

Lesson # 5 - The Priorities Regarding the Commandments

Introduction

- A. In approaching this subject of priorities among the commandments we must realize that this is all based on the great truth that God has revealed Himself to us. This revelation comes to us as our final authority.
- B. The commandments of God are an important part of divine revelation. In His loving mercy God has carefully stated what we must do and what we may not do. These commandments are not a contradiction to His love - they indicate how deeply He loves and cares for us.
- C. To speak of priorities in the commandments of God does not mean that some of these commands are unimportant. We are asking as to whether there are relationships among the commandments.
- D. When the Lord Jesus used the words "first" and "great" in regard to one of the commandments then we see that there are relationships and we see what we must do to obey Him.

Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
Matthew 22:36-40

I. Expositions The Reason For Priority in the Commandments.

- A. The Basis of the Commandment.
 - 1. While all members of the race are responsible to love God - this commandment is primarily addressed to believers. We are told to love the Lord "thy" God.
 - a. Our love is a response to His. I John 4:19
 - 1) . His love is everlasting in time. Jeremiah 31:3
The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.
 - 2) . His love is immeasurable in extent. John 15:9
As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you, continue ye in My love.

3) . His love is infinite in definition. John 17:23

I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.

4). His love is evidential in proof. Romans 3:8

But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

5) . His love is permanent in duration. Romans 8:38,39

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

6) . His love is persevering in forgiveness. Hosea 3:1

Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love flagons of wine.

b. Our love for God is possible because of the grace of God.

1) . In grace we have been brought to an experience of the love of God. Romans 5:5

And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in Our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.

2) . In grace we have received a divine constraint through the experience of the love of God. II Cor. 5:14,15

For the love of God constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again.

3) . In grace we have entered into a new way of living through being made the object of the love of God. Gal. 2:20

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

2. He is worthy of all the love and adoration that could be given to Him.
 - a. He is worthy because of Who He is. He is absolute in love, truth and holiness.
 - b. He is worthy because of what He has done and is doing. He is the source of all creation, of all providence and of all redemption.

The Meaning of the Commandment.

1. Biblical love includes at least three facets.
 - a. Love means that we recognize another person as a person. This we must do with God. We must acknowledge Him for Who He is in all the greatness of His being.

And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Exodus 34:6

- b. Love means that we give that person rightful place in our life. This we must do with God.

... The Lord, The Lord God . . . and Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. Exodus 34:6,8

- c. Love means that we do what is right by that person. This we must do with God. It is right to surrender to God, to believe and trust Him, to worship and adore Him, to honor and serve Him.

I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in Whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. I will call upon the Lord, Who is worthy to be praised . . Psalm 18:1-3

2. To love God we must keep in mind the relationship of love to decision and action.

- a. Love finds its origin in decision - choices - and not in feelings.

Love suffereth long and is kind, love envieth not, love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. . . I Cor. 13:4,5

b. Love is inseparably related to action. Our life proves our love.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk (live) in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. Ephesians 5:1,2

II. Explanation: The Importance of Loving God.

A. It is the First Commandment. Matthew 22:37-39

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

B. It is the Virtue to be Sought Above All. I Cor. 13:13

And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three. But the greatest of these is love.

C. It is a necessary requirement for exercising faith. Gal. 5:6

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.

D. It is an evidence of genuine sonship. John 13:34,35

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.

E. It is Inseparably Related to Obedience. I John 5:3

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous.

III. Application: How are We to Love God?

A. Meditate on the Greatness and Goodness of God. Rev. 2:4,5

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen

B. Repent of all Failures to Love God. Rev. 2:5

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent

C. Choose by Faith to Love God. Rev. 2:5

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works

D. Express your Love to God in Actions, Rev. 2:5

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works

Conclusion:

Allow me to make a suggestion that may help you. Most of us know our weak areas of life and when we need special help during the day, I have benefited by praying about what will happen during the day. When I choose to love God and practice the truth - then I do not enter into situations spiritually unprepared. If I make up my mind to honor God and do what is right - then the Holy Spirit can help me.

We often ask: What am I going to do? The Bible states: Love God and practice the truth!