

WITH ALL YOUR HEART

Jan. 3, 2026

Jesus commanded Israel to 'Love the LORD your God with all your heart'. In the Old Testament, Israel forsook God and went into idolatry and immorality. God had considered His covenant with them to be a marriage, but they had been unfaithful.

**'For your Maker is your husband - the LORD Almighty is his name - the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. - Isaiah 54:5
'For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. - Isaiah 54:7 see also Jeremiah 3:14, 31:32**

In the New Testament, God's people are referred to as sons and daughters, servants, friends, saints and soldiers, but the most precious relationship we have with Jesus is as bride. It is a covenant based on the love and commitment between us. The apostle Paul gave Christians this reminder....

'I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.' 2 Corinthians 11:2

Note: Man's jealousy is often envy of what belongs to another person, whereas God's jealousy is a desire to protect what belongs to Him.

Since Christians are betrothed to Jesus, it is only natural that they should desire to live a holy and pure life as they prepare for their wedding day with Jesus. As one reads the words of Jesus during his last supper with his disciples (John 13-17); it seems that Jesus was speaking as a bridegroom would speak to a future bride.

'In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you; I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.' - John 14:2-3 NKJV (Jewish custom for a bridegroom was to make a pledge to their future bride and then go way to prepare their future home)

'A new commandment I give you; love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another. - John 13:34

John was there at the Last Supper, and decades later he wrote many words about love in a letter to the church. He reminded them that since Jesus showed them sacrificial love at the cross, they should love one another. He also warned them about the world.

'Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. - 1 John 2:15

A Wedding Vow:

I promise to love and cherish you, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and forsaking all others, keep myself only unto you, for so long as I shall live..

(this vow could also be used when someone becomes a Christian!)

A pledge of marriage to Jesus requires forsaking all other gods or idols. He must be our first love. We will explore this further in our next message. jesusreigns.net