

Wholehearted Commitment: Embracing God's Call

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Wholehearted Commitment

Silver Spring Presbyterian Church

In a world filled with distractions, competing priorities, and shifting seasons of life, the call to wholehearted commitment remains a steady anchor for every Christian. Our deepest allegiance is not ultimately to careers, family roles, personal ambitions, or the comforts of later years—it is to the living God who created us, sustains us through every stage, and redeems us through Christ. This truth rings clearly in the passage Jesus Himself identified as containing the greatest commandment: Deuteronomy 6:4-7.

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

When a teacher of the law asked Jesus which commandment was most important, Jesus pointed directly to these verses, declaring that loving God fully is the first and greatest commandment (Mark 12:28-30; Matthew 22:34-40). Spoken by Moses to Israel as they prepared to enter the Promised Land, these words are a blueprint for unwavering devotion—whether we are raising children, building careers, navigating midlife, or walking the later years of faith.

Pause here for a moment to reflect on the scripture above. Read it again, slowly. How well do you think you are doing at keeping this commandment? Meeting the “ALL” standard seems impossible. I know for certain that I fall short. I suspect most of us would answer similarly.

For the last few years, the Session has been working to raise its own and our awareness by classifying the annual budget into three spending areas: *Loving and Praising God; Loving and Serving our neighbors; and Loving and Nurturing our church family*. This year for SSPC’s 2026 Season of Commitment, the Commitment Committee is inviting everyone to press into this single most important question: What does it really mean to love God with **all** our heart, soul, and strength? What would your day look like? How would your life change? What would our SSPC family life look like? What impact would this have on our children, our neighbors—near and far, and each other?

While this is the theme of our annual commitment appeal, these questions are simply too big for just the 8-week stewardship season. We intend to keep this conversation going throughout the year and we invite you to join in!

The Foundation: Recognizing God's Oneness

Deuteronomy 6:4 declares, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one." This opening affirms God's exclusive sovereignty. He alone is God and deserves our complete loyalty. In ancient times, surrounding cultures worshiped many gods. Today, the situation is similar and the temptation is subtler—we treat our faith as one important part of life rather than its center.

Whatever our season, this truth is both liberating and convicting. Those in the thick of work and family life can easily compartmentalize, giving God part of their attention while juggling many demands. Those in retirement may settle into comfortable patterns or assume the heavier lifting of commitment belongs to earlier chapters. Yet God's oneness still calls every believer to undivided allegiance. When we truly grasp His uniqueness and supreme worth, our devotion moves from duty into grateful, joyful surrender. Everything we hold—time, energy, experience, resources, and remaining strength—finds its proper place under His lordship.

The Heart of Commitment: Loving God Fully

Verse 5 builds on this foundation: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Jesus quoted this as the greatest commandment. Heart, soul, and strength together describe the whole person—emotions and will, innermost being, and the physical and mental energies God has given us in this season. God asks for nothing less than our entire selves.

This is not superficial affection or frantic activity. It is active, sacrificial love that mirrors Christ's perfect love for us. In the working and family years it often means choosing prayer and integrity amid busy schedules, work pressures, and the demands of raising children. In the retirement years it may look like persevering prayer when energy is limited, serving within the capacities God still grants, and trusting Him through health challenges, loss, or fixed incomes. In every stage, Romans 8:38-39 assures us that nothing can separate us from God's love. That same love empowers us to keep loving Him in return.

Living It Out: Integrating Faith into Daily Life

Verses 6-7 make this love practical: "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

God's Word is meant to shape our inner life and overflow into ordinary moments. For parents and caregivers, this includes naturally weaving Scripture into conversations at mealtimes, bedtime, or during everyday activities with children. For those whose children are grown, or who are single, or whose primary influence is now with grandchildren, younger believers, neighbors, or friends, the same call remains: impress God's truth through mentoring, shared stories of His faithfulness, patient encouragement, and consistent witness.

Daily integration looks different across life stages, yet the principle is the same. It may mean reflecting on scripture during a commute or quiet morning, speaking of God's goodness in family conversations or phone calls, bringing His promises into discussions about work stresses or health concerns, or using available time for intercession and presence. Whether we are walking busy roads or quieter paths, ordinary routines become opportunities for discipleship. By investing in the next generations of faith, whether biological or spiritual, we help build a lasting legacy.

Wholehearted Love Expressed in Stewardship

Loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength naturally includes the faithful stewardship of what He has entrusted to us. In every season this means offering:

TIME: The hours we have—whether tightly scheduled or more open—for prayer, presence, mentoring, serving, and building up the body of Christ, calibrated to our current energy and responsibilities.

TALENT: The skills, wisdom, and experience God has given us, whether developed in the workplace, in parenting, or across decades of life, for the good of the church and the encouragement of others.

TREASURE: Generous, joyful giving from current resources, practiced with proportional faithfulness whether we are managing growing family expenses or navigating fixed incomes. It also includes thoughtful consideration of how accumulated assets and estate plans can further God's work beyond our lifetime.

These expressions of stewardship are not added burdens. They are concrete ways the greatest commandment takes shape in daily life.

The Blessings and Challenges of Continuing Commitment

Challenges remain in every season. Distractions, work and family pressures, physical limitations, grief, and the temptation to withdraw can pull us away. Yet the rewards are profound: a peace that surpasses understanding (Philippians 4:7), clear purpose, and deepening intimacy with God.

Paul expresses this intimacy as an outflow of joy and gratitude for **all** things: “*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you*” (1Thess 5:16-18). At Silver Spring Church we have connected our stewardship to gratitude. And here, Paul gives us the insight on how gratitude connects us to God.

Scripture gives us many examples of those who walked faithfully across the years—Abraham, the apostles, and above all Jesus, who perfectly lived by this command to show us what the Kingdom of God looks like.

The Holy Spirit enables us to live this out. Jesus invites us to abide in Him (John 15:4-5). When we stumble or grow weary, His grace restores and renews our devotion.

A Call to Wholehearted Devotion in Every Season

As we reflect on Deuteronomy 6:4-7—affirmed by Jesus as the greatest commandment—let us examine our hearts with honesty and hope. Is our love for God total, or have fragments of distraction, self-protection, or weariness crept in? Whatever our stage of life, we are invited to love Him with all the heart, soul, and strength He has given us now; to let His Word dwell richly in us; and to share this truth with family, friends, and the generations coming after us.

In doing so we foster a community rooted in lasting devotion to God—and we steward well the time, gifts, and resources He has placed in our care, for the good of His church and the glory of His name.

Let us start now as a community of faith in prayer:

Father God, thank you for revealing this greatest commandment through Your Word and through Jesus. Thank you for the years You have already given us and for the faithfulness You continue to show even when we fall short of your desires for us. Help us love You fully in whatever season we find ourselves. Help us keep Your truth in our hearts and live it out daily through the wise use of all You have entrusted to us. Empower us by Your Spirit to honor You and to glorify your Name with all that we are and with all that we have.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.