

“...you will keep My commandments.”

John 14:12-17

12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. 13

"Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.

15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

16 " [And] I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper [another Counsellor of the same kind as I am], that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

There are 4 really big deals in these six verses.

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1. Greater works (verse 12)
2. Answered prayer (verses 13-14)

3. Loving Christ (verse 15)

4. Another Counselor-the Holy Spirit (verses 16-17)\

Last Sunday, we finished the 2nd subject – answered prayer, prayer in Jesus' name.

Now we continue with the third subject in our passage: loving Christ (verse 15).

John 14:15. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments

/In our relationship with the Lord, love and our obedience are inextricably linked.\

John 15:10

10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

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/Once again, our Lord Jesus Christ sets the precedent for us with his love for and obedience to His Father.\

John 14:15 does not interrupt the train of thought in John 14:12-14 before resuming it in John 14:16. Rather, it is tightly woven into the fabric of the passage.

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1. *greater works than these he will do*
2. *"If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it*
3. *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments*
4. *The Father will give you another Helper (the Spirit of truth)*

Love and obedience are essential elements of the Lord's teaching in verses 12-17. Love and obedience provide energy for the greater works in verse 12.

/Love and obedience supercharge our prayer life as well.\

Looking ahead to verse 16 and 17, the Holy Spirit pours the love of God into us. He helps us to pray, and He enables us to walk in the works God has ordained for us.

Doing what the Lord commands us to do magnifies our capacity to effectively and genuinely ask for things in Jesus' name.

/Keeping His commandments indicates that we have come to know Him.\

1 John 2:3-5

3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; 5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected.

/When we come to know Him, we know what to ask for in His name.\

As we come to know Jesus better, we come to love Him better.

/ As we love Him better, we come to obey Him more completely. \

5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected.

/When we obey Him, we abide in His love. \ We get to know more about His love for us. And our prayer life becomes more effective.

This is a circle. The circle is reinforcing. The Lord has designed it to be that way.

/Circles are a good way of representing mutual relationships.\
And in most cases, relationships between people are designed to be mutual.

Marriage, for instance. <Picture>

John 14:15. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments

Jesus is giving a seminar on the interlocking and reinforcing power of obedience and love. So it's time to consider scriptures which speak of love and obedience.

First of all, we need to understand what love is (according to Jesus and His Father).

/Love is giving or acting sacrificially on behalf or for the benefit of the one loved.\

God set the precedent for love by loving the world, even though the world was and is in rebellion against Him. He loved by giving the world the greatest gift possible.

John 3:16

16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Jesus will put it this way in chapter 15:

John 15:13-14

13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do what I command you.

Love is giving or acting sacrificially on behalf or for the benefit of the one loved.

And in 1 John, the apostle John has this to say about love:

1 John 3:16-18

16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

We see this same thing in our passage this morning. Here, the one loved is Jesus.

John 14:15. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments

/Love is not simply a mental attitude, although it begins there.\

Keeping His commandments requires more of us than simply knowing them. You do need to know them before you can keep them. Yet...*"If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.*

/Keeping His commandments means actually doing what He says.\

Luke 6:46-48

46 "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? 47 "Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

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The essence of love is not a feeling, although a feeling may accompany it.

The demonstration of love is not just telling someone you love them.

The perfection of love is not a thought, although it starts with a thought.

/The essential thing about love is taking action on behalf of the one you love.\

let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

/And when it comes to loving Jesus, taking action means obeying His commands.\

With that, we are ready to explore more of what John has to write about love.

We begin with the reciprocal relationship of love and obedience.

Our main passage gets things going.

John 14:15. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments

This is a statement of fact. /Those who love Him will keep His commandments.\ In fact, it's a definition of love for Him. Loving Him and obeying Him go hand in hand.

John 14:21

21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me;
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This is a reciprocal relationship – a circle, if you will. Look at John 15

John 15:10

10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

/What is the result of keeping His commandments? Abiding in His love.\

So between John 14:15 and John 15:10 we have a powerful reinforcing loop.

/We love Christ, so we keep His commandments. When we keep His commandments, we will abide in His love. And on and on it goes.\

Unfortunately, it also works in the negative. If we don't love Him, we won't keep His commandments (John 14:24). *"He who does not love Me does not keep My words;"*

We need to love Christ first in order to obey His commands. But our flesh is not at all interested in obeying His commands. So how can we even begin to love Him?

There must be a love which comes before our love for Christ.

/If we are going to love, we must first be loved. \

1 John 4:19 We love, because He first loved us.

We love, because He – God the Father and God the Son - first loved us.

God's love comes first. He loved us before we were born. He loved us when we were His enemies. God is love. He is the source of love. His love for us came first.

1 John 4:8-10

8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

This is how God demonstrated His love for us. We come to know His love for us, and we come to love Him. And that enables us to keep His commandments.

1 John 4:16

16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

God's love for us came first. We love because He first loved us.

John 14:15. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments

This begs the question: What commandments?

There are of course many, but here in the gospel of John (as well as in John's letters and indeed in Paul's letters as well), one stands out as the foremost.

John 15:12-17

12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. 14

"You are My friends if you do what I command you.

17 "This I command you, that you love one another.

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/Love one another.\ There's no doubt about it: this is the commandment Jesus emphasized with His disciples that evening in the Upper Room.

Look at how John puts this in 1 John 4:

1 John 4:11-12

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

1 John 3:16

16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

He loved us first. He showed that love by the cross. When we come to know His love, we come to love Him. When we love Him, we obey Him. We lay down our loves for the brethren. /And that completes the circuit of His love.\

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[This is also true of the love of God, in that the three persons of Trinity mutually love one another too!]

And most unfortunately, the negative here is also true as well.

1 John 4:8

8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1 John 4:20

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.