



Exploring the Kingdom of God through Matthew: The Least of These Commandments

Developing the Right attitude towards Christ and His Word!

October 22, 2017

TEXT: MATTHEW 5:19-20

- Last week, we looked at God's Law and discussed how the believer in Jesus, who is not under the law but under **grace** (Rom 6:14), should respond to it.
- We said that CRCC affirms the absolute authority and inerrancy of the Law, but interprets the Church's responsibility towards the Ceremonial and Civil Law through a more New Testament, Apostolic, Gospel-centric grid with **Christ** being the fulfillment of the Law's types and shadows. Please review that message if need be.
- Having understood how we are to look at God's Law, today we'd like to pick up on and be exhorted by a certain **attitude** towards God's Law (and indeed all of Scripture).
- Our Lord Jesus teaches this attitude clearly in Matthew 5:19. It is a position or state of the heart that God desired in His creations from the beginning.

God desires that our love for Him be expressed by a joyful, careful, passionate, volitional obedience to Scripture! Christ wants our love for Him to produce a mindset that says, "I will not ignore one jot or tittle of His Word; I will not relax even the least of His commandments, nor will I teach others to do so!"

WHAT IS AN ATTITUDE?

- From the Webster 1828:
 1. In painting and sculpture, the posture or action in which a figure or statue is placed; the gesture of a figure or statue; such a disposition of the parts as serves to express the action and sentiments of the person represented.
 2. Posture; position of things or persons; as, in times of trouble let the prince or a nation preserve a firm attitude.
- So an attitude is a **stance**; a disposition; a mental frame of mind.
- It is a "settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person's **behavior**."
- A "right attitude" towards the God and His Word comes from a heart that says, "Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens." (Ps 119:89) Indeed...

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever." Isa 40:8

DO WE REALLY LOVE GOD? I MEAN REALLY?

1. How should the love of God be expressed? Through prayer and worship and service and love one for another? Yes! But how?
2. How does anyone know that you love the LORD? What clues them in to your love for Jesus?
3. What are the chief manifestations of a transformed life?
4. What does God consistently say we must do to show our love for Him?

5. **I submit that a spirit-empowered, love-based obedience to the whole council of God is the chief way we demonstrate our love for our good, good Father!** This is the heart of God! (Note how often love and obedience are connected in Scripture.)

Exo 20:4-6 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Deu 4:2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Deu 5:29 O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

Deu 6:5-7 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Deu 10:12-13 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, 13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

Deu 11:1 Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always.

Psa 81:8-16 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me; 9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god. 10 I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. 11 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. 12 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. 13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! 14 I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. 15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. 16 He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

Isa 66:2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Luk 11:27-28 And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. 28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

Joh 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Joh 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

1Jn 5:2-3 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.
3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

2Jn 1:6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

THOUGHTS ON THIS ATTITUDE

1. In our text, the LORD not only lifts up every jot and tittle of Scripture, but rebukes those who would dare to **relax** and teach men to relax His Word.
2. He exhorts a "righteousness" that exceeds that of the Pharisees, who were great at lifting up their own **traditions** over God's Word (Matt 15:1-9) and missing the point of the Law entirely, which was justice, mercy, and faith (Matt 23:23).
3. Thankfully, from a Gospel-centric understanding, the righteousness we need has been imputed, or laid to our account, by faith in Christ! (2 Cor 5:21)
4. However friends, we are in the midst of a MASSIVE relaxing of the Word today. Teachers everywhere are instructing the masses that God's Word is antiquated, out of step with accepted **cultural** norms (and therefore irrelevant in many areas), and in large part should not be used to regulate home and church. Indeed...

"You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that! They are the kind who work their way into people's homes and win the confidence of vulnerable women who are burdened with the guilt of sin and controlled by various desires. (Such women are forever following new teachings, but they are never able to understand the truth.) These teachers oppose the truth just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses. They have depraved minds and a counterfeit faith. But they won't get away with this for long. Someday everyone will recognize what fools they are, just as with Jannes and Jambres." (2 Tim 3:1-9 NLT)

5. In another example of the opposite of the attitude we should want, Paul writes:

2Ti 4:2-4 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

6. **Oh friends, our love for God should cause us to want better. Our desire to please our LORD should motivate us to yearn for Him and His Word. Our gratefulness at having been saved by Christ's cross should inspire us to "love Him and keep His commandments!" (John 14:15)**

SCRIPTURE ON THIS ATTITUDE:

I can think of no better way to encourage you in this "right attitude" of loving God through a passionate keeping of the Word than to read a bit of **Psalm 119**. Let us read a few verses together and pray for transformed hearts.

Amen.

PERSONAL DEVOTIONS/FAMILY WORSHIP:

1. Finish reading Psalm 119. Jot down a few thoughts about the attitude of the psalmist towards God and His Word.
2. Compare the biblically appropriate attitude to yours.
3. Discuss/pray through changes you want to make based on what you learned.