

Study 4

The Love for Others JESUS commanded

“*You have heard it said...*” taught Jesus, “*But I say unto you...*” He added. After having just finished teaching that the Law was good and that He was not abolishing any aspect of it, but was rather going to fulfil it, He now establishes something that most Christians never realise.



The Love for brothers JESUS commanded

Love is the hallmark of the follower of Christ. But Christ raises the standards for how we are to love. In many religions there are laws about not doing harm to people as a way of being loving. For example, Confucius taught, “*What you do not wish upon yourself, extend not to others.*”

But Christ took this from being a *passive* statement to being an *active* statement as we will see soon.

Having just taught that His standards are *higher* than the Old Covenant Law, Jesus now reveals the principle behind all of God’s Laws: *love*. It would be wrong to think that we either live by Law or by Love (note what Jesus said in Matthew 5:19-20).

1. In First Corinthians 9:21 what kind of Law does the Apostle Paul say that he is under?
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2. According to Galatians 6:2 how does Paul say that believers can fulfil this Law? (Note Romans 13:10 and Galatians 5:14)
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3. Read Matthew 5:21-22. The Law of Moses prohibited murder, without dismissing this, what did Jesus teach was His standard for how we *feel* toward those who aggravate us?
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Consider the following excerpt from an article by Dan Kimball-

Six Perceptions of the Unchurched, by Dan Kimball

Every now and then, we experience an epiphany of some sort that drastically changes our life's course. For me, it's an extremely vivid memory of what happened when I took the time to step outside the busyness of ministry and listened to some college students from what was known to be one of the more anti-Christian campuses in California. It was these "pagan" students who gave me such incredible hope for the Church.

I was leading a young adults ministry we had recently started at the church I was on staff with at the time, and occasionally during worship gatherings, we showed man-on-the-street video interviews to set up the sermon. For an upcoming message series on evangelism, we decided to go to this college campus to interview students and hear firsthand their thoughts about Christianity. We asked two questions: "What do you think of when you hear the name 'Jesus'?" and "What do you think of when you hear the word 'Christian'?"

When they answered the first question, the students smiled and their eyes lit up. We heard comments of admiration such as, "Jesus is beautiful," "He is a wise man, like a shaman or a guru," "He came to liberate women." One girl even said, "He was enlightened. I'm on my way to becoming Christian."

What an incredible experience! These students on the very campus I kept hearing was so "pagan" talked about Jesus with great passion. However, when we asked the second question, the mood shifted. We heard things like, "Christians and the Church have messed things up," and "The Church took the teachings of Jesus and turned them into dogmatic rules." One guy said, "Christians don't apply the message of love that Jesus gave," then jokingly added, "They all should be taken out back and shot."

This seems to highlight the incredible damage done to the Name and Cause of Christ when His followers don't keep these teachings of Jesus.

4. How did Jesus say people would be able to identify His followers? (Jn. 13:35)

5. According to John 13:34, how are Christ's followers to particularly love each other?

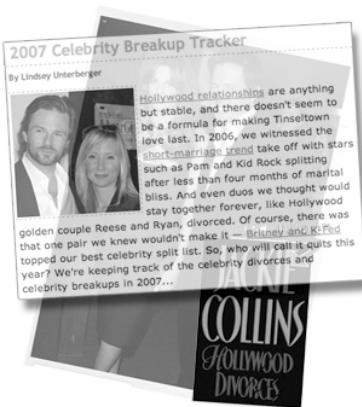
The Love for marriage JESUS commanded

God invented passion, romance, and intimacy. He is not against these things. But He has ordained the boundaries for their appropriate expression: *marriage*. This is because such physical intimacy with another person is the highest expression of physical love between two people and therefore demands the highest physical commitment between two people: *marriage*. Not only this, marriage is a picture of God. The union that a husband and wife experience is a type of the unity within the Trinity between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God takes His gift of marriage very seriously!

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6. How does Hebrews 13:4 emphasise just how seriously God regards marriage and wants us to do the same?
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Some might argue, *What would Jesus know about marriage? He was single!*

7. How does Ephesians 5:22-32 refer to Christ?
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Christ teaches that marriage is not something to be entered into lightly. Under the Old Covenant, a man could divorce his wife for almost any reason. This readiness to divorce completely undermined God's intention for marriage. Marriage is meant to be a life-long union between a man and a woman who are prepared to work through difficulties and challenges under God.

8. How did Jesus reinforce this idea of marriage in Matthew 19:3-8?

9. We sometimes think that it is only our actions that are the evidence of sin in our lives. But Jesus commanded that we not only guard our actions.

Note Matthew 5:27-28 and discover what Christ also said was sin-

Someone has said that if living with sins forgiven, but in miserable circumstances (sickness, hardship, poverty, adversity, calamity) for 85 years without relief, seemed hard, it should be compared to the 85 million ages in the life to come that will be enjoyed in total pleasure- knowing that God will never condemn us!

10. How did Jesus reinforce this concept in Matthew 5:28-29?

Some people are now teaching that “Hell” is not real. They argue that a loving God could never send anyone to such a place of eternal torment. Instead, they argue, “Hell” is a metaphor (a word picture) for *no longer existing*.

11. How long did Jesus say the torment in Hell would last for in Matthew 25:41? (Note why God created Hell based on this same verse.)

12. According to Matthew 5:31-32 what is one of the grounds for divorce, and what are the consequences of divorcing?
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**The Love for honesty
JESUS
commanded**

Followers of Christ represent Him in the way they speak. We are to speak like Christ in respect to how we handle the truth, speak of others, and express our feelings.

13. How does James 3:2 describe the person who guards their mouth? (Note Eph. 4:29)
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14. How does James 5:12 reiterate what Christ said in Matthew 5:33-37?
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15. Which aspect of the way you speak requires the most attention to conform it to these commands of Christ?
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Father, help me to love, to speak, and to feel in ways that honour Christ and bless my family, friends, colleagues, church-family and community.

Amen.