

# GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



## GIG164 – Love God

Thank you for joining us today in this podcast. I know that when this is posted and released, we will have a few more days remaining in our celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles for this year. I wanted to read a few verses, well, a lot of verses, that really pertain to this. If you have not yet heard the previous podcast about the Feast of Tabernacles for 2023, I would encourage you to go back and listen to that; because this podcast will follow on with what we were speaking of with that teaching. As the Lord has been laying on my heart, this year, I believe, we recognize that the celebration of Tabernacles is a time of preparation for us and for our hearts in the days ahead – the days ahead in our walk with Him in this time, as well as in our eternity. It is a preparation; and that preparation is extremely important for us as we walk on in the Lord and as we grow in God.

I want to begin by reading Deuteronomy the thirtieth chapter, and I will begin with verses 5-6. It says, “The Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.” Now the drive and the focus of this podcast is this issue of loving the Lord with all of our heart. One thing that I have always been taught from my mentor, John Stevens, is that God does not command you to do something that He does not also equip you and enable you to do. So if God is telling us to love Him with all of our heart, we have to recognize that it is possible for us to do that. And I think sometimes that just seems so out of range for most of us in our faith that we kind of excuse ourselves from the ability to really walk in that kind of a Word. But, again, if God is telling us something to do, then He is going to equip us to do it. And here we see that in verse 6. He says, after you come into the land and you possess it, “the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.”

So God does not just tell Israel to love Him with all of their heart; He equips them by circumcising their heart and enabling them to love Him. I believe it is the same with us. I believe that we are to love God with all of our heart; and I believe that when He directs us to do that, He will enable us to love Him. As we finish this time of Tabernacles, and as we go back to the previous podcast about the purpose of this Tabernacles time being to really think about the preparation that God has us in in this life we are now living, which is a continuation of our eternal existence and relationship with Him, then we see very clearly that a major aspect of these days of preparation – this life, if you will, of preparation – is to bring us into the enabling to love God with all of our heart, with all of our soul. So, as you continue to celebrate this great Feast of Tabernacles, I encourage you to reach in with faith, with greater faith, with a sense that God will enable you to love Him with all of your heart, with all of your soul, in order to please Him and to be capable of performing the works that He has prepared for us as those who are walking with Him.

In verses 7-9, it talks about the fact that,

“The Lord your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. And you shall again obey the Lord, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. Then the Lord your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers.”

I believe this applies for us in this day and age. Of course, these are direct promises to Israel, and I believe they apply. I believe they will see their fulfillment in this time, and we believe and pray that during this Feast of Tabernacles, Israel will see the fulfillment of these prophecies – that there will be prosperity, there will be an abundance and the blessing of their physical health, of their cattle, of their produce, of all that God is doing; that God will rejoice over them again to do good as He rejoiced over the fathers.

He goes on in verses 10-15 to say,

“If you obey the Lord your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult... [Now we are getting into the meat of this teaching. We need to really take into our hearts and minds what he is saying in these verses.] For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. [This is not out of reach for us. We can do this. We can come into the reality of loving the Lord with all of our heart, with all of our soul.] It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it. See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity.”

This is really the urgency that we need to understand, especially in the day that we are living in, in the world that we are living in. This idea of loving God with all of our hearts, observing His statutes and His instructions to us, it really is life and death; it really is prosperity and blessing, or adversity. And I, for one, am ready for us to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in such a way that we come out of it living in days of life and health and prosperity, and we leave and walk away from the day and the age of death and adversity. This Word is near us. He said, “It is in your mouth, and it is in your heart, that you may observe it.” We can do this. He is putting it in our heart. He is putting the words of faith in our mouth that we may speak it into existence.

Verses 16-20,

“In that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the Lord your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it. But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your

God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

We know these are promises and prophecies to Israel, and we know that these blessings are going to happen for them and they are going to walk in these days. But I also believe that they are to us as believers, as Christians, as humans in the world today; that God is calling heaven and earth to witness against us that He has set before us life and death, blessing and cursing, and He is entreating us to choose life, in order that we may live – not only us, but our descendants after us. How do you come to that? “By loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice and holding fast to Him.” This, again, is important in my mind to us as believers in Christ, those who have a salvation experience; because we cannot just quit with the salvation experience, and say, “Oh, I’m saved. My sins are washed away.” No, he says that the life and the blessing that comes, comes “by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice and holding fast to Him, by loving Him with all of our heart.” We must love Him with all of our heart. We must walk with Him in a way that proves out, and proves the thankfulness that we have for our salvation. This promise comes not because you say, “I’m saved,” and you go on and live your life in some other way. It comes because we literally live a life in which we love the Lord our God with all of our heart, and we obey His voice. What is His voice and His commandment to us? It is like we read in the previous podcast out of John, that we love our neighbor as ourself. There are things that we are to do and to walk in, and I believe that it is very essential.

You know, these feasts are a divine time in which we can break through into things which are available to us, and I believe this is one of them. We cannot keep saying that loving God with all of our heart and soul and mind and strength is too difficult for us, that we have to send somebody into heaven to go up and find Christ and bring Him down to help us do it, or somebody has to cross the sea, or someone has to go into the abyss in order for it to happen. This is possible for us. It is in our heart. He has placed it there, and we can do this.

I just want to read one more Scripture, and that is out of Deuteronomy the sixth chapter, starting at verse 4. This is called the Shema prayer, and I want to read all of the verses that pertain to it.

Deuteronomy 6:4-13.

“Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, then watch yourself, that you do not forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name.”

I do feel like these words apply to us. I feel like we live in an age of abundance. I feel like we live under so many blessings. I know for sure in America that is true, and in other countries it is also true. But this is a warning to us: that we watch ourselves when we have been blessed by God, and that we do not forget the Lord – the Lord who brought Israel out of Egypt as an example to all the nations; the Lord who brought Israel into the land of Canaan as an example of wisdom and grace for all of the nations to follow. These words are to us, these commandments are to us, that we are to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our means; everything that we have, we are to love Him with that. These are the words that He has commanded us. These are the words that He has put upon our heart. And it is possible. We have to stop saying, “This is too difficult for us.” It is not too difficult – God makes it possible. He has made it possible. The promise in Jeremiah is that He would write His Word upon our heart, and we would all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, and we would walk in His ways and we would love Him with all of our heart.

As we finish the celebration of these days of Tabernacles, let us finish them with a drive of spirit that says we will love Him. We will walk with Him. We will obey His Word. But we will give our hearts to Him and our souls to love Him. We are able to do this because His provision and equipping has enabled us. And I believe this. We can do this. By faith, with all of our hearts, in this time of the celebration of Sukkot, of Tabernacles, we do it together.

Amen.