

February 2026

GLOBAL TRAINING
NETWORK

Our Itinerary

**Feb 8:** Sonoita Bible Church**Feb 11:** Ponderosa Bible Church, Payson, AZ**Feb 15:** First Baptist Church, Duncan, AZ**Feb 22:** Maranatha Baptist Church, Globe, AZ**Feb 20-23:** GTN Leadership Gathering**March 12-26:** Northern Iraq**March 26-29:** Doha, Qatar**April 12:** Grace Church, Chino Valley, AZ**April 19:** First Baptist Church, Nogales, AZ**May 10:** Floris Baptist Church, Floris, IA**May 14-30:** Rwanda

Loving God in Real Life

How much do you love God? In order to answer that question, you need to ask another one: How much do you love people? Jesus linked love for God together with love for other people. In fact, He tied them together so tightly that you can't really claim one without the other. When asked about the greatest commandment, He answered by naming *two* that function as one: love God with everything you've got, and love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40). Then He added, "On these hang all the Law and the Prophets." This is it! —This is the whole deal!

Jesus commanded His disciples, "*Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another*" (John 13:34-35). He says the world will recognize His followers not by their theology, but by how well they love. And the Apostle John was blunt: "*Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar*" (1 John 4:20-21). Strong words—but true. Loving people is how love for Jesus shows up in real life.



This love takes shape in all kinds of relationships. In **marriage**, loving Jesus often looks like daily, ordinary faithfulness: choosing patience over resentment, forgiveness over scorekeeping, and sacrificial love over selfishness. When spouses serve, listen, and lay down pride, they're not just strengthening a marriage—they're honoring Jesus (Matt 5:25).

Loving Jesus can also mean honoring **parents**, caring for **children**, and extending grace when relationships are strained (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:21). It's loving relatives who are difficult, setting healthy boundaries without bitterness, and choosing forgiveness again and again (Colossians 3:13). It isn't always easy, but love in a family is one of the clearest places where love for Jesus can be seen.

In the **church**, loving Jesus looks like unity, humility, and service. Jesus said love for one another would be the defining mark of His followers (John 13:35). That means bearing with one another, speaking truth with

(Continued on page 2)

Treasure in Jars of Clay

In Paul's writings, he consistently exalts the gospel. He also frequently humbles himself. Sometimes he does both at the same time—like in 2 Corinthians 4:7: "*But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.*" The 'treasure' in this verse is the gospel, something of limitless value. Paul, on the other hand, considered himself a 'jar of clay': the rudest, crudest, smelliest container to be found in an average household. Somehow he never stopped being amazed that God would entrust a guy like him with something as game changing as the gospel. It was not just

his background as a persecutor of the church that humbled him. After receiving great revelations directly from God, he was also given a "*thorn in the flesh*" (2 Cor 12:7) specifically to humble him. We don't know for certain the nature of this ongoing trial. Perhaps it had something to do with Paul's well-known eye troubles. I've been meditating about this lately. As most of you know, during my recent trip to the Philippines I experienced a medical scare involving my eyes. What I thought (and a Filipino ophthalmologist agreed) was a rather serious problem with

(Continued on page 2)



Loving God in Real Life (cont'd)

grace, and putting others ahead of ourselves (Philippians 2:3-4). It's not about ME impressing people. It's about CHRIST in me expressing love for people.

Loving Jesus shows up in **casual and collegial friendships** through integrity, kindness, and respect. Scripture tells us when we are on the job to work "*as for the Lord*" (Colossians 3:23) and to show genuine honor to others (Romans 12:10). Whether it's a coworker who's annoying or a friend who's struggling, love looks like consistency, honesty, and compassion.

Jesus also stretches our definition of love outward—to **neighbors, strangers, and those who are often overlooked**. The Good Samaritan didn't just feel sympathy; he stopped, crossed boundaries, and acted (Luke 10:33-37). And, in Matthew 25, Jesus says when we feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, or care for the sick, we're actually serving Him (Matthew 25:35-40). That's not metaphor—it's mission.

And then there's the hardest category: **enemies**. Jesus doesn't dodge this one. "*Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*" (Matthew 5:44). That kind of love doesn't come from willpower; it comes from being shaped by Christ's own love for us.

So, loving Jesus isn't just what we believe or sing on Sunday. It's about how we treat the people God has placed in our lives—our spouse, our family, our church, our coworkers, our neighbors, and even our enemies. When we love them, perhaps imperfectly, but well, we're loving Jesus Himself. 



Treasures in Jars of Clay (cont'd)

one retina, turned out to be a far less serious event called "posterior vitreous detachment" (PVD), a commonly occurring problem for older and nearsighted people. (Why didn't somebody warn me?) At any rate, I spent more than a week anticipating

(with angst) a surgery that never came. During that time, I thought about Paul and his failing eyesight and how "*God meant it for good*" in the life of a man "*called according to his purpose*" (Romans 8:28). I was not exactly worried, but I did consider a few

'worst case' scenarios. "Surely," I thought, "I am no Apostle Paul, but if I emerge from this with any kind of impaired vision, God must also mean it for good in my life." The outcome was blessedly non-dramatic. It turns out, I'm just showing my age. I've left my concerned possible scenarios behind; but I am left with something more enduring: a deeper awareness that, regardless of a person's health or strength, we are all pretty fragile, really. Something too tiny to see, like a germ, is capable of laying us low for days. One false step can lead to life altering injuries, and we can't stop aging no matter what we do. When we look reality hard in the eye, it looks back and tells us bluntly. "*YOU are a jar of clay.*" It is humbling... but not something that should cause despair. After all, in spite of our frailty, we have been chosen, like the great apostles, to carry the life changing treasure of the gospel. Our very weakness makes the gift that much more amazing! 



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Our Praises & Prayer Requests



- Praise God for a good outcome after vision medical scare.
- Praise God for very strong January giving.
- Praise God for a productive Philippines ministry.
- Please pray for our 2026 training events in the Philippines, Rwanda, Cameroon, Qatar, and Kurdistan.
- Please pray for a productive visit to many of our Arizona churches.
- Please pray for wisdom in managing our schedules this year.

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Your financial partnership is essential as we carry out our God given ministry.
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