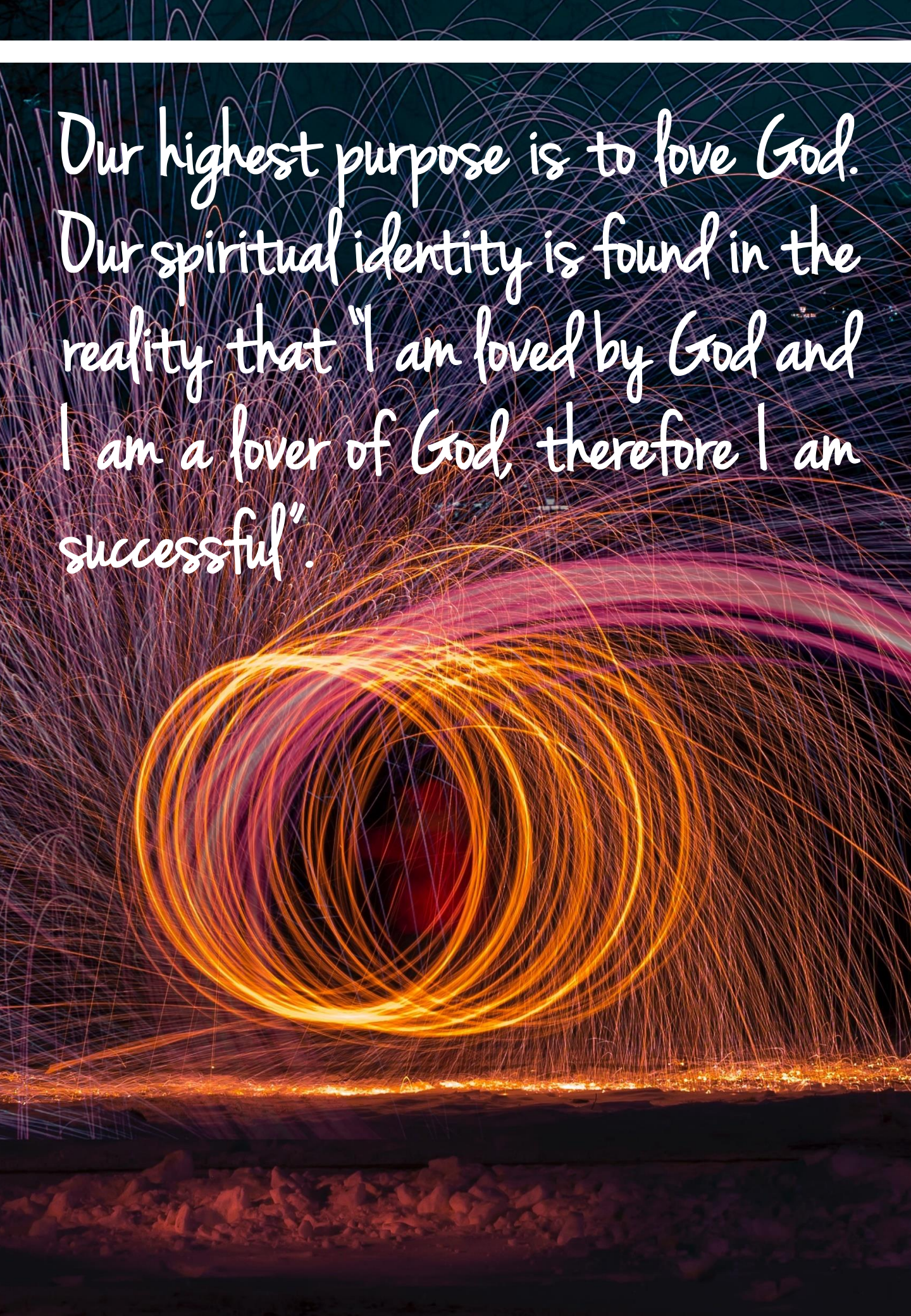
In Matt. 22:36-38, Jesus teaches us about the First and Great Commandment - to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

God is looking for LOVE. He is after our hearts and not our talent or money. He desires voluntary, wholehearted love from hearts that are abandoned to Him.

He wants to take over our lives, but He also wants us to give it to Him willingly. God created us for a specific purpose and designed us with longings to fulfill that purpose.

God requires that we love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength because He loves us that way.

Jesus wants us to love Him the same way He loves us. He will supernaturally empower us to love Him this way, because it "takes God to love God". The Holy Spirit will impart this greatest gift to us, the anointing to receive God's love (Rom. 5:5) and to return it to Jesus in the same measure that the Father loves His Son (John 17:26).



Our highest purpose is to love God.
Our spiritual identity is found in the
reality that "I am loved by God and
I am a lover of God, therefore I am
successful".

God's ultimate eternal purpose for creation is to provide a family for Himself that includes faithful children who will love and obey Him. God's desire is also to provide an equally-yoked Bride for Jesus as His eternal companion. He promised to give Jesus an inheritance consisting of a people whom He will fully possess in love (Psalm 2:8).

He is nurturing a Bride who will be prepared by wholehearted love to reign with Jesus. The First Commandment will be in the first place in the Church when Jesus returns (Rev. 19:7).



Why is loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength known as the First and Great Commandment?

Jesus calls it the First Commandment because to God, loving Him is to be our first priority.

Loving God is a glorious end in itself.

However, it never ends with loving God alone but always overflows to loving ourselves and others – believers and unbelievers alike.

Jesus is after our hearts. He wants to awaken love in our hearts. He wants to reveal and impart His love to us. Everything that God does, He does first for love.

It is called the Great Commandment because if we live it out, we will be great in the sight of God.

Loving God has the greatest impact on God's heart, our hearts and the hearts of those we touch.

Our greatest calling in the grace of God is to move or impact God's heart. We move His heart with every movement of our heart to show Him love through obedience.



What God wants most and esteems as greatest is the response of love from the human heart.

He delights to see us give Him our time, money and talents because in giving them we express our love for Him.

Loving Jesus has the greatest reward both now and in the Age-to-come. It is the only way to enter into our highest destiny. We can be one of the greatest people in history simply by living in deep love for God. We might not become the most famous but we can be one of the greatest (Matt. 5:19).



The anointing to love God is our most treasured possession. The reward of love is found in possessing the power to love. No sacrifice is comparable to what God has given us in His love. Anyone can quit but not a person in love. When we are tempted to quit, what stops us from doing so is our love for God.

The primary reason why we live out the Joel 2 lifestyle is love.

We are seeking to love Him with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, to know Him intimately and to partner Him through prayer.

For God desires a wholehearted Bride,
whose heart is vibrant and burns in
love for Jesus.

A heart-shaped opening in a blue door, with a lit candle inside, symbolizing love and devotion.

Will we say yes?



Readings and Prayers for the week

Readings for Week 38

Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her (Luke 10:42). Will you choose to make prayer and gathering in sacred assemblies a top priority?

Prayers for Week 38

Using Phil. 1:9, ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand the supremacy of the First Commandment, and to empower us with His grace to live it out through the Joel 2 lifestyle.

Pray John 17:26 for the Church to receive the impartation of the Father's love for Jesus so that we will love Jesus the way the Father loves Him.