

The New Commandment The New Commandment - Summary

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This is the final installment in a series of messages entitled “The New Commandment” and so of necessity this final teaching intends to pull together all that has been said in the entire series, which constitute many hours of taping. Jesus said, “A new commandment I give you: Love one another as I have loved you.” John 13. (Inserted – actual verse—**“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” – John 13: 34**) In John 15 He repeats it and He says, **“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”** (Inserted – **John 15:12**)

By the implication of a *new* commandment, what is implied is that there was an old commandment. In **Matthew, chapter 22 at verse 36**, Jesus tells us what the old commandment was. The old commandment said that you should love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and love your neighbor as yourself. (Inserted – actual verse—**“ ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” – Matthew 22:36-39**)

Now what is different between these two is *the standard*. The standard of the old is different from the standard of the new. The standard of the old is an appropriate standard for the law. The law requires *all* that you could do but the law cannot require anything beyond all because *all* means *all*. Beyond that—by the existence of the law that requires *more* than all—you’ve been made lawless. The new commandment has a different standard. Jesus is the one who is speaking and He is speaking as the living God. While He is speaking, His place and position is that of the living God, and so when He says, “As I have loved you...” He announces, in this new commandment, a different standard.

God is the standard of the love that we ought to have one for another. In this way the standard is the same for God and for man. “As I have loved you” applies the same for God as it does for man and because the standard is the same, the result is a unique result. That result is that there is meant to be an equality in the character of love between God and man. That is: in the matter of love, God and man were meant to be equals. Now

this isn't just *any* man; this isn't just a human as a human. This is the human being who has been born again of God because it is this human being—according to **II Peter**—this human being who becomes a partaker of the divine nature. (Inserted – actual verse —**“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”** – **II Peter 1:3,4**)

This human being is perfect in love because the same standard of love for the Father is—of necessity—the same standard of love for His children. That is why we are Father and children, that is why we are the children and He is our Father... God is our Father. So the Scriptures that say in **Matthew**, at the end of **chapter 5** that says, “Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”** – **Matthew 5:48**) The standard of perfection is very deliberate; it's the same for God as it is for us because we are meant to be the children of God as our Father.

God is the Father of our spirits, not the Father of our flesh. Therefore, how we are in our spirits should be the exact representation of the nature and the character of God. Why is this so? Why is this the standard and why this requirement? Well to understand this we looked at the fact that God chose humans from among whom He would select His heirs—from among the category of human beings God would choose and select His heirs. His choice and selection would be based upon those who accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The alternative choice could have been the angels but God did not make the angels capable of loving. Angels were a creation made to serve, not to love, and there is no reference—Old or New Testament—there is no reference of angels loving but angels have the freedom and the choice to serve or not to serve. One of the things that the angels were deeply impacted with is that *this* choice meant that the angels *all* would have to serve those who would receive salvation—namely the sons of God.

Some of the angels—a third of them—decided that this was not an acceptable or appropriate happening and they judged that God had made a mistake in choosing humans. The basis of their judgment was that they were a more competent creature. Now they looked at the advantages they enjoyed over human beings and felt that—on the basis of these substantial advantages—that God had made the wrong choice. A third of them, led by one—Satan, whose name then was Lucifer—revolted against God. God put down the rebellion and exiled them from the highest heavens... exiled them into the second heavens. There are three heavens according to Paul in **II Corinthians 12** (Inserted – actual verse—**“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven.”** - **II Corinthians 12:2**). There are three heavens; they were put in the second of the heavens where they still are though they come to the earth and on occasion—on rare occasions and by invitation—they are required to give an account

before God. But the mere use of force to suppress their ambitions did not, by itself, prove whether or not God's choice was the correct choice and the use of force does not determine what is right—though force might at times be used in the pursuit of what is right, it does not, by itself, decide whether or not a thing is right. The fact that someone is bigger than you, stronger than you and can beat you up doesn't make them right and God—clearly knowing that—had a more durable way of establishing the truth that His choice was the only choice—and the right choice.

He wanted to demonstrate this choice by bringing human beings—the very disputed creature—by bringing them up into such a place of glory and honor that everyone in all creation could readily see that they were not only the right choice; they were the only choice. Now God had a great challenge here because this creature was known for exercising free will and that exercise of his free will, without exception—there was no one among humans who would not choose this way—without exception, they would reject God. So God Himself had to come into the ranks of humanity—He came veiled in the form of the creature despised—and demonstrated His love for humans by preferring humans over Himself. We use the analogy of how Jesus on the cross—being God—cried out to God in heaven and God in heaven turned His back on God on the cross and did not rescue Him who was now clothed in sin and separated from God. And the reason that He failed to rescue Him was that if He had done so He would have forsaken the well-being of all humans—of “the other”.

So the new commandment is not: “Love me as I have loved you.” If God had loved Jesus the way Jesus loved Him then it would have been a forgone conclusion: Jesus would have never ended up on the cross. The new commandment is: “Love ‘the other’ more than you love yourself.” And when that was applied God was obligated to reject the plea of Jesus in favor of those who—at the time that He was rejecting the plea of the one who loved Him (the Lord Jesus Christ)—at the time that the Father was doing that in favor of us who hated Him—at *that* time we hated God. It wasn't that we really did love God but we had some problems with sin. It's that while He was dying for us on the cross we hated God and the Lord Jesus Christ and so the love of God, then, does not have anything to do with whether or not man, in turn, loved God.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Inserted – **Romans 5:8**) It means that the love of God is not conditioned upon God's ability to love us, is not conditioned in any way upon anything we could do or on any form of our reciprocation. *He loved us because that's His nature.* Therefore the cross totally proves the perfect love of God. Now we are told to love one another as Christ has loved us. That is not a command; that's not the same as saying, “Love God as God has loved you.” It's saying, “Love one another, love your fellow human beings, love the body of Christ as you yourself have been loved.” That's what it means.

Now to develop the question of “What exactly does it mean to ‘love one another as I

have loved you” we turned to Paul’s teachings in **I Corinthians the 13th chapter** which is the definitive chapter in the Scriptures on the subject of love. We’ve turned there for understanding and guidance. As we approached **I Corinthians 13** we saw three categories: “what love is”, “what love is not” and “what love is always”. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.” – I Corinthians 13:4-8a**) Now these three categories are distinct because each one presupposes an existing understanding that makes—what the three categories are—makes them of usefulness to us. It’s the *context* that helps us to understand what is meant by “what love is”, “what love is not” and “what love is always”.

The context of the first—“what is love”—is this: that everyone has a destiny in God. Before you were in your mother’s womb God knew you. You were created and put here on the planet to fulfill a destiny in God. Quite literally, the Living God intends to live—uniquely and personally—through every human being who has ever been born on this planet. Now the fact that we do not choose a destiny in God does not mean that there isn’t one for us. And the fact that you may have arrived on the planet through extreme circumstances does not mean that your destiny somehow is related to the circumstances by which you came here. Your destiny cannot be prevented by the circumstances through which you came here, though it might be enabled or enhanced by those circumstances. When you can see someone who is “along the journey” of becoming who God made them to be—if you can see them for who God made them to be—then your opportunity is to be patient with them and to be kind to them while they are becoming that which God made them to be. So there is that opportunity then to express the love of God by having the same vision for these people that God has for them.

In order to be patient and to be kind with people, it is required that you see those people the way God sees them and we talked about how sometimes, within the conflict of relationships, you are nose to nose with other people—whether they be members of your own family or friends or even strangers. But then there is “another” you—if you like: your spirit—who is seated on the throne of God and is receiving understanding and information from the Living God concerning the situation that you are confronted with. Your spirit will inform your soul, which is involved in this face-to-face confrontation of what the truth is, and your soul has the option of choosing to agree or not to agree. When your soul agrees with God the results are always transforming; they touch the relationship at the level of the heart.

We used the example of the woman of Samaria at Jacob’s well and how Jesus spoke to her heart and validated her existence, though not approving of her way of life, but that validation released her to her purposes and she immediately became an evangelist. When you see others the way they are in God and you validate the thing that God has put them

here to be, you have the capability of releasing them to their purposes in God. Oddly enough, this works whether or not you are talking to Believers or strangers. I rode on an airplane once with a woman who, as far as I could tell, is really not a Believer, and I could see that she had prophetic leanings—that she had a prophetic calling to her life—so I spoke with her about the elements of what it means to be prophetic. I didn't necessarily mention at first that was what I was talking about, I simply described a phenomenon of being prophetic. It was a relatively short ride by airplane—maybe an hour-and-a-half. By the time that we got to our destination she concluded that I knew her in a most “intimate” way—in the sense of knowing her thoughts, knowing who she was—better than almost anybody she had ever met.

We'll ask yourself this: if you were ever to sit down with Jesus—physically, if while He was on earth you were to walk with Him—do you suppose that you would come away with the sense that He knew you intimately? I'm sure He would and that's because He understood God's purposes for everyone He met. We used the example of Simon Peter and that He [Jesus] would not reject or turn away from Peter even though Peter rejected Him and He could affirm Peter's call even though Peter was a long way from that call. In that respect then, He was both patient and kind with Peter.

The second category that we talked about in **I Corinthians 13** was “what love is not” and all of the things that love is not might be summarized in this way: “love is not competitive”. And the reason that love is not competitive is because love recognizes that we are all members of the body of Christ and we need each other in order to be made complete ourselves. Therefore there is no place for pride or envy or jealousy or strife because we recognize that—just as the Living God lives personally through you, and uniquely through you—in the same way He lives personally and uniquely through every other person who is a member of the body of Christ. And even if one is not a member of the body of Christ you can appreciate the gifts and the calling of God that is within them—though the gift and the calling of God then are unredeemed—and you could speak to that in the hope of redemption. So there is no need for the body of Christ to be competitive and no need for any member to downgrade the value of any other member because it is how God lives in us, uniquely.

The final category that we looked at was the one in which God has established you in a position of authority in relationship to another and really everyone has some measure of authority in his or her life. They have authority over others and they are under authority. Some of what this means is how you respond to the authority over you and some of what it means—and the principle meaning—is how you respond to those over whom you have authority. The presentation here is one in which you are meant to present the reality of the invisible God—whose attitude and character you represent—to those people who are under your care. When that is so, you hold your course regardless of how the people under your care react... whether they choose to submit to your authority or not, you persevere. Whether they choose to tell you the truth or not, you trust what God told *you*

about them. It's not that you trust what *they're* telling you, it's that you trust what God told you.

You always “hope” because hope is not merely a matter of wishing that things were better. Hope is the certainty that anchors the soul in the reality of what God has told you even while you are waiting for the thing to be revealed that God has told you. The way that you will act toward one under your care—if you know what God told you and if you hold onto it—the way you will act toward them will be different than if you didn't know who they were. If God told you that someone is a certain way, and this is who He has made them to be—while they are becoming that—you will hold to the thing that God has shown you even if they are no where near that in their present state of behavior or action.

In all these ways then, you present—in your person, through your body...in your body you allow the Living God to be who He is. This is what the Scriptures mean when they say, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”** (Inserted – **Romans 12:1**) This is exactly what Jesus did when He loved you more than He loved himself. He presented His body to God and He only did what He saw the Father doing. When you love in this way you are loving as Jesus loved. When you love as Jesus loved you are truly a son of God. You—this creature of flesh and blood, this creature lower than the angels, this creature whom the angels that rebelled against God judged to be entirely unworthy of being called the heirs of God—you have risen up to the potential for which God designed you and you have become—in functional reality—you've become “like” God in the matter of love.

The way you love and the way God loves are the same. You have presented your body, God lives through you by His Spirit, and everything that God would have done if He were face-to-face with that person, you are or you are available to be and to become, and that's over the objection of the soul that refuses to submit to anything but its own imperatives and its own desires. One who denies the soul and presents himself, as a vessel through whom God might live is one who loves exactly as God loves. This person then is the proof that God presents to the angelic—especially the angels that sinned—and says to them, “This is the proof that I was right.” and because of *this*, you will judge angels. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!”** – **I Corinthians 6:3**) The new commandment then is all about “loving one another as I have loved you.” I'm Sam Soleyn, God bless you and I'll see you again.

Scripture References:

John 13:34

John 15:12

Matthew 22:36-39

II Peter 1:3,4

Matthew 5:48

II Corinthians 12:2

Romans 5:8

I Corinthians 13:4-8a

Romans 12:1

I Corinthians 6:3