



# WHOLEHEARTED

**Feb – March 2024**

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## **Overview**

The start of a new year presents a prime opportunity for envisioning people for the year ahead. We have come out of a long and tiring season of figuring out whether meeting locally is where God is leading us and whether we have the right leadership in the right places - now we can take meaningful steps forward. This year isn't a year of discerning; it's a year of action. But action without devotion is meaningless. Unless we are a people whose lives are totally devoted to the Lord, all our outreach efforts will be pure noise. To teach into the five areas scripture calls us to be wholehearted will propel us into 2024 with every reason to throw ourselves - wholeheartedly - into the mission our Lord Jesus Christ gave us.

## **Outline**

1. Wholehearted Love - Matthew 22:34-40
2. Wholehearted Obedience - Psalm 119:33-40
3. Wholehearted Trust - Proverbs 3:5-6
4. Wholehearted Praise - Psalm 103:1-5
5. Wholehearted Work - Colossians 3:2

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Week 1 • 11 Feb 2024 • Matt 22:34-40

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## Wholehearted Love

1. What's the best example of love that you've witnessed with your own eyes? What made it so memorable for you?
  
2. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 as being the first and greatest commandment. This comes after giving the 10 commandments in Deut. 5
  - a. In what way do the other commandments flow from loving God first and foremost?
  
  - b. How does St Augustine's quote: "*Love God and do whatever you please*" fit with what Jesus says here?
  
3. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-8
  - a. What stands out about the importance of love over everything else?
  - b. What aspect of love in vv4-8 speaks to you most strongly? Why?
  - c. What are some examples of being "a clanging symbol" (just annoying noise) that come to mind?

4. A popular phrase that's done the rounds over recent years is "Love is love".
  - a. What do you think is meant by that?
  - b. How does the purity of God's love, and the love he desires for us, go infinitely further than this secular phrase?
  
5. How would you describe your own love for God right now?
  - a. What do you find difficult about loving God? What do you find easy?
  - b. What's one step you can take to grow in your love for the Lord?
  - c. How does Jesus show us what perfect love looks like?
  
6. Expressing love and adoration for the Lord can be through prayer, song, dance - any form of worship. How can we as a group grow in expressing our love for the Lord together?

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Week 2 • 18 Feb 2024 • Psalm 119:34-40

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## Wholehearted Obedience

1. How obedient were you as a kid? What were some of the rules you had to obey in your home growing up?
2. Use the Discovery Bible Method to dig into Psalm 119-34-40
  - a. Read the passage one aloud
  - b. Close your Bibles and try retell the passage from memory
  - c. Read the passage again and see what it says about God.  
What do we learn about him here?
  - d. Read the passage again and see what it says about people.  
What do we learn about ourselves here?
  - e. What is one thing you feel God is asking you to do differently, after looking at this text today?
3. If it didn't come up in the previous discussion, have a look closely at vv 36-37.
  - a. What makes it so difficult for us to obey God's commands with all our hearts?
  - b. Read 1 John 5:3 - how is this helpful in appreciating God's commands for how we ought to live?
  - c. How does Jesus show us what perfect obedience looks like?



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Week 3 • 25 Feb 2024 • Prov 3:5-6

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## Wholehearted Trust

1. If you feel game enough, do some “Trust Falls” with your group (YouTube how to do it safely if you’re not sure!). Otherwise, who in your life is the most trustworthy when it comes to:
  - a. Being on time
  - b. Making a delicious meal
  - c. Doing what they said they would do
  - d. Giving an awesome present
2. Read Proverbs 3:5-6
  - a. What does Solomon pit against each other in verse 5?
  - b. Why can’t these two things co-exist?
3. Trusting God with all our hearts essentially involves giving up the illusion that we are in control of our lives. How do the following verses give us assurance that our trust in God isn’t futile:
  - a. Psalm 16:1
  - b. Isaiah 26:3
  - c. Romans 8:28

4. What do you commonly see people in the world putting their trust in?
  - a. How do you think this contributes to the pervasiveness of anxiety in our world?
  - b. How could this message of the trustworthiness of God be a useful spiritual conversation starter, or an opportunity for you to share a brief testimony with someone?
  - c. How does Jesus show us what perfect trust in God looks like?
  
5. What things do you find it easy to trust God with? What things do you find more difficult?
  - a. What verses that you've looked at today could you memorise to help strengthen your trust in times of struggle?

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Week 4 • 3 March 2024 • Psalm 103

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## Wholehearted Praise

1. What two songs (one Christian and one secular) stir you to get up and sing and dance the most right now?
2. Read the whole of Psalm 103 together and note down every reason the Psalmist has for praising God with “all my inmost being”.
  - a. When do you find it most easy to worship? What things cause your soul to praise the Lord?
3. What do you notice about who the psalmist is addressing in 103:1 and also Psalm 42:11?
  - a. What does this tell us about giving praise to God? (Hint: it’s a choice we must make even when we don’t feel like it).
4. What are some things that are often worshiped in our culture?
  - a. Pick one or two things and then write down all the reasons why that thing is praised (like you did with question two).
  - b. Now compare the two lists - how do they compare?

5. Reflecting on question 2a, how can I choose more times and more reasons to praise God, whether alone or with others?
  
6. Spend some time praising the Lord together. You can put on Spotify or YouTube, or someone might feel led to start a song or offer a prayer - whichever way you do it, praise him together!



# WHOLEHEARTED

Week 5 • 10 March 2024 • Col 3:23

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## Wholehearted Work

1. What are the best and worst jobs you've ever had and why?
2. Read Colossians 3:23-4:1 and Ephesians 6:5-9.
  - a. What reason does Paul give for working "with all your heart", no matter the role you have?
  - b. What exhortation does Paul have for employers in these passages?
  - c. What does Paul's use of "whatever" in these texts (and Ecclesiastes 9:10) tell us about how God views all our different kinds of work, whether blue collar or white collar?
3. What kind of roles does society elevate above others, and how do we see people who work those "lower roles"?
  - a. How would God have us view people and these roles in a proper light?
4. What kinds of practices do you see in your workplace, or others, that don't look like "working with all your heart" or "working for the Lord"?



5. Consider your current place of work:
  - a. Would you describe your work ethic has being “wholehearted”?
  - b. Would your work ethic look any differently if you reminded yourself who you were truly working for?
  - c. Has today’s discussion helped you see the dignity and importance of your work in a new light?
6. Jesus was the perfect example of someone who worked and rested as God would have us.
  - a. What rhythms of rest (Sabbath) could you build into your week to help you work with all your heart?