

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE If You Love the Lord

SERIES

DATE 1/7/2024

KEY SCRIPTURE John 14:15; Matthew 4:17-19; 5:16

SYNOPSIS If you really love the Lord, you will keep his commands.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ If You Love the Lord

If You Love the Lord by Keith Green

If you love the Lord, you will love His will for you.

Instead of questions why, there'll be praise for all he brings you through.

And if you love the Lord, you will love His Holy Commands.

Delight yourself in them, and everything you do will surely stand.

We are His workmanship, created for good works in Christ.

He calls us to offer up ourselves a living sacrifice.

☞ **John 14:15-16, 21-26**

15-16 If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever... **21-26 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me.** The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them. *Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"* **Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching.** My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. **Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching.** All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

In this scenario Jesus was showing his disciples what true love looks like. He had just washed their feet in chapter 13 and he told them to do likewise. He wasn't specifically telling them to ☞ wash each other's feet, but rather demonstrating that love looks like serving. **Love is more than just an emotion.** Hopefully, you do "feel" love for Jesus, but "feeling" is not enough.

☞ **True, real love, will be demonstrated.** That's what Jesus did – he didn't just talk about love, he demonstrated his love, he showed it. Then, here, he explicitly says that love for Jesus looks like ☞ obeying. **To demonstrate your love for the Lord, you will obey him.**

--David Guzik... Those who love God most obey Him most joyfully and naturally. To say, "I really love Jesus. I just don't want Him to tell me how to live my life" is a terrible misunderstanding of both Jesus and love to Him. Jesus also spoke to the proper source of our obedience. It isn't fear, pride, or desire to earn blessing. The proper source of obedience is love."

But, even when we love, we aren't always consistent. We let our loved ones down from time to time. And, our love for the Lord doesn't always show through in obedience. However, the good



☞ news is that Jesus knew that's the way it would be, so he provided a Helper for us. **The Holy Spirit is with us, helping us to love the Lord and demonstrate that love with obedience.**

Now, let's get down to it... Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commands." Real Christianity is simply following Christ and his commands. I know following commands doesn't sound like much fun. But if you really take the time to look at the commands of Christ, you may realize that following him is actually something worth aspiring to — even if you're not a believer.

So, what are his commands? I could easily contend that every command in the Bible is the command of Christ, since he is the Word of God. But, I want to make it a bit simpler than that. What do we know that Jesus actually said while he was living amongst us? What commands did he personally give during that time?

Jesus gave a lot of commands in Scripture. Some of them were for Christians in general, and some were intended for the original disciples only. And then, some were directed at those disciples, but also apply to us today. For the next several weeks, we are going to work our way through the Gospel of Matthew to look at the commands of Christ which apply to us today.

☞ **Repent**

"From that time Jesus began to preach and say, '**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**'" (Matthew 4:17).

In its most basic sense, "repent" means to think differently and for the better. And, in almost every case, it is in relation to sin. So, **think differently about your sin and do better.**

*--David Guzik... Some people think that repentance is mostly about feelings, especially feeling sorry for your sin. It is wonderful to feel sorry about your sin, but **repent** isn't a "feelings" word. It is an action word. Repentance speaks of a change of direction, not a sorrow in the heart.*

Repentance was perhaps best defined by a young girl: It's to be sorry enough to quit.

It is said of repentance, "It makes a person allergic to what he was addicted to, and addicted to what he was allergic to."

The call to repentance is important and must not be neglected. It is entirely accurate to say that it is the first word of the gospel.

- **Repent** was the first word of John the Baptist's gospel (Matthew 3:1-2).
- **Repent** was the first word of Jesus' gospel (Matthew 4:17 and Mark 1:14-15).



- **Repent** was the first word in the preaching ministry of the twelve disciples (Mark 6:12).
- **Repent** was the first word in the preaching instructions Jesus gave to His disciples after His resurrection (Luke 24:46-47).
- **Repent** was the first word of exhortation in the first Christian sermon (Acts 2:38).
- **Repent** was the first word in the mouth of the Apostle Paul through his ministry (Acts 26:19-20).

The first command of the Lord is to repent. If you love the Lord, you will keep this command.

☞ **Turn your life around.** This very first word of Jesus in his public life ultimately means to turn your life around and go in the opposite direction. Change your mind, change your behavior; change your life! If you love the Lord, keep his command and repent.

☞ **Follow Jesus**

And He said to them, “**Come, follow Me...**” (Matthew 4:19). Jesus invites us to come join him. He doesn’t just tell us to do something on our own. He invites us to go along with him and join him in what he is doing. Here again is another time that we see how the Lord wants to partner with people. He doesn’t just call us to a religion and leave us on our own.

☞ He invites us to **join him in a partnership.**

This is good news, especially since we are talking about the commands of Christ. He doesn’t just issue us commands and then watch with expectation. He invites us to follow him, which will make keeping the commands a natural outcome.

The United States Army is one of the most powerful forces in the world with the strongest and most trained soldiers in all the world. Therefore, training requires strict discipline and the ability to follow orders of the leaders to ensure survival. One of the most dangerous places on the battlefield is in the middle of a minefield. Step in the wrong direction and you could set off a mine that may not only kill you, but also your fellow soldiers. How do you successfully navigate your way through the minefield? Do you try it on your own and hope for the best? A step here and a step there? Certainly not! You wait for the experts, the Army Engineers to arrive and clear a path through the minefield. Once the path is cleared you must stay on the cleared path only and follow in the steps of your leader to arrive safely on the other side. Any wrong step would be disaster. As a Christian, many times our daily lives feel like we are trying to navigate through a minefield. Some mines are hidden while others are out in the open. These are the mines set to trap you in sin, desperation, and loneliness... The devil attempting to entice you to try to traverse the minefield all on your own. It is in these moments that we wait on our expert, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, Jesus. We allow him to clear a safe path before us through the



minefield where we follow in his steps avoiding the mines that could hurt us or others. We stay on the narrow path that leads to safety on the other side, our home with Jesus.

☞ **This following Christ also means to follow his example.** Jesus invites people to follow him and to learn from him how to live life. In 1 Corinthians 11:1 the Apostle Paul says to follow his example as he follows the example of Christ. This literally means to become an imitator or a mimic, and it's an ongoing process. **Keep on becoming an imitator of Christ.** WWJD

☞ **Shine**

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16).

We get our word “lamp” from the original Greek word for shine. The word can mean “to radiate light” as opposed to hiding the light. Jesus knew that there would be a temptation to keep our faith hidden because it can attract attention, especially from people who hate the light. So, he tells us emphatically to let our light shine. Charles Spurgeon says that Christ never considered the production of secret Christians, whose virtues would never be displayed.

☞ He expects us to **let others know about our faith so that they will be drawn to God.**

And, this is not about showing off or trying to get a lot of attention. It's about glorifying God. It's not so people will see how great we are, but that they would see God at work in us and through us and be drawn to him.

This shining can mean “to beam.” And some of you can do that just with your smile, and I think that's a great way to indicate your love for the Lord. But it's more than just a smile. Jesus elaborates here, saying that shining has to do with good works. He's talking about your behavior, especially as it relates to other people. In other words, **become known for your goodness to others** and let that goodness point people to the Lord. Let your light shine!

☞ **If you love the Lord, you will keep his commands;** you will obey his directives. If you really love the Lord, you will repent and turn your life around. If you really love the Lord, you will follow him, becoming an imitator of Jesus. And, if you really love the Lord, you will shine, doing such good for others that they will be drawn to the Lord.

This is the first Sunday of the year – a great time to consider your ways. Perhaps it's time to repent to the Lord and get back on track, following him. Determine to let your light shine.