

Growing in Your Love of God

SATURDAY, August 08, 2025 at 8:00am CT

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Growing in your love of God. That is the topic we'll discuss today on the Christian Worldview Radio Program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. Christian Worldview is a non-profit listener-supported radio ministry. Our website is TheChristianWorldview.org, and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout today's program.

There are lots of issues that consume our attention, such as world events, politics, work, family, recreation, health trials, and many more, but there is one issue for the Christian that should be of primary focus. Loving God. Loving God means to order our thoughts and actions around what brings glory to God and pleases Him. In fact, Jesus said that loving God with our whole being is, quote, "The great and foremost commandment," Matthew 22:38, not a suggestion, but a commandment to love God. When the believer grows in love for God, he will enthusiastically want to worship and obey Him. Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep my commandments." Of course, we'll do anything for someone we truly love.

So how do we grow in our love of God? Is it about trying to manufacture and maintain affectionate feelings toward God, as a man has for a woman with whom he is in love? Should Christians expect to wake up every day just naturally loving God? John Crotts joins us this weekend on the Christian Worldview to discuss the all-important issue of growing in your love of God. John has been pastor of Faith Bible Church in Sharpsburg, Georgia for 30 years, hosts the Integrated podcast, and is a fellow with the Fortis Institute, where he produced a video titled Head to Heart, Five Ways to Know and Love God. Let's get straight to the interview with Pastor John Crotts.

John, thank you for coming on the Christian Worldview Radio Program today. Before we get into our topic of growing in your love of God, tell us about your background, how God brought you to saving faith and what your life is like now.

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

I grew up in Virginia in a Christian family, and we were going to a traditional Baptist church, and I walked the aisle and prayed the prayer when I was just a kid in a revival meeting. But it wasn't until I was about 16 that some people gave me some messages from a Christian comedian and I started listening to them and the gospel came to life in my heart. There was really no change or no evidence at all, other than I had a conscience, I knew the facts about the gospel before that. But I had once thought, when I became an old person, I would want to live for the Lord, because the old people in our church were the only people that I knew of that were really zealous for walking with the Lord. And yet, I saw no one in the youth group and no one in the young adults that were doing that.

But when I heard these tapes, the gospel came to life, and it was like, wait a minute, Jesus really did rise from the dead, I shouldn't be waiting until I become old, I need to live for Christ now. And looking back, I believe that's when God saved me. I started to see new evidences in my heart, a desire for the things of God, the Bible, not just to get the Sunday school answers right, but because you want to know God more and want to learn. And I started seeing the fruit of the Spirit develop in my heart, liking people that I didn't even like before, God was at work and giving me a zeal for the gospel.

So I eventually had an opportunity to preach in our church, and my pastor maybe sowed the seed and said if I didn't go to seminary, I had missed my calling. I don't remember thinking about seminary before that, but soon it was my direction. After I graduated from Liberty University and met my wife and we got married, we moved to Southern California so I could attend the Master's Seminary, and I was there for three and a half years, and God really changed our lives, gave us a solid foundation for ministry and just the privilege of sitting under Dr. John MacArthur as our pastor and being part of that church for three and a half years. And then, God brought us to Georgia, where I've been serving as the pastor of Faith Bible Church for the past 30 years, by God's grace.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Wow, that is a story of God's grace, and just all in light of Dr. MacArthur's heaven-going recently as well, just to see the influence that he had on your life in seminary and attending Grace Community Church there too.

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

Absolutely.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Thank you for sharing your background and how God brought you to saving faith with us. Now, our topic today is growing in your love of God, and you are a fellow with the Fortis Institute and you produced a video with the Fortis Institute titled Head to Heart, Five Ways to Know and Love God, and that's what we're going to talk about today.

And I want to start out by reading a passage in Matthew chapter 22, starting in verse 34, it says, "But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees," so both religious sects of the Sanhedrin, the religious ruling class back then in Israel, "They gathered themselves to together," the Pharisees did, "One of them, a lawyer, asked Jesus a question, testing Him," and here's the question, "'Teacher, what is the great commandment in the law?'" So big question here. And Jesus said to him, quote, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" He said, "'This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets.'"

In other words, that's a summary of the Old Testament right there, to love God with all your heart, your soul and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself. And really, John, that is really the purpose of why God created

us, to love God and love neighbor. So before we get into how to grow in our love of God, what does it even mean to love God, and what does it look like in the life of someone who does?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

Well, I think a very important component is going to be our obedience. Jesus says, "If you love Me, you'll keep my commandments." And so, it's going to show up in our obedience. But it's not just outward obedience, we're not just doing it as a show. A love for the Lord as our motivator is going to mean a godly sincerity, a devotion to the Lord, a satisfaction in God. I think it really is finding our joy and satisfaction in seeking to honor Him, and that shows itself in our obedience to His commandments. So like I said, when I was a new Christian, the Bible came to life in my heart. It wasn't just a book of stories, it became the rule. This is what God says, this is who He is, this is what He's done, this is what pleases Him. And as a new believer, the Holy Spirit had written His laws on my heart, there was a love for the Lord there that wasn't there before and a new desire to obey Him from the heart.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Well, equating it with maybe a human relationship of a father and a son or a son who just loves and reveres his dad and he just loves him so much because he respects the father and the way the father loves him, and so he wants to do whatever he can to please him, and obeying his father is a joy for him because he knows the father always has his good in mind. So I know that falls short of the way we should love God, but maybe a human relationship between a loving father and a loving son would maybe do it a little bit of justice to think of it that way.

John Crotts is our guest today here on the Christian Worldview, the pastor of Faith Bible Church in Sharpsburg, Georgia. Now, why is it a major challenge, John, for Christians to not just know about God, in other words, have right knowledge, doctrine, head knowledge, but then not have a deep love, affection, a reverence for Him, that actually is the motivator of our living for Him, of our orthopraxy or our application of our knowledge of God?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

Our spiritual enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil, want to do everything they can to counteract our love for the Lord motivating us. And so, it's really sad. I thought about the parable of the soils where the first seed goes onto the hard path, Jesus said that the birds come and take the seed away, and I thought, what a picture of what the devil is trying to do in our lives. He's trying to be like the spiritual wet blanket over us all the time, clouding our thinking from the sincere devotion to the Lord that the Lord wants of us, and taking away the word that we're reading and memorizing, seeking to knock it right off of the shelf, if you will, and put something else new and shiny in its place. And of course, we're surrounded by the world system where everything is going against the Lord, and then we have within us, someone said, the traitor within our breast, our remaining sin.

If you grew up like me going to an art class and you'd do the modeling clay every now and then, if you'd leave that clay out overnight, it became hard as a rock, and our hearts are like that. If we don't continually

work in the water of God's word, so to speak, and continue to massage that truth into our hearts so that our hearts stay soft and, again, filled with earnestness in our desires for the Lord, our joy in the Lord and satisfaction in Him, our hearts will become hard as rocks. A great verse I love is Hebrews 3:13, which says, "But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called today, that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." That's where I get that modeling clay illustration. Even though we're new, we still have that remaining sin that just wants to shrivel up and forget everything that we know.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Well, we're going to get into that a little bit later, how sin, even small sin in our life, keeps us from fully loving God a little bit later in the conversation today, but I'm glad you've started touching on that now, that's so key. John Crotts, again, with us today here on the Christian Worldview of Faith Bible Church in Sharpsburg, Georgia, talking about the love of God.

Now, James chapter one, starting in verse two, says, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its perfect result so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." Who considers trials to be joy? The only way you could possibly consider trials to be joy is if you love God so much and trust Him so much that you know He's working for your good in the midst of your hard trials. That's one way that our love of God is tested, when we encounter trials, do we still love God and trust Him in the midst of it. But our love of God is also tested in our everyday myriad of choices that we make, or when we face temptation, our love of God is tested. How so, John?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

It's not very often that mature believers just look at a temptation and just say, "I'm going to forget God right now and just dive right into the sin." However, we're so prone to forget God, so we may not be active in pushing God off to the side, but because of remaining sin, it's like we get spiritual amnesia. I find that the sin of what I sometimes have called practical atheism is one of the great sins of our day, where we just forget God, we put Him on the shelf and we think we can handle it on our own. And so, absolutely, our love of God is tested and challenged by every sin, even the verses that you referenced before in James 1.

The very next verse is James 1:5 about, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given to him." I think that there's a direct connection between this counting our trials as joy and begging God for the wisdom we need to be able to do that. We need to, as John Piper has said, he calls the Christian life the fight of faith, we need to believe what we know is true from the scriptures, every day, wake up with fresh faith in the basic truth that we know about the Bible, because everything around us is fighting against that and eroding it.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

It just seems to me that when we face temptation, that we have a choice, am I going to love and obey God in this moment or am I going to love and please myself in this moment? And so, really, temptation, or even our daily choices, what we decide to do on a daily basis is really reflective of our choice of whether we're going to love God in this moment or we're going to please or serve ourselves.

Welcome back to the Christian Worldview, I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit TheChristianWorldview.org, where you can sign up for our weekly email, the Christian Worldview Journal, monthly print publication, order resources for adults and children, and support the ministry. Our topic today is growing in your love of God, and our guest is Dr. John Crotts, pastor of Faith Bible Church in Sharpsburg, Georgia, host of the Integrated podcast, and fellow at the Fortis Institute. We look through the Bible, John, and we see key figures like Abraham, Moses, Joseph, King David, Daniel, John the Baptist in the New Testament, some of the Apostles, Peter, John, Paul, all of them, these were stalwarts of the faith. It's not that they just knew a lot about God, but they lived their lives out of a love for God and it was manifest in their obedience. I'd like you just to pick one or two of them as a model for us and just something they said or did in their life that evidenced how great their love was for God.

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

What about Joseph? He was so faithful and he had such a difficult road. It's one thing to just have the story of Joseph at a Sunday school class and you get an overview, or even just reading your Bible, but I tell you, the time that Joseph spent in prison when he was unjustly accused of being inappropriate with Potiphar's wife, and here he's trying to honor God, he gets forgotten about, but in every way, he's trying to think about God and love God in the midst of an impossible circumstance. Now, he didn't know all that God was about to do. God had Joseph in that prison exactly where he was supposed to be for as long as he was supposed to be. I think it was about 13 years when you do the math of how many years he was there before Pharaoh brought him out and he interpreted the dreams, of course, at the end of his life when his brothers are begging for forgiveness and for mercy because of what they had done in selling him into slavery.

In Genesis 50:20, he says, "Guys, you meant this for evil, but God meant this for good." What that shows is Joseph had this comprehensive perspective of God and God's glory, even through the most difficult circumstances of his life. Now, I'm sure he had some bad days in that jail. He may have even asked God some very hard questions during his prayer times in the jail. But when he was able to reflect upon what God had done, he was a shining example of one who kept God in his thinking, in the foremost, so the love for God manifested in the way that he kept God in his thinking throughout all of those circumstances.

When we go over to the New Testament, again, like I said, all of those examples that you gave are great ones, but what about John the Baptist? John the Baptist had an interesting calling. Of course, he's there to be the messenger of the Messiah, but when we get the little glimpses that we see about his life and character, he was completely devoted to the Lord's mission and he was in a very difficult situation and circumstance, as he is boldly proclaiming the truth of God in the midst of hostility, really intense hostility, from the religious leaders of the day, and he was faithful to do what God required of him. When he had the opportunity to confront Herod and basically lost his head over that, I'm sure he could have smoothed the rough edges and probably found his way out of that prison as well. But instead, he was a man of integrity, a man who loved the Lord with his mind. And so, his mind was committed to God's truth and God's mission, and that drove him to do what eventually led to his own martyrdom.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

I'm going to follow up and ask you about Peter, because as you were answering this, I was thinking about the Apostle Peter, who, of course, denied Christ, before Christ, when He was on trial and about to be crucified, and Peter was just crushed over this. And in that moment of testing, there it is, he had a choice of love and do you love Christ, and saying boldly, "Yes, I'm one of his disciples," or do you love your own skin more? And so, in that moment, he chose loving himself and he was just crushed about this. But later on, after Christ rose from the dead, they met up by the Sea of Galilee, and Jesus three times interestingly asked Peter the same question, "Do you love Me?" And so, why do you think that was the question that Jesus asked Peter after Peter betrayed Him at that particular time?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

Right. And just like you observed, what interesting timing there, three times asking if he loved Him, that seems to correspond to the three denials. A lot of people say this is Peter's restoration as the Lord specifically called him out. Obviously, Peter led the way, but the other disciples also forsook Jesus in their time of need, maybe not blatantly denying Him as Peter did. But now, Peter is getting this opportunity to affirm his love for Jesus three times. Some people make a big deal about the specific Greek words that were used in that, but there's actually a lot of overlap in some of those words and I'm not sure that that's the point as much as the point is just Peter, okay, this is it now, loving Me looks like this. Now, you're going to be feeding My sheep. Now, you're going to be following Me all the way to the end.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

John Crotts, pastor of Faith Bible Church in Sharpsburg, Georgia is our guest today. He's also the host of the Integrated podcast, and also a fellow at the Fortis Institute. You can find links to him at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. We're talking today about how to grow in our love of God based on a session he did titled Head to Heart, Five Ways to Know and Love God.

Now, I didn't get all five ways, didn't jot them all down, but I did a few of them in that special broadcast that you did, Growing in Our Love for God. One of the ways was to spend time with or read about the most godly person you know, so whether it's someone you know in life or someone you know in the past, maybe you're reading a biography of them. You reference the passage Proverbs 13:20, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm." That word wisdom is really not just knowing information about God, it's knowing God's will, but understanding how to skillfully apply God's will as well, it's living it out. So how does it help us to grow in our love of God, to spend time with or read about godly people?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

That proverb is one of my favorites, if you walk with wise men, you become wise. Basically, you become like the people that you spend the most time with. And so, I've challenged a lot of people, find the Godly people in your church and look for ways to spend time with them. If you really believe this proverb is true, then what would it take for you to get more time with some of these people? Would it mean buying somebody a cup of coffee to have time with them? If they're really godly, they are delighted to spend time with you. So we're looking for people that have a proven track record of knowing the Bible and putting it into practice, being

driven by the truth of the scriptures and the commands of the Lord. They're not just living for themselves, but they're obviously serving others. Their love for God is showing itself in their sacrificial service.

And again, we often think in the context of the local church. I'm not saying we don't know some other believers from other churches that we can benefit from friendships, but the church family is the design of the Lord to really get to know people well and to serve well. And so, looking for the Godly people and looking for ways to spend time, it will rub off on you. Some of the decisions they make, you will find yourself making. Some of the things that might have seemed outlandish, now you find yourself going, well, you know what? That Godly brother or sister did that repeatedly, and I'm going to do that as well. You don't even have to be having a Bible study, per se, to get the benefits here. It's really seeing them in action, seeing the way they love their wife, seeing the way they shepherd their kids, seeing the way they reach out to others, and just being there and following their example.

Of course, you mentioned the biographies as well. I love biographies. Everybody is a person. Everybody's flawed, and of course, there's even benefit to seeing how they respond to their failures in repentance and faith and restoration and things like that. It's great to know, when we're reading these biographies of people, men and women, who run the Christian race and finish well. You mentioned John MacArthur, and we're so thankful for his life and ministry and influence, but one thing we can say about him that we can't say about some other people is he was faithful to the Lord, he was faithful to his wife and he was a man of integrity, not perfect, of course, but he was striving to walk with God and he didn't fall off the deep end. So biographies help us because they usually are written about people who have finished their race well, and we learn so much from them and seeing the way that God has worked in and through them, through all kinds of circumstances, and I just think the power of example is underrated and we can really benefit from having those Godly examples around us.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Well, we certainly do become like the people we admire, the people we spend time with in life, for better or for worse, we are all a product of those who influence us, for better or for worse again, so it makes complete sense that if you spend time with Godly people who love God, that is going to rub off on you. Let's go to another point that you brought out in your session there in Growing in Our Love for God is to be engaged in a local church, and you said that it really goes beyond just attending on Sunday morning the main service and then going home. What does it mean to be engaged in a local church as to how that helps us grow in our love for God?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

I grew up, like I said, in a traditional Baptist church, and when I came to the Lord, I did that in the context of a public high school, of all things, with some Christian friends sharing the gospel with me, and I never changed churches, I stayed in that church. I got a job at a Christian bookstore. I was around other Christian books and I started listening to preachers on the radio, like John MacArthur and Charles Swindoll and some others, and so I got the idea that you did your growing by spending time with Christian friends and by reading Christian books and listening to messages, but church was just a place to check off.

But that is not at all the way the Bible presents the church family. We're all in it together, we all have a part to play. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul compares us to body parts within the body of Christ. Ephesians 4 says that, "Gifted men equip the saint so that we all are contributors to doing the work of ministry," which is speaking the truth in love. As we rub shoulders with our brothers and sisters, as we share what the Lord is doing in our lives and scriptures we're learning, they share with us what the Lord is doing in their lives, and we each are motivated and accountable to help each other to grow. The verse I alluded to before, Hebrews 3:13, talks about exhorting or encouraging one another day-by-day so that we don't become hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Well, I think that's in the context of the church family. And even the most famous verse about going to church, Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembly of ourselves together, as is the habit of some," it talks about encouraging one another and provoking one another to love and good works.

The way that we motivate each other in the church is by our participation, so we don't just come to church to check a box, we don't come to church thinking of it like going to a show or a theater, where we sit and eat our popcorn and watch what's happening on the screen in front of us. No, we are going to engage with the other brothers and sisters who are there with the word as it's being preached. We are not just singing songs, we're certainly not just listening to other people sing, we are singing. We're not just singing to the Lord, we're singing to each other. It says in Ephesians and Colossians that we stir each other up by our psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. All of these things come together to keep us motivated, to continue to strengthen us in our love for the Lord. John says that, "If we don't love one another, who we can see, how can we say that we love God, who we haven't seen?"

And so, there's a direct connection here between the great commandment of the Lord with all of our hearts, all mind and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves, they go together, and the church is the arena that we are to most prioritize our love and good works among the body of Christ.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

That's well said, and that's one of the things that we try to focus on with this radio program is not being just a parachurch ministry, not being a church to anyone listening, but really encouraging listeners to be involved and engaged, like you were just mentioning, in a sound local church. That's God's design for the growth of a believer, where the believer can grow in their love for God.

John, we touched on this one earlier, but I want to ask just a little more because I think it's important, keeping the weeds out of the garden, so to speak. In other words, the weeds of sin out of our life, because sin keeps us from deepening our love for God. And so, how do we, John, recognize these small weeds growing, that are sometimes indiscernible because it's early on, but as they grow and grow and grow, they begin to take over, how do we recognize sin early in our lives so we can, quote-unquote, "Kill the weeds"?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

We are not going to be sinless in this life, but may it be that we are quick to confess our sins, because sin becomes like a snowball, like an avalanche, it continues to pick up steam and to grow. James 1 talks about that we're lured and enticed, but the goal of sin is to put us to death, that is what the devil wants to do to

wreck our lives, and we lie to ourselves to think that we can keep sin as a little pet and it can be managed. But we know from our own experience that if we aren't killing those little sins, they grow to become bigger sins and they suck the life out of us. We know that there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, Romans 8:1, and we're so thankful for that and we're reminded that we should remind ourselves of the gospel to keep ourselves motivated and to keep ourselves humble before the Lord, so that's great.

However, our sin still affects our relationship with the Lord. Ephesians 4:30 talks about not grieving the Holy Spirit, which implies the Holy Spirit can be grieved by our actions and attitudes and words. And so, hH's going to convict us, and as He convicts us, may it be that we're quick to respond to that, not to push Him away and say, "Oh, this is just little and manageable, I'll deal with it later." No, we want to deal with it immediately and put those small sins to death so that the spirit will help us to quickly get back to the Lord. I was reading just today in Isaiah, Isaiah saying to Israel in Isaiah 59:2, "But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear." Why is it that it seemed like God wasn't answering their prayers? Well, there was a pile of sin between them and God, so to speak, and God wasn't going to listen. And of course, God disciplines those whom He loves.

So the Holy Spirit, one of His main jobs is to convict us of sin, and He's very happy to do that. But may it be that we keep a very short account of those sins, and I just think being a quick confessor, a quick repenter, is one of the great virtues of a growing Christian.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

It certainly is. How to grow in your love of God, a most important topic, this is the point of life, and particularly the Christian life, is to love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. This is the point. All right, final question for you, John. I love Psalm 119. It's the longest of the psalms, but every single verse, the psalmist writes something to do with God's word, and not only writes something to do with God's word, but there's an affection, there's a love there for God's word that is expressed over and over again throughout those 176 verses. I'll just give you an example. Psalm 119:10, "With all my heart, I have sought you. Do not let me wander from your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart that I may not sin against You. Blessed are You, oh Lord, teach me Your statutes. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways. I shall delight in Your statutes. I shall not forget Your word."

Every verse there, John has some sort of embracing affection, delighting in God and His word. So as we close our conversation today, what would be your final exhortation for listeners today in how to read the word of God in order to love the God of the word?

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

Well, the Bible is how God reveals Himself to us. He does reveal Himself generally in creation and conscience, but especially through the scriptures. And so, if you want to know God and know His ways, you've got to be a man or a woman who reads their Bibles. There is no substitute, there is no magic formula that will help you

become more spiritually minded that avoids the Bible. And so, you might think, I'm not a great Bible reader. Let me encourage you, do what you can do. You don't want to be that person on New Year's Day that makes the resolution and goes to the gym and spend six hours there, and then is devastated physically and never goes back until the next New Year's. You don't want to be like that with the Bible. Some people get motivated like that as well. But I would rather you read regularly, most every day, read something scripture, maybe it's just a chapter, maybe it's a couple of chapters.

But then, as David mentioned, those psalms in Psalm 119, the verses that talk about meditating. Now, Eastern meditation is all about emptying your mind and maybe filling it with some nothing word or something like that. But biblical meditation is filling your mind with God's word. Let me just give you a simple way to meditate. For me, it's so helpful to write something down. Now, I got this from Don Whitney who taught for many years at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Now, he teaches at Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City. But he wrote the wonderful book, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, and I got a chance to study under him at Southern, and we talked about the importance of writing down some thoughts from the scripture as a means of meditation, and it completely helped me.

So I'll take a couple of chapters of the Bible in the morning and I will pick a verse or two from what I read and I'm just going to write down some thoughts, whether it's observations, whether it's turning those verses into a prayer, whether it's asking a couple of questions, writing down a couple of questions literally about what I just read. And what I find is that that sinks the truth in my heart deeper, just the physical act of writing it down forces me to think about it in different ways, to turn the diamond and see it sparkle in different ways. And what I find is I come away with more remembrance of the entire passage that I read that day, even though I only wrote observations and applications for just a couple of verses, it just sticks the whole thing in there deeper. And when you've got God's word in the forefront of your mind, then you can apply it and put it into practice as you're going about your daily activities.

So, it's such a wonderful thing to do to remember the meditation piece. Yes, it's great to have a time and a place to just do some Bible reading, definitely, that's so important. But then, take it one more step and think about what you're reading, even if it's just a small portion, just take some time, whether you can just do it in your mind or whether you're like me and you do it on paper in your journal, it is so worth the investment, because it drives the great truth about God and his ways deeper into our hearts, so that we cannot just be hearers of the word, but doers putting it into practice.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Yes. And a doer of the word is one who loves God, that he wants to do what God says, so thank you for that exhortation, John. And I was just thinking, as you were giving that answer, that any relationship grows when we spend lots of time and have deep communication with someone, you begin to appreciate and love that person more, let's say your wife, it's really similar with God. As we spend time with God and deepen our communication, we hear from him and his word and then pray back to him or meditate, as you were saying, writing down or just thinking about what his word says, we're going to grow in our love of God, which, again, as we've been saying, is the whole point of the Christian life, to love God and to obey him.

So we thank you for this message you did, John, on growing in our love of God. It's called Head to Heart, Five Ways to Know and Love God. We have it linked at TheChristianWorldview.org. We thank you for coming on the Christian Worldview Radio Program today, and we just wish all of God's best and grace to you at Faith Bible Church and with your family as well.

GUEST: JOHN CROTTS:

Thank you so much. It was a privilege to get to be with you today, David.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Again, we have links to John Crotts' church and ministry at TheChristianWorldview.org, including the video he did titled Head to Heart, Five Ways to Know and Love God.

Now, John talked about Joseph being imprisoned after being falsely accused of rape by Potiphar's wife. Have you noticed what Joseph said after Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him? Joseph said, "How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?" Genesis 39:9. Basically, what Joseph is saying is, "I love and revere God more than I love pleasing myself or you." This wasn't Joseph loving God based on a good feeling in that moment. Rather, this was a settled conviction to love God above all else that proved itself by obedience under great pressure and temptation. Good feelings of loving God are easily chased away when harsh realities of persecution and suffering and trials enter our lives. You can't just hope to feel a love for God, because your unredeemed flesh inside of you is constantly telling you to love yourself, not God. The world around you doesn't want you to love God, it wants you to love the things and pleasures of the world. True love is a settled commitment of our will that will sometimes be accompanied by good feelings, but it's not dependent on good feelings.

So just to summarize some of the things said today in how to grow in your love of God. Well, first, you have to know who God is, His perfect attributes and nature. Second, you believe what God has done for you through Christ. Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." So when we know who God is and we believe what He has done for us on the cross, what Christ did to pay the penalty for our sins because of God's great love for us to save us, that should build a love for God within us. So we need to remind ourselves of who God is and what He has done for us if you're a believer.

Then once you're a believer, we're called to draw near to Him every day, James 4:8, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." So how does any relationship grow? Through time spent together in communication. It's the same thing with God, spend time communicating with Him. You hear from Him, through reading his word, meditating on His word, hearing it preached, and then you communicate back to Him through prayer. It takes effort to cultivate a close relationship, it doesn't just happen, love can grow cold if neglected. Another thing is to fellowship with other believers who love God, especially within the context of the local church. And if you're a Christian, we need to remind ourselves that the purpose of reading the word and hearing it preached and fellowshiping with other believers is ultimately to love God more and more, so you can't wait to see Him face to face someday, so when you face trials here on Earth, you know can trust your

loving Father, because He loves you so much and you love Him so much that all you want to do is please Him and obey Him and worship Him.

We are out of time, but thank you for joining us today on the Christian Worldview and for your support of this nonprofit radio ministry. Christian, let's obey Jesus' command to love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. So until next time, think Biblically, live accordingly and stand firm

The mission of the Christian Worldview is to sharpen the Biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript or find out what must I do to be saved, go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll-free 888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener-supported non-profit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation. To make a donation, become a Christian Worldview partner, order resources, subscribe to our free newsletter or contact us, visit TheChristianWorldview.org, call 888-646-2233, or write to box 401, Excelsior, Minnesota, 55331. Thanks for listening to the Christian Worldview.

The 10th Overcomer Foundation Cup golf event is set for Monday, September 15th at White Bear Yacht Club near St. Paul, Minnesota. David Wheaton here, host of the Christian Worldview, encouraging you to invite some friends or clients to experience a rare day on one of the best courses in Minnesota, hear the good news of the gospel, and discover how the Overcomer Foundation, the non-profit organization that directs the Christian Worldview Radio Program, is impacting hearts and minds. Golfer registration includes 18 holes with cart, all meals and beverages and golfer gift. Out of town golfers and guests are more than welcome to come. Non-golfers can take part in the post-golf meal and message. There are lots of sponsorship opportunities as well. We hope to see you Monday, September 15th at White Bear Yacht Club near St. Paul, Minnesota. To find out more and register, go to TheChristianWorldview.org, or call 188-646-2233.

The Christian Worldview Journal is a monthly 12-page full-color print publication designed to sharpen your biblical worldview on current events and issues of the faith. Featured in the July issue, Soeren Kern writes about the false peace after the Israel-Iran War, Greg Gifford details how the mind is different than the brain and why this matters in treating mental health, and Virgil Walker explains why Islam is incompatible with Christianity.

The *Journal* is sent to all Christian Worldview partners who support the ministry at \$10 or more per month. Plus, when you become a Christian Worldview partner, you will be sent a complimentary copy of my book, *University of Destruction*. Individual issues of the journal are also available for purchase. To become a Christian Worldview partner and receive the journal, go to TheChristianWorldview.org, or call 188-646-2233, or write to box 401, Excelsior, Minnesota, 55331.