

Obeying Jesus

7 Commands
for Every Disciple

Week 4 | For the Love of God

Obeying Jesus – Series Focus

- In his last moments on earth with his core disciples, Jesus said, “Go and make disciples... teaching them to obey all that I have commanded” (Matt 28:18-20)
- So, what are these commands that sincere, authentic followers of Jesus should be obeying?
- In our **Obeying Jesus: 7 Commands for Every Disciple** series, we will look closely at those teachings and practices that Jesus presented as basic and foundational to faithfully following him as his disciples in the world
- 7 Commands: repent & believe, baptism, communion, **loving God & neighbor**, prayer, giving, & making disciples

For the Love of God

- Jesus sums up all of the commandments of God into two: Love your Maker and love your neighbor.
- What does it mean to love God with all of your heart, soul, and mind? What does this look like today?
- Jesus said that our love for God and neighbor, which includes love of our enemies, proves to the world whether or not we really are his disciples.
- In *For the Love of God* (4 of 7), we will look at how our love for God ought to compel us to love others; we should display our profession of faith with our lives.

Matthew 22:34-40 NIV

³⁴ Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

³⁷ Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

v.37 – Deuteronomy 6:4-5 “The Shema”

v.39 – Leviticus 19:18

“Once more, what Jesus says here about loving God, and loving one another, only makes sense when we set it within Matthew’s larger gospel picture, of Jesus dying for the sins of the world, and rising again with the message of new life. That’s when these commandments begin to come into their own: when they are seen not as orders to be obeyed in our own strength, but as invitations and promises to a new way of life in which, bit by bit, hatred and pride can be left behind and love can become a reality.”

N. T. Wright, *Matthew for Everyone* (pg. 95)

Luke 10:25-29 NIV

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”²⁷ He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Luke 10:30-32 NIV – The Parable of the Good Samaritan

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

Luke 10:33-35 NIV

³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

Luke 10:36-37 NIV

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

“Go and Do Likewise”

Who might be our “neighbor” in need of mercy today?

- Muslim neighbor
- LGBT neighbor
- Black neighbor
- Refugee neighbor
- Ex-Convict neighbor
- Addicted neighbor
- Annoying neighbor
- Republican neighbor
- Democrat neighbor
- Independent neighbor
- Evangelical neighbor
- Patriotic neighbor
- Fundamentalist neighbor
- Terrorist neighbor

Jesus, Matthew 5:43-45 NIV

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Matthew 5:46-48 NIV

⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

1 John 2:3-6 NIV

³ We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴ Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵ But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

What Keeps You From Living And Loving Like Jesus?

- **Loving your own life more than Jesus**
“[Those seeking] to save their life will lose it” (Matt 16:25).
- **Loving your sin & the world more than Jesus**
Refusal to repent and stand out from the world.
- **Loving safety & comfort more than Jesus**
Fear motivates anti-Christ thinking and behavior.
- **Loving those like you instead of all whom Jesus died**
It's easy to judge (instead of love) those not like you.

1 John 4:16-18 MSG

God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day—our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life—fear of death, fear of judgment—is one not yet fully formed in love.

“There’s nothing, absolutely nothing, that should ever displace the command to love as the first and foremost concern of the disciple—no doctrine, no ethical principle, no personal agenda, and no exceptions. If our thought, word, or deed doesn’t result in ascribing unsurpassable worth to the person we’ve encountered, it shouldn’t be thought, voiced, or acted on. It is that simple; love alone must govern each and every encounter in our lives.”

Greg Boyd, *Repenting of Religion* (pg.53)


“So now I am giving you a new commandment:
Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you
should love each other. Your love for one another
will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

Jesus, John 13:34-35 NLT

For the Love of God

“For the Love of God” reflection questions:

1. Who do you find it hard to love and why? Are you willing to see that person(s) as Christ sees them?
2. If you are honest, how much of your inability to love and show mercy is a result of your judgment and fear?
3. Are you trusting in the power of God’s love to redeem, or have you bought into the lie of retributive justice?
4. How is Christ calling you to obey this morning? Who or in what ways is he inviting you to love as he loves?



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Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:
www.christiansburgmennonite.org