

# *Bryan Station Baptist Church*

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*"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"*

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## **LOVE and OBEEDIENCE**

By the late: C. D. Cole

**"If ye love me, keep my commandments"  
(John 14:15).**

Love to Christ and obedience to Him are inseparably and infallibly connected. Love to Christ is both a duty and a grace. Every man ought to love Christ and failure to love Him will result in the direst tragedy. I Corinthians 16:22 says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" or let him be accursed. Love is also a grace, a work wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7). Love is not natural to the human heart. We read in Romans 8:7: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." These truths may be hard to harmonize, but if both are believed there will be a feeling of responsibility and also a sense of our weakness. A sense of responsibility will turn the wheels of conduct and duty and a sense of weakness will drive us to our knees.

In religion nothing can take the place of love to Christ. Talent, money, service, sociability, sacrifice, without love will profit nothing. Read I Corinthians the 13th Chapter. The great need in our churches is for members who love Christ and are willing to obey Him. Success is measured by obedience. "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion

is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king" (I Samuel 15:22,23). We have Samuel here speaking to Saul. There is the ever present danger of exalting an affable and sociable spirit above the spirit of obedience.

I. We have here the all-sufficient ideal and guide to life. We do not become Christians by keeping commandments, but we are successful and happy Christians by keeping commandments. It is true that none of us keep His commandments perfectly, but he who makes this an excuse to openly disregard any commandment of Christ is to betray a bad state of heart.

Where are His commandments? They are in His Word. The New Testament is the law of Christianity. Injunctions found in the writings of Paul, Peter and John and all the rest of the New Testament writers are the commandments of Christ. Remember that Christ did not write a single line of the New Testament, therefore, if His commandments are in the New Testament, they must be found in the writings of others. Paul, because he wrote some things that men and women do not like, is set aside. Paul says in I Corinthians 14:37 that the things he writes are the commandments of the Lord. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

We would like for you to note:

1. That Christ's commandments are not in harmony with the fashions of the world. He who keeps the commandments of Christ will have to break with the ways and customs of the world. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

2. They are not in harmony with human reason. He who keeps Christ's commandments will not follow his feeling or his conscience. People are forever saying that they do not see any harm in this or that when God's word plainly prohibits it. There would be no harm in doing certain things if God had not spoken against it. Why was it wrong for Uzziah to touch the ark? Only because God had said no man should touch it. Why was it wrong for Jezebel to teach publicly in the church at Thyatira? Only because God's word opposed it. Why is it wrong for women to cut their hair? Only because God's word says it is a shame for her to do so. Why is it wrong for a man to wear long hair and keep his hat on during public worship? Only because of what God's word says. Who is to be the judge of what is right or wrong? God or the conscience? Why was it wrong for Saul to spare Agag and the best of the cattle as we find in I Samuel, Chapter 15? He gave good reasons, if conscience is to be the judge. He said he spared the best cattle to offer in sacrifice to God. But it was wrong because God had said to destroy them completely. Do we need to be told that it is wrong to do that which God says we must not do?

II. We have here the proof and evidence of love. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." There are various attitudes towards the commandments of Christ. Some murmur at them and call them grievous. Others set them aside as out of date and belonging to another age. Others ridicule them as impracticable. Some explain them away and ease their conscience. Some keep them reluctantly, but love's attitude is to keep them joyously. Some keep them out of regard to the preacher who proclaims them. If they like him, they will keep Christ's commandments. If they lose their admiration or love for him, they will cease to keep the commandments he preaches. But they ought to be kept out of love for Christ.

The commandment to give is one that many church members do not seem to know is in the Bible. Paul is writing about giving in II Corinthians 8:8, and says, "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love." He declares that the evidence of sincerity of love to Christ is willingness to give. How would we like for God to judge us by that standard?

How much do you really love Jesus? You can answer by what you are giving to His cause and the proclamation of His word. We sing, "My Jesus, I love thee," but what is the proof? Paul says it is your giving—what you do with your money. "Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf" (II Cor. 8:24).

It is so with human love. We prove it by our gifts. We show it by what we do. Our actions speak louder than words. Love is service. We give because we love. It is so with divine love. God so loved that He gave. His love is measured by what He gave. His love is the greatest because He gave the greatest. The greater the love the greater the gift. We can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving.

III. The all-powerful motive. The true motive of all obedience is love to Christ. We are to keep the commandments because they are Christ's commandments. Keeping them for any other reason is not keeping them at all.

Many religious workers are not saved now. They are not saints. They have not been born again. They have not partaken of the Divine nature. The Saviour says, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22,23). In the time of Christ there were many who did things to be seen of men for human praise. And there is every reason to believe that the race of those who love the sound of human praise has not perished from the earth. All saints should show their faith by their works, but their works should be works of love to Christ, and not works of love for human acclaim. May this truth probe the hearts of both writer and reader.



**REAL LIFE**

Is Not in the Abundance  
of Things Possessed, but

**IS IN DOING THE  
WORK OF CHRIST**