

# Obeying Christ's commands

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[ 0 : 00 ] Gospel, it's John 14 and starting at verse 15. So it's John's Gospel, chapter 14 and starting at verse 15.

If you love me, you will obey what I command, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth.

The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you.

Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.

[ 1 : 16 ] Then Judas, not Judas Iscariot, said, But Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us, not to the world? Jesus replied, If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.

My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own.

They belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you, but the Counselor, 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.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you, I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.

Now let's come to God in prayer. Sitting in a congregation one day, was a young man, who heard the preacher say these words, The world has yet to see, what the Lord can do, with one person, wholly committed to him.

[ 2 : 34 ] And that young man who heard those words, was D.L. Moody. And sometime later, he became the preacher.

In the context of one of his sermons, he included those same words. The world has yet to see what the Lord can do, with one person, wholly committed to him.

And sitting in his congregation, was a man called C.T. Studd. Became a famous England cricketer.

Later a missionary to China, and who wrote a poem, Only one life, will soon be passed. And that man, C.T. Studd, was to pen the words, I'm going to quote you just now, Nothing less than unconditional surrender, could ever, be a fitting response, to Christ's sacrifice, for me, at Calvary.

You see, there is to be no ifs, or no buts, in Christ's call. When Christ asks us to follow him, it's not, will I do it?

[ 4 : 09 ] But I must do it. Because, the master, calls. We are called, by the Lord Jesus Christ, not to be static, not to be static Christians, but be Christians, that are on the move, daily, maturing, in our Christian pilgrimage.

But alas, that's not always the case. Because, there are times, our Christian lives, can be caught up, and caught napping.

and God's blessing, passes us by. Remember that story, in the Old Testament, in Genesis chapter 28, and verse 16, when Jacob, woke from his sleep, he thought, surely, surely the Lord, is in this place, and I was not, aware of it.

Oh, that we might be, very clear this morning, coming to worship, our God, our Lord, the Jesus Christ, that he is in this place, and he wants to touch, your life, and he wants to touch, my life.

He wants us, not to be static Christians, but Christians, who are on the move, for him. in our living for Christ, in our worship, in our commitment, the Lord Jesus Christ, requires, that we be encapsulated, by his life.

[ 6 : 11 ] His life, totally fills us, takes over, our lives, and it's him, and him only, that should be shown, from us day by day.

That we be enlightened, by his word, that we take that word, up day by day, and read it, that God, would speak to us, would show us, would give us, understanding, and enlightenment, and we might be empowered, by his spirit, and realize, that we don't live, the Christian life, on our own strength, but we live, the Christian life, by the power, of God's spirit, within us.

I can do all things, through Christ, who strengthens me. I can't do all things, on my own, I can't do all things, if I want to, I can only do, those things, that Christ wants, and that Christ, inspires me, to do, and that Christ, fills me, with his power.

A man went, to see his doctor, one day, he hadn't been, for a number of years, and when he was shown, into the waiting room, he was, pleasantly surprised, there he found, taped music, being played, which brought, an extremely, relaxing, atmosphere, and as he sat, contemplating, his appointment, with the doctor, he overheard, two women, talking to one another, and one said, to the other, just like, these young doctors, a crowded, waiting room, and he's, in there, playing the piano, God, God, doesn't, stand, stand, stand, still, he's, on the move, nor, does he, expect, his, church, to stand, still, he, doesn't, want us, to live, in the past, he, doesn't, want us, to live, in what used to be, but he wants us, to live, in the continuous present, of what, is happening, and what, will be, in the future,

I've quoted, from time to time, not from time to time, but on the odd occasion, a statement, from Gilbert Ritchie, Gilbert Ritchie, was a past president, of the Baptist Union, of Scotland, he was a minister, in Stenhouse Baptist Church, his, grandmother, was a niece, of Hudson Taylor, and he said this, in his presidential address, like a mighty tortoise, moves the church of God, brothers, we are treading, where we have always trod, does God want us, to be in that kind, of situation, or does God, want us, to continually, be on the move, with him, as he leads, and guides, and directs, and motivates, nothing less, than unconditional, surrender, and that's a challenge, to us all, not keeping to ourselves, what we want, but letting God, fill us by his spirit, and motivate us, and generate, and generate, within us, the desire, to do what God wants, we read this morning, read for us this morning, in John's gospel, if you love me, you'll obey, my commands, and before Jesus, ascended, to be with his father, he said to his disciples, go into all the world, and teach them, to obey all things,

[ 11 : 06 ] I have commanded you, and I will be with you, always, always, have you ever asked yourself, what are the commands, of Christ, what is Jesus saying, when he says, to his disciples, his followers, obey me, listen to me, if you love me, you will obey, my commands, now a careful study, of scripture, will reveal to us, that there are around about, 150 commands, of Christ, and even if we were, to group those, into themes, there would be 21, now I don't think, anybody, would want to have, a 150 point sermon, no that's okay, just wanted to check with you, or even a 21 point sermon, however, if we could do, we could do well, to remember, the two greatest commandments, that Jesus left, which are recorded, in Matthew's gospel, chapter 22, and verses, 37 to 40, you must, love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind, this is the first, and greatest command, a second, is equally important, love your neighbor, as yourself, love God, and love your neighbor, those are the two, important commands, and they encapsulate, everything else, that Jesus taught, those who listened to him, almost 2000 years ago, and whom, the Holy Spirit, wants to impress, upon our lives, today, and others lives, in the past, and who will impress, those things, on people's lives, in the future, if you want to know, how much, you love God, think of the Christian, you love least, and you'll have the answer, if you want to know, how much you love God, think of the Christian, you love least, and you'll have, the answer,

Jesus doesn't ask us, to follow, some of those commands, or most of those commands, he doesn't ask us, to be selective, and only follow, the ones that we understand, or are easiest to follow, are those, that sit comfortably, within our own, thinking process, but he asks us, to follow, at least, the two greatest commands, love the Lord, your God, and your neighbor, as yourself, now you've got neighbors, haven't you, do you like them, anybody, who doesn't like their neighbor, who noises them up, if God, only knew my neighbor, he wouldn't ask me, he wouldn't ask me, to love them, oh God, does know your neighbor, he knows your neighbor, better than you do, and he asks you, to love them, as he loves them, and that's a tall order, that sometimes, can create, for us difficulties, last night, our neighbors, had a party, and I think, they brought the children, from all over,

Stenhouse, to that party, and they sang, and they shouted, and they screamed, but I loved them, you may not believe that, but I did, and then, there was quietness, but whatever, our neighbors do, to noise us up, to challenges, God says, I sent my son, to die for them, the same as I did for you, help them to know, my love, and it's only, as we surrender, our lives, unconditionally, that we begin, to discover, an ability, to be obedient, and are surprised, by joy, at what we can do, in Christ, for the context, of Jesus' words, and the promise, of his Holy Spirit, and he said, wait, receive power, and the Holy Spirit, will come, upon you, he didn't say, the Holy Spirit, will pass you by, when we wait, in expectancy, and believe,

God will give to us, his blessed Holy Spirit, who will enable us, to do the things, that Jesus, that Jesus, would have done, and let's hold on, to that, and believe it, you see, the Lord Jesus Christ, doesn't only, want the world, to see, Christianity, as an external, ethic, but, an internal, dynamic, and transforming, experience, he wants, to transform us, day by day, as we live, closely, with him, as we allow, his Holy Spirit, to fill us, as we allow, the Holy Spirit, to unpack, his words, the Bible, to understanding, and he wants, to fill us, with joy, to overflowing,

James Stewart, ranked, one of the best, preachers, of the 20th century, said this, there are many Christians, many sincere Christians, who are living, defeated lives, because, they are not aware, of the full promise, of full provision, which is theirs, in Christ, they gave, Christ a cross, not guessing, that he would make it, a throne, King of my life, I crown thee now, thine, shall the glory be, but returning, to those two, great commandments, that Jesus, mentioned, and recorded, for us, in scripture, we need to understand, that without love, for God, the external, observance, of the commandments, becomes, an empty, for him, for him, loving God, means, receiving, cleansing, from within, and only, in that way, is our obedience, genuine, otherwise, even, even though, we may appear, to others, to be righteous, our obedience, is corrupted, by bad motives, heart, mind, and soul, are three distinct, small pieces, of ourselves, that we may offer, love, gives us, a right motive, so, we can genuinely, obey the commands, and you see, our hearts, are central, loving God, empowers us, to love, other people, and if we don't, love other people, then it tells us, where our love, for God, lies, love helps us, to understand, the real thrust, of the commandments, and to give us, his concern, for actual, obeying, rather than, merely, listening, it's not just, listening to what God, is saying, it's putting it, into practice, what God, is saying, we can all, listen, and you have,

[ 22 : 04 ] I anyway, remember, my school days, and the teacher, would say, did you hear, what I said, did you listen, what I said, yes miss, well tell me, what it was, and sometimes, I couldn't remember, because, I had taken, in something, and I had, compartmentalized, what she had said, and misunderstood, what she had been asking, or telling me to do, and it's not, just about listening, what Jesus, and what God says, in scripture, it's about obeying, putting into practice, those things, that we have heard, and listened to, to love God, is the first, and greatest, and represents, the heartbeat, of all the commandments, it doesn't replace, the commandments, it gives us, the right motive, in order, to genuinely, obey, the commandments, commandments, where there is, the real, there is a counterfeit, and you see that, and for example, the illustration, of Elijah, in first Kings 18, the prophets of Baal, where Elijah,

Elijah wanted to call, his followers, to a clear commitment, of God, and he challenged, the prophets of Baal, and if, I was preaching, this yesterday, with all that rain, that we had, it would be easy, to understand, what Elijah, was saying, when he called him, fill four barrels, with water, even, in our, best summer, we could do that, do it again, and do it again, and he said, the same thing, to, to his, to Baal's followers, test your God, and the God, who answers by fire, he, will be God, and the old prophets, of Baal, cried out, and cried out, and cried out, to their God, to answer by fire, and burn up their altar, nothing, nothing happened, and of course,

Isaiah, teased them, and then, he, he put them, to the test, fill four barrels, with water, do it again, and do it again, and pour that water, over the altar, and ask God, to come, and answer, by fire, and God did, as I was showing, his people, and the prophets, of Baal, that their God, was a counterfeit God, but the God, whom Elijah, and his followers, worshipped, was a true God, come, let us, honor God, and when you, obey those words, when you, let God, fill your lives, there's a new, consciousness, of Christ, where his character, pervades, your life, and my life, where we are able, to see others, with the eyes, of Jesus, and the mind, of Jesus, and the love, of Jesus, no distinguishing, between God's love, and the love, we show, because we're showing, his love, and we do it, with love, and with humility, a new, consciousness, of Christ, a new, concept, of prayer, where there's, a new desire, a new, realization, of God's power, we hear, often, and read, often, about the revivals, that swept, across this land,

North Scotland, for example, and how God, touched people's lives, by allowing, his Holy Spirit, to come upon them, and many, came to know, the Lord, as their Savior, is that, the kind of experience, that you want, certainly, it's the kind of experience, that I want, I want to know, God, in the fullness, of his power, in my life, doing with me, what Christ, did, when he lived, on earth, Jesus, can do that, when a people, are fully committed, to him, a new, Christ likeness, and character, not only, seeing, and doing, but acting, and there, that Christ likeness, of character, we are, overflowing, with joy, it's amazing, to, to, to think, so often, that when Christians, claim to be, filled with joy, the joy of the spirit, there's not, a smile, when God, fills us, with his love, with the power, of his spirit, we are, overjoyed, we are, filled with joy, we can't, retain it, in ourselves, we've got, to let other people, know, and see, and feel, and experience, what we've, experienced, that God, comes, in the power, of his spirit, into their lives, and changes, and that means, the communication, of Christ, and Jesus, when we look at him, in the gospels, communicated, by example, he taught, he inspired, he persuaded, he entertained, he corrected, he rebuked, he illustrated, he questioned, he encouraged, and he listened, and we could do well, to learn, from the master,

F.B. who, amongst, other things, was, an inner city, mission worker, both sides, of the Atlantic, said this, in every, in the life, of every Christian, Jesus, is present, present, but in some, he is not only present, but preeminent, but prominent, and in others, he is not only present, and prominent, but preeminent, if you love me, you will, obey my commands, love, so amazing, so divine, demands, my soul, my life, my all,

[ 30 : 28 ] I remember, I had a friend, who sang that song, many years ago, and he changed the words, of the last verse, love, so amazing, so divine, not demands, but, shall have, my life, my soul, my all, and as we sing it, in a moment or two, I want to encourage you, to sing those words, shall have, make it a commitment, this morning, that Jesus Christ, will have, your life, your love, your all, and if you don't know Christ, if you never, never experienced, his power in your life, maybe this morning, is the time to ask him, to forgive you, for your sin, to cleanse you afresh, to help you, to know his power, and his enabling, and trust him, when you sing that song, demands, sing it that, shall have, and commit yourself, afresh, and anew, to God, and let his spirit, fill you, in a new way, that we may go out, of this place, transformed, and renewed, by Christ's presence, and Christ's spirit, that others, not just in here, will know, but those, who we come, into contact with, in the community, will know, that some things, happen to our lives, wouldn't that be good?

Only one life, yes, only one, soon, will its fitting hours, be done, then, in that day, my Lord, to meet, and stand, before his judgment seat, only one life, till soon be passed, only what's done, for Christ, will last, what will our, if you like, appraisal be, when we meet Christ, will what we have done, for him, last, last, love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, your soul, and your mind, and love your neighbor, as yourself, so go from here, this morning, loving God, and telling your neighbor, you love them, even though they've had you up all night, partying, tell them, that you care about them, but more importantly,

God cares about them, in your behavior, as you relate to them, Paul said, for me to live as Christ, to die, is gain, we're going to sing, just now, that lovely song, as we come to communion, when I survey, the wondrous cross, and as we, invite you, to share with us, in communion, this morning, we invite all, who know, and to love, the Lord Jesus Christ, to share in that, to take the bread, and the wine, and if you've not, made that commitment, don't be afraid, to pass it by, but if you've made it, this morning, if you've taken, that step of faith, in the quietness, of where you're sitting, then you're, eligible, to share in that, communion service, with the others, don't be afraid, but let God speak, let God change, and let God motivate, when I survey, the wondrous cross.

Amen.