

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

Phil O. Waldo
Lead Pastor



1224 Hancock Drive
Boone, Iowa 50036

Phone: 515 432-3329

Website: www.booneopenbible.com
E-mail: office@booneopenbible.com
pastor@booneopenbible.com

SERMON TITLE If You Love the Lord, part 4

SERIES

DATE 1/28/2024

KEY SCRIPTURE Matthew 6 & 7

SYNOPSIS

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ If You Love the Lord

John 14:15

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Love is more than just an emotion. True, real love, will be demonstrated and, to demonstrate your love for the Lord, you will obey him. So far, we've talked about repentance and reconciliation, as well as reliability, and even perfection. The commands of Christ have been getting harder and harder to carry out, which means we much rely more and more on him. Ultimately, obeying his commands is only possible through his strength, so we must keep running back to him.

☞ Today, we will look in **Matthew 6 & 7**:

Matthew 6:1

Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

☞ **Don't grandstand. (Showboat, put on airs, play to the crowd).**

Jesus talks about three different expressions of faith that can be done for the wrong reasons: Giving, Praying, and Fasting. These three are all good things which Christians should be doing, but not in such a way that it's all about getting attention.

☞ It's good to be a generous giver and is even a requirement of the Lord. But we must **check our motives**. We all know of people (usually celebrities), who make a big fuss over their donations to worthy charities and other causes. Sure, the charity will benefit from the gift, but the giver benefits from the social capital they gain from appearing to be "such a generous person." On the other hand, Jesus says, when you give to others, do it quietly and without making a fuss.

It's important for believers to pray, but we don't need to try to impress anyone with our prayers. Long, drawn out prayers or use of flowery language are not necessary. "Almighty, omnipotent, all-sufficient Lord, in all humility and reverence, we beseech thee today..." Now, if that's the way you always talk, fine, but if it's only because you want people to think you are a good pray-er, then, no.

--Mother Teresa... "Let's not pray long, drawn-out prayers, but let's pray short ones full of love. Let us pray on behalf of those who do not pray. Let us remember, if we want to be able to love, we must be able to pray!"



☞ Jesus says to pray, but to keep it simple and **sincere**. I've said before that my favorite prayer is, "Lord, help!" Use the KISS method: Keep It Simple, Saints. Now, when Jesus says to pray in private, he is not saying we should never pray in public or out loud. He's talking about the attitude of your heart. Don't try to impress him or anyone else with your wordy, fancy praying. Just pray.

Finally, fasting is a good Christian practice – giving something up so that you can focus more on the Lord. But, again, the Lord knows our hearts. If we are trying to impress others with our fasting, then it's a lost cause. When you choose to go on a fast of some sort, don't make a big deal out of it, just pursue the Lord.

Ultimately, here, in verse 19, Jesus says that all of this striving for attention and admiration is like storing up treasure on earth where it will get lost, destroyed, or stolen. Instead, we should store up our treasures in heaven, where they will last. So, give and pray and fast, but check your motives and do those things with a sincere heart.

Matthew 6:25

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear.

☞ **Don't Worry**

Reminds me of Bob Marley's song, Three Little Birds... "Don't worry about a thing, cause every little thing gonna be alright." Or, Bobby McFerrin's, Don't Worry Be Happy... "Here's a little song I wrote. You might want to sing it note for note. Don't worry, be happy. In every life we have some trouble. But when you worry, you make it double. Don't worry, be happy. Don't worry, be happy now." Worrying doesn't gain us anything, except more anxiety. It's been said that worry is like a rocking chair – it gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere.

Now, Jesus is not saying that we should not give any thought to our needs or to the future, but that we should not let anxiety and worry consume us. David Guzik comments, "There is a difference ☞ between a godly sense of responsibility and an **ungodly, untrusting worry**." The Lord is also not telling us to just sit back, do nothing, and expect God to do it all. We do have a part to play in taking care of our own needs, but the Lord doesn't want us to be overly focused on those things.

☞ He wants us to **always put God first**.

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.



Many listening today can attest to this Kingdom Principle – when you put God first, everything else tends to fall into place. It is not without any effort, but it tends to come much easier when God has first place.

When you're always focused on your wealth, you'll never have enough. When you're always focused on your wardrobe, it'll never be nice enough. And worry will creep in. But the more you focus on the Lord, the more you will realize the blessings he has already given you.

Matthew 7:1

Do not judge, or you too will be judged.

☞ **Don't Judge (Inappropriately)**

This is a hot topic among Christians and non-Christians, alike, and we need to take a close look here. Some accuse Christians of being judgmental, and some Christians are afraid to say anything that might be considered judgmental. And this tension has been around for millennia. When Lot was in Sodom and spoke of the wickedness going on, the people were outraged that this “outsider” would dare to judge them. And, now Jesus says, “do not judge.” But what does he really mean?

First, let's look at the context. After saying “do not judge,” Jesus adds, “or you too will be judged.” As well, he goes on to talk about the plank in your eye while there's only a speck of sawdust in your brother's eye. And, in the previous chapter, Jesus talked a lot about trying to appear righteous. ☞ So, his main thrust is that we **don't be hypocritical**. If you're pointing out the sin in someone else's life, you better also be real about the sin in your own life.

Clearly, he's not giving a blanket statement to never make judgments. In fact, in John 7:24 he tells us to judge when he says, “Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.” Again, he's giving instructions on how to evaluate things appropriately. The New Testament continues this theme in 1 Corinthians. In 10:5, Paul tells us to judge for ourselves what he said. And elsewhere he says we are actually supposed to judge matters when believers disagree. So, the Bible is not saying we shouldn't ever speak up about right and wrong, but rather, be careful how we go out about speaking up. Christians are often accused of “judging” or intolerance when they speak out against sin. But opposing sin is not wrong.

David Guzik...

Among those who seem to know nothing of the Bible, this is the verse that seems to be most popular. Yet most the people who quote this verse don't understand what Jesus said. They seem to think (or hope) that Jesus commanded a universal acceptance of any lifestyle or teaching. But, just a little later in this same sermon (Matthew 7:15-16), Jesus commanded us to know ourselves and



others by the fruit of their life, and some sort of assessment is necessary for that. The Christian is **called to show unconditional love**, but the Christian is **not** called to **unconditional approval**.

So, while this does not prohibit examining the lives of others, it certainly prohibits doing it in the spirit it is often done. An example of unjust judgment was the disciples' condemnation of the woman who came to anoint the feet of Jesus with oil (Matthew 26:6-13). They thought she was wasting something; Jesus said she had done a good work that would always be remembered. They had a rash, harsh, unjust judgment.

- We break this command when we think the worst of others.
- We break this command when we only speak to others of their faults.
- We break this command when we judge an entire life only by its worst moments.
- We break this command when we judge the hidden motives of others.
- We break this command when we judge others without considering ourselves in their same circumstances.
- We break this command when we judge others without being mindful that we ourselves will be judged.

Warren Wiersbe...

Christ is not telling us to avoid evaluating people or not to use our God-given wisdom. Every believer has the obligation to test others by their fruits (vv. 15-20), but no Christian should ever judge motives. Christ also did not say that it was wrong for you to help your brothers or sisters get rid of their sins; but He did say that first you should take care of your own sin. In other words, we should be as severe with ourselves as we are with others.

☞ If you love the Lord, you will obey his commands. And, his commands today are **“Don't grandstand; don't worry; and don't judge.”**