

Deuteronomy 6:4-25

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[0 : 0 0] I remember a number of years ago, I was trying to work out how long it was, but about 16 years ago, sitting in a little meeting room somewhere in an office, reading a paper I'd been given. And it was by one of the big heads of one big advertising agency, not that I worked in advertising.

But the basic thesis of this thing was, for people working in marketing, their goal for their advertising had to be, I quote, to develop relationships of love between consumers and their brand.

Now, I worked in the toothpaste industry at a time. I tried getting someone to love their toothpaste. It's quite hard. But actually, if you look at the adverts we see on TV, we look at the adverts that are there in newspapers and magazines, they are seeking to bring us into a relationship of love.

If you notice, no one ever sells a product for its benefits anymore. Your toothpaste, for example, is no longer about reducing the number of fillings you get at the dentist. It's all about making you beautiful and attractive, your teeth white and glistening, your breath fresh.

And look at cars. You see that ridiculous Toyota advert. Fall in love with driving again is the catch line. Can anyone in West London fall in love with driving, I ask myself.

[1 : 1 9] But that's the kind of myth itself. The line of that advert is, nothing's worth doing unless there's love involved. We know what they mean. I can't do that with a Toyota.

I mean, not what I've got one, but anyway. But all these things, all these brands want to get us to love them. Want to get us to buy into their lifestyle. Because there are so many different brands out there competing for us.

So many different toothpastes, so many different cars, so many different mobile phones. So they want us to kind of buy into the lifestyle they sell. Because they're all competing for our loyalty.

Now, Israel lived in a world that was very different to ours today. But there's still many things competing for their loyalty. There's certainly things today competing for our loyalty.

Our careers, our work, our God, our children, their education. All these things, many things compete for our loyalty, don't they?

[2 : 1 5] And that's why Moses, on the cusp, the brink of going into the promised land, is commanding the people, telling the people where their loyalty needs to lie. And so we get this great commandment, Deuteronomy chapter 4.

It's a commandment the Lord Jesus himself said was the greatest commandment. It's a commandment that even today, Orthodox Jews will repeat these words twice a day. It's called the Shema in Hebrew.

Because that first command, Shema, here, is the word Shema in Hebrew. What does it mean? What's it here for? Why is it still so important? Well, we're going to look briefly at the basis of the command, the meaning of it, the tests of it, and the consequences of it.

So first of all, the basis of it. Verse 4. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Now, if you're reading your Bibles there, you'll see there's a footnote.

And there are actually four different ways that verse can be translated. And that's slightly strange in the original language. But really, this is what it seems to be driving at. We know this partly because Paul picks it up in 1 Corinthians 8.

[3 : 2 4] It drives at the fact that the Lord is unique. And he's a unity. He's single-minded. So he's unique. He's in a class of his own.

He's in a class of his own. There is only one... You often say to me, there's only one... No back Djokovic if you're into tennis, winning just about everything. There's only one saying so.

There's only one Lord. He is in a league of his own. He's in a class of his own. Everything else in the universe is creative. He is creator. He is in a class of his own.

He is distinct. And he's not some sort of random force or some post-modern ideal about deity. He's a God who has a name and has a history.

His name, Lord, in capital letters here, is his personal name. It's his calling card. It's the name with which he introduced himself to Moses back in Exodus. Particularly in Exodus 6.

[4 : 18] Yahweh in the original. The Lord as it comes down to us. And when he introduced himself to Moses, he basically said, I'm about to show you what my name means.

I'm about to show you what my character means. Because at that time, names always had a meaning, had a significance. And so he showed that significance in the book of Exodus.

As he rescued his people out of slavery. As he kept his promise to their forefathers. That is the kind of God he is. That is who he is. He's not some random force. He is a person.

He has a name and a history. A history of rescuing people. He's unique. There's no one else like him. No other God like him. There is no other God indeed. But also here I think there's a sense of, the Lord is one in that he is united in his preference.

United in what he's like. I'm sure we all know people who are a bit unpredictable. Maybe some of you have got a teacher like that. It might be a good lesson today. It might be a really bad one.

[5 : 19] Depends which one turns up. There's some football players like that as well, aren't there? Yeah. Give it a good day. Oh dear. It's like the other guy showed up today. It's not like that with the Lord.

He is single minded. He is a unity. He does what he says. He says what he does. There's no guessing what he's going to be like today. He's not a volatile person.

He is united. And because this is who he is, because he's unique, there's no one else like him, because he's united in his purpose, so his people should be united in our purpose, united in our affections for him, united in our commitment to him, in our loyalty to him.

Because he means what he says. He is unique. So that's the basis of the command. It's based in what the Lord is like. And who he is. What does it mean to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your strength?

Well, the meaning is unpacked in verses 5 to 9. In some ways it's unpacked in the rest of Deuteronomy. Time and time again over these next chapters, up to chapter 11, Moses kind of reapplies this command.

[6 : 26] Shows us what it means from various angles. It's a great command, isn't it? Love is a funny word in English, isn't it? We talk about people falling in love.

As if it's kind of tripping up in the street. But this is not just a kind of accident. It's not just a feeling. Moses is commanding it. And certainly with any marriage that's going to last, it has to be more than a feeling.

It has to be a commitment. Something we command ourselves to do. And that's appropriate language here, because a covenant is a commitment. Moses is speaking to God's covenant people, the people who effectively he'd married at Sinai.

He'd entered into this commitment with them, like a marriage. And the marriage won't last, but it's just a feeling. It needs to be a commitment. And that's what Moses is commanding the people to. Not just a warm, fluffy feeling about God. Not just to kind of come along and sing worship songs about how much you love him. But to a commitment. To something that can be commanded, something we command ourselves to do.

[7 : 30] After all, this Lord is full of steadfast love towards us. As we heard again in that call to worship. He is committed in his love for his people. So he calls for a response of commitment.

A response that's wholehearted. A life of loyalty. Look at verse 5. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

Now what's the sign of this love? What does this love look like? I'd like you to imagine a romantic scene. A young man and a young woman that just got engaged, that special meal to celebrate their engagement.

And so the bride-to-be for the whole evening is talking away about her dreams for the wedding, and who's going to be the bridesmaid, and what sort of flowers she might like. And then after that, what the house might be like, when she can finally have a house where she can put up her own curtains, and what happy kids she'd love to have.

She's pouring out her heart to her fiancé. All her dreams, all her hopes. She's telling them all these things. At the end of the evening, he looks in her eyes and says, I love you, but I don't care about

anything you just said.

[8 : 43] What would we think? We think that relationship is pretty doomed. If you don't care what the person you profess for love says, then you don't really love them, do you? If someone says, I love you, I care about you, but then totally ignores you, how do you feel?

Loved? I think not. And so the key to love is, what do we do with the words the Lord speaks? You see that in verse 6. These words that I command you today shall be on your hearts.

These words that Moses had just commanded, the ten commandments that we were considering this morning, and the commands that are going to come as well, God's word has to be on these people's hearts.

That's the sign that they love him. They're going to be loyal to his word. It's a sign for us that we love God. It's not how nicely we can talk about it. It's not how nicely we can sing the songs. It's not a feeling we have.

It's ultimately what we do with his word. Are we loyal to his word? If we really love someone, we allow them to correct us, don't we?

[9 : 48] We allow them to say things to us that we don't agree with when we first hear them. It's the same with God. A lot of people will say, I really like Jesus. Jesus is great.

I love a lot of things that Jesus says. There's an REM song that says, I cannot say that I love Jesus. But, it goes on, do not judge one another, what a beautiful refrain.

And that's what our culture's like, isn't it? The REM approach to Jesus. Well, we like him. Do not judge others, that's a beautiful refrain. We love that. Other stuff. I know the way, the truth, and the life.

We don't want to have that. We don't want to have that. So the challenge for us is, do we love God? Will we let God's words, like the words of the Lord Jesus in the New Testament, correct us and rebuke us?

Because if we, if we ultimately, only listen to God's word when we agree with it, then who are we really listening to? Who are we really loving?

[10 : 48] It's just ourselves, isn't it? Real love means we'll let other people's words correct us. And Moses spells out the areas of life where God's word will impact on our lives.

Go back to verse 5. You shall love the Lord your God with all your hearts and with all your soul and with all your might. Now we think of the heart as the seat of emotions, don't we?

That's how we use it in English. In the original, in Hebrew, the heart was not so much the centre of emotions as the centre of, the centre of the will and the centre of the mind, the thinking.

So, the law is to direct our very mind, our thinking, and our very will, what we choose to do in our lives.

That's why the fact that the mind is evolved as well, we see as Jesus quotes these words in the New Testament. In the Greek, it comes down to us in a different way. So Luke 10, 27, where a lawyer asked him, what's the greatest commandment?

[11 : 47] Jesus answered, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. That's inherent in the Hebrew idea of heart.

So in our thinking, we don't love the Lord as well as without our choice, our will. So that means we use our minds in loving God, not just being lazy, but thinking about what he says, studying his word as best we can.

It means our wills love him, submitting our wills to his wills, what he directs, to what he says. So that's the heart. And then the soul. Again, in English, we tend to think of the kind of abstract idea of body and soul, which comes to us from the Greeks.

But for the Hebrews, the soul was, that word soul is used in many ways. Basically, it means the person, the whole life, if you might. If you imagine concentric circles, the heart, the mind and the will are a symptom.

The soul is a person, the outside, what everybody else sees. So it's loving God with your whole life. And then might. Loving God with your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might.

[12 : 59] Again, that word really means all our resources, all our energies, all our possessions, all those things directed in God's service, directed in loving God. So the center, there's the heart, outside that, there's the soul, then beyond that, it's our possessions, our being, it's all we have.

All to be in God's, in God's service. All to be devoted, committed to God. It's through God, the Lord's word, it's going to form our minds, direct our wills, shape our character, and determine how we use

our resources.

That's the meaning here, that Moses is giving the people. That's what he's commanding them to. It applies to every area of our life. We see that unfolded then in verses 6, 7, 8, and 9.

So these words, like command today, shall be on your heart, and you shall teach them diligently to your children. You shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down.

See, God's word is to be not just the center of the person, it's not just a personal thing, be on your heart, but it's a familial thing, it's to be the whole family. So you impress them upon your children.

[14:06] Teach them diligently to your children. Literally, repeat them over and over again.

Deliberately, make sure God's word is something they know. It's like times of formal teaching, but also times of informal teaching, as you talk with them in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down.

It should be the subject for our conversation. Now it's interesting, isn't it? What are our conversations about in our homes, I wonder? What would our children pick up as being of first importance to us who are parents?

It's easy, isn't it, to end up into the, defaulting to the things that are important to the world around us. And making sure, making sure the schoolwork's done. That is important.

That is a good thing to do. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we want to do the schoolwork. Doing well in our exams. That's important. But it's not ultimate, is it? What's the thing we talk to our children most about?

Or most consciously about? And do we only talk to them in the formal times? In our family devotions? Or is it also all of life?

[15:11] Watching the TV, talking about the news, talking about school. In all of those situations, are we bringing the gospel to bear? Are we talking about the God of love who is with them as they go into school?

That's a great challenge for us as a family. To encourage our little daughter who's struggling a bit with school. No, actually she can pray at school. She didn't leave Jesus at home.

She's a child of the covenant at school every bit as much as she is at church. So God's word is to be in our lives personally, our families. And also to be in our societies.

Look at verse, in our groups. Look at verse 9. Shall we write them, God's words, on the doorpost of your house to the world around? And you should see that our family life is governed by God's word. And on your gates, Moses says. Now of course, they don't in those days, they didn't have gates at the bottom of the garden like some of us do. So it wasn't the gates of our houses, it was on the gates of the towns that they moved into it.

[16:09] The city gates was where the business was done. It's where the leaders would sit and meet and discuss the rights and wrongs and judges would meet and make decisions. So Moses is saying, the life of your whole society is to be under God's word.

For us, our life as a church should be governed by God's word. As we get to Presbytery on this weekend, discuss the book of church order, one of the things is going to be, is the way we're arranging ourselves, faithful and true to what God has revealed in the scriptures.

See, God's word applies personally in our families, in our society. That's what it means to be loyal to the Lord, to love them. It means to have his word absolutely directing our lives individually, in our families, in our church.

And that's how we show our loyalty, our love for the Lord. But that loyalty gets tested, doesn't it? That loyalty gets tested. So we move on now to look at those tests to our loyalty, tests to this commandment.

And really that takes up verses 10 through to 19. And there are three tests. Now these will get, Moses will come back to these time and time again in the next few chapters. So we're going to go with them relatively briefly now to dwell on them at greater length in coming weeks, mainly after Christmas, but also next Sunday morning.

[17:32] There are three main tests he mentions here. The test of affluence, the test of assimilation, and the test of hardship. So look at the test of affluence in verse 10.

When the Lord your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob to give you, with great and good cities that you did not build, and houses full of good things that you did not fill, and systems that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that

you did not plant, and when you eat and are full, then take care, lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

And we turned up in America to get a seminary. We moved in to a completely empty flat with our apartment, sorry, it was America, it was an apartment, with our two suitcases or whatever we managed to bring on version of air.

And by the end of our first day in that apartment, it was completely full, because the way it worked at the seminary is that when international students left, whole sorts of furniture and stuff got recycled and brought around.

So at the end of that day I was actually in a flat full of beds, full of stuff, I think I had two hi-fis and two televisions. How did all this get here? And we had to remember, none of this is ours.

[18 : 53] This is all given, it was all a gift. And for the Israelites, today would come when they'd be in the promised land, and they'd be surrounded, they'd be living in houses they'd never built, stuff they'd never worked to possess, vineyards they'd never planted, all just provided by God's great grace, just as all that stuff in our flat was provided by the kindness of strangers in Covenant Seminary.

And what would be the temptation? The temptation would be to forget that that was not stuff, that that wasn't stuff they'd earned, it's just stuff God had given them.

That's kind of the temptation for us, isn't it? When do we pray most? Is it when we've got a job, when we're healthy, when we're happy, when life is going well? Or is it when trouble strikes?

When children are in hospital as we've had this week? When the job goes? When there's a tragedy somewhere? We so easily forget, don't we?

We're actually dependent on the Lord all the time. And yet when life is good, when there's affluence, whether that's material, when we're wealthy, or whether it's just in terms of health and relationships when things are going well, it's so tempting to forget.

[20 : 07] When we get what we want, but we so easily forget the Lord, can't we? Yet we only have things because of his great grace. Even those of us who've been brought up in Christian homes as I have, it's sometimes easy to forget, isn't it?

The great grace that's been shown us. We can so easily be complacent and think that somehow we deserve this, that somehow we're in a good Bible teaching church because we've figured out that that's important.

That we're Christians because actually we worked it out. None of us are. Even those of us who've had the privilege of growing up in homes where we've been taught the gospel from day one, that is all part of God's grace to us.

It's not stuff we built for ourselves. It's his incredible kindness to us. So that in our efforts, be it material or even spiritual efforts, having great resources around us, we must not forget the Lord.

What do we read in verse 12? Take care lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. It is the Lord your God you shall fear, him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.

[21 : 15] So that's all of us who believe in Jesus, isn't it? All of us have been brought out of slavery to sin, into God's freedom by his grace. The danger is we forget that and forget to fear the Lord.

Forget to serve only him. Especially when we have so much else. Actually these verses are so important Jesus quotes them. As he's being tempted, as the devil takes him up on the mountain and says, look, I'll give you all these lands if only you will worship me.

Matthew chapter 4 verse 10 Jesus said to him, be gone Satan. For it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve. And that's going to be our temptation every day, isn't it?

To think we can get things by falling in line with the world, by believing Satan's temptation. But no, all we have is by grace from the Lord God so him alone we shall serve.

Him alone we shall serve. We may think we can get happiness from the things the world offers, from the relationship we think we need, from the job we think will be perfect. We may think we'll be perfectly happy and content if the kids get to the right university.

[22 : 28] But ultimately these things, good as they may be, cannot secure us. It's only the living God who has loved us who can secure us. So him only shall we serve.

However affluent, however secure we feel. So if affluence is one temptation, the second is assimilation. Look at verse 14. Just blending in with a crowd. What's the command in verse 14?

You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples around you. For the Lord your God is in your midst, is a jealous God. As the anger of the Lord your God be kindled against you and he destroy you from off the face of the earth.

So there's a danger that Israel would just assimilate from what the nations around were doing. Worship their gods, worship Baal as they did. The danger for us is we start to take the Lord for granted. Just blend in with some of the ideology and philosophy around us.

Surely you can't possibly say there is only one way to God. Surely not. Surely that's a bit intolerant. Surely you can't really believe that a good God would send people to hell.

[23 : 35] And very quickly we just assimilate what other people think and do and believe. Yet do you notice the warning but also the hope here? The warning.

When you live in the midst of the nations don't do what the peoples around you do but instead remember the Lord your God in your midst. Yes we might live in the midst of a hostile world a world where people do other things but in our midst is this living God who is a jealous God jealous because he loves us jealous because he wants what is good for us jealous because he has rescued us to be his own.

That's what to be jealous means. It's a right jealousy. A jealousy for what is rightly his because we are rightly his because he has brought us. Now it's a danger to think that actually we're safe we're good Presbyterians we'll always be jealous for the Lord and always be faithful to him we won't follow the patterns of the nations around us.

Yet the denomination I grew up in the church is doing just that. Falling into line with the world around and its views on sexuality and its views on education as well now.

It can happen anywhere. Generation after generation we need to choose to be loyal to our God and not assimilate to the world around us. So there's the first two temptations.

[24 : 59] Affluence we might forget. Assimilation we might just blend in. Thirdly this hardship. Look at verses 16 to 19. You shall not put the Lord your God to the test as you tested him at Massah.

Moses is reminding them what happened in Exodus chapter 17. Israel had seen the Lord do amazing things. They'd seen the plagues he put on Egypt.

They'd seen the Lord rescue them out of slavery in Egypt. They'd seen him bring them through the Red Sea passing in front of them. They'd seen him provide manna from heaven so they had bread to eat.

And then they'd get to this place called Massah and end up being called Massah in Exodus 17. And they said where's the water Moses? Where's the water? Is God really among us?

That was their question. Exodus 17 7. So they put the Lord to the test by doubting his revealed character. That's what testing the Lord is. It's doubting that God will do what he's promised.

[25 : 59] Doubting that God will do what he has shown time and time again he will do. And that's what Moses saying. Don't do that again. Don't doubt that God will do what he's promised.

Don't doubt God's revealed character. Don't rebel against him and say is God really here? Is God really among us? What should we do in contrast to avoid that?

Verse 18. Instead you shall do what is right. Sorry verse 17. You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God and his testimonies and his statutes which he has commanded you.

And you shall do what is right and good in sight of the Lord that it may go well with you and that you may go in and take possession of the land the Lord swore to give you to your fathers by thrusting out all the enemies from before you as the Lord has promised.

What's the antidote to testing the Lord? To doubting him? To saying is he really among us? It's to keep trusting him by keep doing what he said. It's to keep holding on to him, being faithful by his grace.

[27 : 07] And what will happen? You see the incentive there in verse 18. You do what is right in the sight of the Lord that it may go well with you and you may go in and take possession of the good land. As you trust him, as you show your trust by clinging to his word, you show your love by clinging to his word, so he will fulfil all he has promised.

There will be times in our Christian eyes when we wonder where God is, where we'll feel that Israelites in the desert, where's the water going to come from, how can we keep going? As we cling on to him in faith, showing our love for him, so he will be true to his character, true to his word, and will provide.

So the basis of this command is the Lord's character. He is faithful, he is loving, as we trust him, he will be faithful too. He shows himself faithful, time and time again.

So we've seen what the command means, we've seen where it can be tested, and finally, quite briefly, verses 20 to 25, we see the consequence of our loyalty, of our love for the Lord.

There are two consequences really, the consequence in the family and the consequence with the Lord himself. So verse 20, when your son asks you in time to come, what is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you?

[28 : 25] The idea is that the son will look at what's going on and say, the nations around us don't do this stuff, why do we do this? Why do you love the Lord your God? Why do we keep his commands? And what's the answer going to be?

Is the answer going to be because God has commanded us to? Well, it's part of the answer as we get, as we look on further, but it's not the first answer that we give, the first answer that money just tells the people to give in verse 21.

Because the answer is not the Lord commanded us, the answer is first of all what God has done for us. Look at verse 21. Then you shall say to your son, we were slaves in Egypt, and the Lord brought us up out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and the Lord showed us signs and wonders, great and grievous against Egypt and against Pharaoh and against all his household before our eyes, and he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers.

So that's the answer for us, isn't it? When our children say, why are we going to church on a Sunday? Why do we go to church twice on a Sunday? What's that about? My friends are out playing football. My friends are going around the shops with their parents.

Why are we here? Why are you encouraging me to read a Bible every day? Why are we praying together as a family? Why do we do these things? The answer surely is not because God commanded it, although that is true.

[29 : 47] But God's commands are always based on God's grace, aren't they? What's our answer to our children? Why do we do these things? Because we are naturally slaves to sin, naturally we are helpless, we are cut off from God, naturally we face his wrath and his anger justly against our rebellion, against all the bad things we've done.

But God didn't leave us there. God sent his own son to live the life we should have lived, to die the death we deserve to die. Everything we have comes from him.

All our hope is from him, is in him. That's why we do these things. Why we love him is because he first loved us and showed us that love on the cross.

We'd be drowning in a sea of materialism and pointlessness if the Lord hadn't rescued us. That's the first consequence, the consequence in our family. We can tell our children the good news, why we love.

But secondly, there's a consequence with the Lord. You see the result of all this in verse 25. As we love the Lord our God, as Israel loves the Lord our God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, what happens?

[30 : 56] Verse 25, they keep the commands, it will be righteousness for us if we're careful to do all this commandment before the Lord our God who has commanded us.

Does that mean you earn righteousness? No. That's not what Moses is saying. In the Old Testament, righteousness is the right response to God's covenant, the right response to God.

And as they seek to live a life of love, as they trust him, as they show that trust by obeying his commands, so the Lord would take that response and credit it to them as perfect righteousness.

How do we get righteous with God today? How can we be accounted righteous with God? Certainly not by being perfect, certainly not by perfect obedience, by perfect love, but by trust in the one who knew no sin, yet became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God.

Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who died for us. As we look at this commandment, love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and strength.

[32 : 11] The commandment is so central to Judaism, it's still repeated twice every day by Orthodox Jews. One of the interesting things in the Old Testament is that virtually no one is ever said to have loved the Lord like this.

Solomon at one point, 1 Kings 3 verse 3, the narrator says Solomon loved the Lord, but then also goes on in the rest of the sentence to show he didn't love him perfectly.

There is no psalm where the psalmist says, I love the Lord. Well, that's not quite true. Psalm 116 says, I love the Lord because he heard my voice.

Actually, in the original, that's the way it's translated in English, in the original it doesn't actually say I love the Lord, it says I love because the Lord heard my voice. There are two kings, two great kings, Josiah and Hezekiah, where the descriptions at the end of two kings are similar to this. They turn to the Lord with all their heart, but not that they loved him. So no one, it seems, really managed to love their Lord with all their heart, their mind, and strength.

[33 : 16] As we turn to the pages of the New Testament, as Jesus sits in the upper room with his disciples, telling them that he's about to die, John chapter 14, verse 31, he says this, I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is kind.

He has no claim on me, but I do as the Father commanded me, so that the world may know I love, how would we finish that sentence? The world may know I love, love my people.

That might be true, but that's not what Jesus says. I do, I go to the cross, as the Father has commanded me, so the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

We will never love the Lord our God like the man Jesus Christ loved his Heavenly Father. but if we trust in the Lord Jesus, in his death, then we can be counted righteous with God as well, and part of his family.

The Lord is worthy of our wholehearted love and devotion because of who he is, and because the Lord Jesus has made us his. Let's pray.