

## 50 Commands of Christ ~ Lesson 1 ~ (Commands #1-6)

Among Jesus' last commands to us are those given in the verses known as "The Great Commission" (Matthew 28:19-20) in which he says, "therefor go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." The word disciple itself means "learner or pupil." Thus, it is with this spirit of being a disciple or a learner that we approach these commands.

Before we get to the commands themselves, let us look at two things that Jesus said about obeying his commands.

John 14:15 \_\_\_\_\_

John 14:21, 23 \_\_\_\_\_

Another question: Why should we obey Christ's commands? *Psalm 103:17-18, John 15:10-11*

Now, the commands themselves:

**1. Repent**—*Matthew 4:17, Proverbs 1:23, Psalm 51:1-4, Luke 13:3, Acts 3:19, 8:22, 26:20, Revelation 3:19*

**2. Let not your heart be troubled (don't worry)**—*John 14:27, John 16:33, Matthew 6:25-26, Philippians 4:6-7*

**3. Follow me**—*Matthew 4:19*—so you can \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Rejoice**—*Matthew 5:12, 2 Corinthians 6:10, 12:10, James 1:2-4*. When should we rejoice the most?

**5. Let your light shine**—*Matthew 5:16*. There are two parts to this command

which are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Is this command a contradiction to Matthew 6:3-4?

**6. Honor God's law**—*Matthew 5:17-19*. How do we occasionally encourage others to break God's rules? Why is it difficult to practice what we preach?

## 50 Commands of Christ ~ Lesson 1 ~ (Commands #1-6) ~ Leader's Guide

What did Jesus say about obeying his commands?

John 14:15 If you love me, you will obey my commands

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John 14:21, 23 Obey my commands and the Father and I will love you

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Why should we obey Christ's commands?

Psalms 103:17-18 – <sup>17</sup> But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children—<sup>18</sup> with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.

John 15:10-11 – <sup>10</sup> If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

**1. Repent** is Jesus' very first command—before he called his disciples, before he did any miracles, and before he preached a message. It is found in Matthew 4:17 – From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Jesus' command to repent is repeated in a number of other places in the New Testament. However, it is not a new command and we find the call to repent at least 60 times in the Old Testament and more than 15 times in the New Testament.

Matthew 4:17 – From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Proverbs 1:23 – Repent at my rebuke! Then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings.

Psalms 51:1-4 – Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

Luke 13:3 – I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.

Acts 3:19 – Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Acts 8:22 – Repent of your wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive your evil thoughts, [NLT]

Acts 26:20 – First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.

Revelation 3:19 – Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent.

**2. Let not your heart be troubled (don't worry)**—*John 14:27, John 16:33, Matthew 6:25-26, Philippians 4:6-7*

John 14:27 – 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.

John 16:33 – I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.” [NLT]

Matthew 6:25-26 – “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Philippians 4:6-7 – Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**3. Follow me**—*Matthew 4:19*—so you can be fishers of men

**4. Rejoice.** Jesus says specifically that we should rejoice most when we are persecuted. This is explained further by both Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:10 and 12:10 and especially in James 1:2-4.

Matthew 5:12 – Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

James 1:2-4 – Consider it pure joy, my brothers whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking

anything.

**5. Let your light shine**—*Matthew 5:16*. There are two parts to this command which are Let your good deeds be seen and so the Father will be praised

Is this command a contradiction to Matthew 6:3-4? <sup>3</sup> But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup> so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

In Matthew 5:16, Jesus says to let your good deeds to the needy be seen but in Matthew 6:3-4 he says to let your giving to the needy be done in secret. They would seem to contradict each other except for the second part of the first command which says that your deeds should be seen *only* so the glory goes to the Lord, i.e., that others would see your deeds and praise the Father. Your deeds and your giving should not be to impress others or build your ego.

**6. Honor God's Law.** Matthew 5:17-19 could easily be a Bible study by itself.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Here are some things to think about when considering these verses:

In discussing sin, why did Jesus make a point of saying, “one of the *least* of these commands?”

How do we occasionally encourage others to break God's rules?

What level of reverence and submission do you think most people have toward the Bible?

What does it mean to “practice” the commands of God?

What are some ways to teach others about the righteousness of God?

Why is it difficult to practice what we preach?

What ideals are most difficult for you to uphold?