

“KEEPING THE COMMANDS OF GOD IS WHAT MATTERS” - 1Cor 7:19

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1. Jesus said, “If you love Me, you will keep **My commandments**. You are My friends if you do what **I command you**.” *Jn 14:15, Jn 15:14*.
Jesus said, “**A new commandment** I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you.” *Jn 13:34,35*.
2. Matthew chapters 5,6,7 contain many of Jesus’ **commands** e.g.
“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God...” *Mat 6:33*
“Judge not that you be not judged...” *Mat 7:1*.
“Lay not up for yourself treasures on earth....but lay up for for yourself treasures in heaven...”
Mat 6:19,20 and many more.
3. “This is the love of God that we keep His **commandments...**” *1Jn 5:3*.
“Whatever we ask of Him we receive because we keep His **commandments....**” *1Jn 3:22*.
4. Jesus gave a summary of all **God’s commands** to a scribe who asked Him, in *Mk 12:28-34*.
Mk 12:30 “The first of all the **commandments** isYou shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”
Mk 12:31 “The second is: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other command greater than these.” See *Lev 19:18, Mat 7:12*.
5. Let’s look at the **first of all commandments**, *Mk 12:29,30*, to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.
6. **The first way we do this** is to “have no other gods before the Lord,” *Ex 20:3*. That is to give God the No 1 place in your life always, at all times. Before we become a Christian “self” is No 1, but in “repentance”, *Ac 2:36-39*, we turn from going our own way and give God the No 1 place, and live to please Him, *2Cor 5:9, Lk 9:23*. Challenged at a Ngaruawahia Easter Camp in 1953, at 19 years of age, to do this, I responded by lying face down before God and giving Him my hands, my feet, my eyes, my ears, my mind, my all, and since that time there has been a steady course set to live for God, and despite many struggles and difficulties, this has kept me on a straight path.
7. **The second way we love God** is to refuse to allow any idol, or anything, to come between God and us, *Ex 20:4*. The Lord challenged a friend of mine, a pastor, “You cannot tell others to get rid of idols out of their lives, while you have one in the corner of your lounge.” That night, late, after everyone else had gone to bed, he carried the TV set out onto the middle of the back lawn, and after taking a deep breath smashed his hammer right through the screen and tube! The idol may be our riches, *Mat 19:16-29*, a human leader, *Ac 12:21-23*, pleasure, *1Tim 5:6*, sport, business or the internet.
8. **Thirdly we love God**, by honouring His Name, *Ex 20:7*. Jesus said, “Pray, Hallowed be Thy Name”. Once, at a Bible College, on a Saturday afternoon, some of the students were in a group, with their guitars, singing Christian songs. After a while they started singing the songs in a mocking, ridiculing way. As soon as this happened, the Spirit of the fear of God, *Is 11:2*, fell on another student some distance away, who ran in amongst them shouting, “Stop! Stop! Stop!” and praise God they did, for the judgment of God was about to fall.
9. **Fourthly, we love God**, by keeping the Lord’s Day for the Lord. *Ex 20:8, Rev 1:10, 1Cor 16:2, Ac 20:7*. In the Old Testament it was the Sabbath, but after Calvary it became “the Lord’s day”, the day on which Jesus rose from the dead, “Sunday”. *Col 2:16*. Make sure you gather on the Lord’s Day to worship the Lord, to minister unto Him, to take communion and pray, *Heb 10:25, 2Chr 29:11, 1Cor 11:17-34*.

10. **Now we look at the second commandment, *Mk 12:31*, “Love your neighbour as yourself,” *Lev 19:18*.**
11. **The first way we do this** is to honour and care for our parents and elderly relatives, *Ex 20:12*. This commandment carries with it a blessing of long life to those who obey, *Eph 6:2*.
12. **The second way we do this** is to keep ourselves from murder, *Ex 20:13*. This is the extreme, but it starts with unforgiveness, bitterness and hate. *1Jn 3:15* says, “If we hate our brother we are a murderer, and no murderer has eternal life abiding in Him,” *Mat 5:21-26*. So forgive freely, and fully, all who hurt, abuse and offend you and pray every blessing on them.
Mk 11:25,26, Mat 6:14,15.
13. **The third way we do this** is to keep morally pure, *Ex 20:14*. Avoid all lustful TV, videos, magazines and refuse to look twice at a miniskirt. Flee from every temptation to sexual lust and sin, *2Tim 2:22, 1Cor 6:18*. “Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators....nor adulterers, nor homosexuals.... will inherit the Kingdom of God,” *1Cor 6:9,10, 1Thes 4:3-7, Mal 2:13-16*.
14. **The fourth way we do this** is to respect, protect and restore other peoples’ property, *Ex 20:15*. Look after their interests. Be a giver not a thief, *Lk 6:38, Pro 19:17*. Follow the giving heart of God, *Jn 10:10b*, and the “Good Samaritan,” *Lk 10:25-37*. (Don’t rob God either. Give your tithes and offerings to Him, *Mal 3:8-12*.)
15. **The fifth way we do this** is to speak the truth in love to, and about one another, *Ex 20:16*. Don’t tell lies about others. Always “Seek and Defend the Truth”. I have seen the inter-relationships of one family totally torn apart because one family member told lies about another. After 25years the tragedy was brought to the light but terrible harm had been done.
16. **The sixth way we do this** is to be content with what we have and avoid coveting, or wanting, what others have, *Ex 20:17*. Be content, *1Tim 6:6-11*, and go to God for the supply of every need, *Phil 4:19, Mat 6:33*.
17. Now obedience to God’s commands is only possible through the strength and inward life of the Holy Spirit, which God gives to us.
God gives us the ability to obey His commands as we:
- a. **Proclaim our faith** in His promises to live His life in us. eg *Rom 6:6,11,14, Phil 2:13(GNB), 2Pet 1:3,4, Ezk 36:25-27, Deut 30:11-14, Rom 10:6-13, Heb 8:10-12, Col 3:16*.
 - b. **Keep filled with the Holy Spirit and His power.** *Rom 8:2, Eph 5:18,19, Jn 7:37-39, Jn 16:13, Jn 14:26, Mat 10:20*.
 - c. **Depend on Christ living His life in us.** *Gal 2:20, Col 1:27, Col 3:3,4, Phil 4:13*.
18. Sin, Satan and this world are stronger than us, but God’s Word, the Holy Spirit and Jesus living in us, are much stronger than these.
19. The Law-Giver on the Throne is also the Law-Keeper in our heart.
20. So live by faith, walk in victory, get up and go on again when you fall, and He will be ready to welcome you into His eternal home when you have completed your course, *Ac 7:56, Eph 2:10, Jn 15:16*.