

When Jesus Speaks: Following New Covenant Commands

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When Eric Liddell (1902-1945), the famous Scottish Olympic runner of “Chariots of Fire” fame, dedicated his life to working with the Chinese as a missionary, he still could outrun most of us. His daughter recalls that he once caught a hare on foot for supper.

But Liddell was known for more than running. He was a devoted follower of Christ.

While on missionary journeys, Liddell would take the family along, using his large tent for their night’s lodging. He would separate his quarters with a cloth curtain. Sometime after midnight the rest of the family would see a glow from his section of the tent as he lit a small candle. When asked what he was doing, Liddell replied: “I’m looking for a command to obey in order to show Jesus how much I love Him.”



When Jesus speaks, we should listen, and obey. In fact, it is a trait of true believers to love to obey. I know that we all have those temporary, deceitful desires that lead us into sin, but the believer characteristically longs to do what Christ says.

Read how Jesus Himself demands our attention and obedience to His words:

Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments [His commands in the Sermon on the Mount], and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Mt. 5:19

Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.

Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall. Mt. 7:24-27

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

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. John 15:10

He means for us to do it. In fact, in the “Great Commission,” some of His final words on earth, He tells us that we are to “make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Mt. 28:19-20).

We should obey as if Jesus were standing right in front of us giving his gracious commands.

Do You Obey Christ’s Commands?

We are to think of the instructions of Jesus in two ways. First, they include the very words of Christ. Second, they include the words of those who were his “apostles and prophets” (Eph. 3:5). Consider some of the commands of Jesus from His own mouth and through his writing prophets, and ask yourself if you obey them?

1. “Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33)
2. “Love your enemies.” (Luke 6:27)
3. “Love one another, just as I have loved you.” (John 15:12)
4. “Flee immorality.” (1 Corinthians 6:18)
5. “Bear one another’s burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)
6. “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit.” (Philippians 2:3)
7. “Devote yourselves to prayer.” (Colossians 4:2)
8. “Rejoice always.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16)
9. “Encourage one another day after day.” (Hebrews 3:13)
10. “Do not love the world.” (1 John 2:15)

The Law of Christ

When Paul wrote the Corinthians, he reminded them that he was “under the law of Christ” (1 Cor. 9:21). So are we.

Though we are not justified through keeping his laws, obeying them will be a distinctive of all His followers.

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