

How do we obey God?

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:37-40

1. Love the Lord your God.

Heart- The seat of your emotions, desires, and will.

Soul- The "you" God created you to be. Your personality.

Mind- Your rational thoughts.

Spirit- That which can connect with the Divine.

All are capable of corruption, all are capable of obedience.

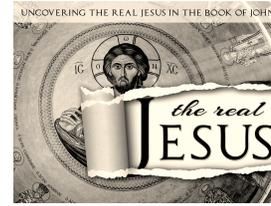
2. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Would I want others to do these good things to me instead of the bad things to me? You will always say yes to that question.

Go and do likewise to them whether or not they do it for you.

Community Group Questions:

1. How do you link love and obedience in your life?
2. If salvation is a free gift of God by faith, how do you explain our response to obey, doesn't God just save us if we ask?
3. Share a time the Holy Spirit has moved you to repent, and what that has entailed.



"Jesus links love and obedience" **John 14:15-26**

¹⁵ "If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them." ²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

²³ Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

²⁵ "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Four times Jesus links love to obedience.

If you love me, keep my commands. vs. 15

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. vs. 21

Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. vs. 23

Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. vs. 24

2 Important truths from the text:

1. The Spirit comes entirely because of Jesus and not us.
2. The Spirit will reside only with those that love and obey Christ. That sounds like work—that we must *do something* in order to experience the reality of the Holy Spirit in our lives. There is an assumption that any amount of work on our part must, by definition, diminish the magnitude of God's grace. Not true.

Dallas Willard: *"Grace is not opposed to effort it is opposed to earning. Earning is an attitude. Effort is an action. In the Bible we are called to work, obey, seek, strive, run with perseverance, fight the good fight, and work out our salvation. In short, we are commanded to exert effort in our life with God."* (Effort is an action in response to grace.)

Human effort, in no way *earns* us either salvation or the Holy Spirit. Christ alone is the reason for both gifts. Jesus can only be received, and the Spirit can never be earned; **That should make us all humble.**

Linking love to obedience reminds us that the Spirit can only be received by those who love Christ and his words.

That should make us want to be obedient.

Many Christian communities, have separated belief from obedience.

Jesus never does that. Nor do the other New Testament writers:

So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. 1 Peter 1:14

Loving God means keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome. 1 John 5:3

"So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say?

Luke 6:46

What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? James 2:14

We get confused by reading out of context.

After starting your new lives in the Holy Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort? Galatians 3:3

Paul says, we have received the Spirit by faith in what Christ has done, are we then to be perfected by our efforts going forward? No. We are already perfect in Christ. But that doesn't mean we can't work at obeying God as a response for what He has done for us in dying for sin.

(God) saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5

What does it mean to be obedient? It's a growing affection for God through Christ, for what He has done for us. A desire to please Him.