

JOHN 15:12-17
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- John 15:12** This is my **commandment**, That ye **love one another**, as I have loved you.
13 Greater **love** hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.
15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.
16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and **ordained you**, that **ye should go and bring forth fruit**, and *that your fruit should remain*: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.
17 **These things I command you, that ye love one another.**

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We live in a land of boundless opportunities and unprecedented personal freedom. But along with that freedom certain responsibilities are incumbent on us. As one man put it, **"your freedom to swing your fist wildly in the air - ends where my nose begins."**

The government of the United States expects many things from many people. There are laws ranging from misdemeanors to felonies. Some things are suggested or requested, others are demanded. We are REQUIRED, that is, COMMANDED, to pay taxes. If one or two fail to pay their tax, they may face a loss of personal freedom. But if all fail to pay their tax, there is a total loss of control, anarchy reigns, and ALL LOOSE THEIR FREEDOM.

WE WOULD DO WELL TO OBEY OUR GOVERNMENT.

Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

BUT WE ALSO HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO OBEY GOD!

"There is an exception, of course. **A Christian is not required to obey if the government orders him to sin or to compromise his loyalty to Jesus Christ (Act 5:29)**. No government has a right to command a person's conscience. So there are times when a believer must, by obeying God, incur the wrath of man. In such cases he must be prepared to pay the penalty without undue complaint. Under no circumstances should he rebel against the government or join in an attempt to overthrow it.

Act 5:27b ". . . and the high priest asked them, **28** Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Act 5:29 Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.**

Our testimony to a lost and dying world, and our duty to glorify God supercede the governments micromanaging of our lives under certain circumstances.

2 things on the news this morning.

- A **coach** of a winning team was thanking God for the victory, And CNN cut him off and went to a shot of their anchors playing with their phones. **(not the first time CNN, owned by the atheist Ted Turner, has cut off Christians mid-sentence.)**
- A **High School principal** who said “God Bless You” – is attacked by the **ACLU**. (American Civil Liberties Union.)

We seem to be living in a whack-a-doodle, parallel universe that that declares “good to be evil, and evil to be good.” Decline to bake a cake – go to jail and have your assets confiscated. Kill you baby? Be a national hero and celebrate on **Twitter**.

Are liberal women really proud to have abortions?

By [Ed Straker](#), Oct. 2, 2015

Taking a nod from the **gay pride movement**, abortionists are calling on women to celebrate their abortion experiences on **Twitter** with the hashtag [#ShoutYourAbortion](#). Really.

The goal, according to Amelia Bonow, 30, who posted on **Facebook** on Sept. 19 that she had had an [abortion](#) at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Seattle last year, was to encourage women who had kept their abortions secret to speak up. “A shout is not a celebration or a value judgment; it’s the opposite of a whisper, of silence,” Ms. Bonow said in an interview. “Even women who support abortion rights have been silent, and **told they were supposed to feel bad about having an abortion.**”

For good reason. An abortion is the ending of a life.

“The problem for a long time was that this stigma felt like a negative cloud,” said Kate Cockrill, the executive director of Sea Change, a nonprofit organization she helped found two years ago to attack the stigma.

Why is it a problem when ending the life of a baby is considered a "negative cloud"?

- When the **Pope, who is the reputed leader some sort of “Church State”**, was here last week, his main concern was not the babies that are being **ripped apart limb by limb and sold by the pound in the flesh market**, but rather he was concerned that **our Constitution gives us the right to bear arms – specifically to reign in out of control “leaders” who have slaughtered 55 million innocent American citizens.**

[Isa 5:20](#) Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Without a doubt, the world would have us believe that there are **50 shades of gray** on every issue. That there is no darkness or light, only a **twilight zone** in which we each establish our own moral boundaries.

GOD GIVES US MANY CLEAR DICTUMS. ONE SUCH EXHORTATION IS FOUND IN **JOHN 15:12**

I. THE EXHORTATION TO LOVE 15:12

This is my **commandment**, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

A. ITS **EXTENT** "ONE ANOTHER"

B. ITS **EXAMPLE** "THE ONE OF WHOM THERE IS NOT ANOTHER!"

CONTEXT OF **12** = "IF YE KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS" OF **V. 10**.

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.

15:12 IS THE **FIRST AND CHIEF COMMANDMENT** AMONG THESE COMMANDMENTS.

John 13:34 says that this is a "**NEW COMMAND.**"

THIS SHOULD BE EASY ENOUGH. AFTER ALL WE ARE **ALL PART OF THE SAME FAMILY.**

- Article in *Reader's digest*, Oct. 2015, When Siblings Stop Speaking. P. 43.

"Brother and sister estrangement is a surprisingly common and unspoken phenomenon." P.43

The article covers several stories of **SIBLINGS** who stop talking with each other – often for years, decades or longer. There were several examples of what caused the breakup – often things as trivial as **failure to send a thank-you-note**, or incessant **criticism** of one sibling to another. One of those who did finally reconcile after 14 years of alienation observed –

"It is nice to share memories with someone who has the same perspective." p. 46.

Final paragraph:

"That is one reason, Kramer notes, that even siblings in contentious relationships still feel pulled to one another.

"Another person knows how your mother gets when she is packing for a trip, or when the car breaks down," she says, **"That shared set of experiences and that shared understanding are very powerful."** p. 46

Too often in the **church - the Family Of God** – there are **siblings who are alienated** from their brethren.

BE CAREFUL ! This is an open-book test and everyone can see how you do on the test. (Linus in Peanuts this week, True/False test story line)

1Jn 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, **because we love the brethren.** He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death.

1Jn 2:8 Again, a **new commandment** I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

Often - The **problem is not the exhortation to love**, but rather with the **extent we are to love to!**

In the **OT** and the **NT** up to this point, the principal was, "**love your neighbor as yourself.**"

NOW Christ changes things. It is no longer, love others as you love yourself, but rather "**love others as I have loved you**"

WELL THEN, **TO WHAT EXTENT DID CHRIST LOVE US?**

FIRST OF ALL, HE LOVED US **IN SPITE OF OUR SIN!**

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. **BUT GOD COMMENDETH HIS LOVE TOWARD US, IN THAT, WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.**

JESUS CHRIST GAVE HIMSELF AS A RANSOM FOR US ALL.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man **Christ Jesus; WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR ALL**, to be **testified** in due time.

1 Peter 3:18 FOR CHRIST ALSO HATH ONCE SUFFERED FOR SINS, THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST, THAT HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit:

- THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST,
- THE LOVELY FOR THE UNLOVELY,
- THE HOLY GOD FOR SINFUL MEN.

CHRIST'S LOVE GIVES ITSELF TOTALLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS.

THIS IS THE TYPE OF LOVE THAT WE ARE COMMANDED TO HAVE FOR ONE ANOTHER!

- THIS IS NOT AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM, or AN UNACHIEVABLE IDEAL.
- IT IS NOT A COMMAND THAT WE CAN IGNORE AND HOPE TO BE ABLE SOMEHOW TO CARRY ON OUR CHRISTIAN LIVES WITHOUT LOVING ONE ANOTHER.

- ALL ELSE THAT WE DO WILL BE A SHAM!
- IF YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN CONTINUE TO "LIVE A CHRISTIAN LIFE" AND YET, NOT LOVE AS CHRIST LOVED, THINK AGAIN!

I Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not LOVE, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not LOVE, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not LOVE, it profiteth me nothing.

FROM Oswald Chambers "**MY UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST**", P. 126.

"If Jesus ever gave us a command He could not enable us to fulfill, He would be a liar; and if we make our inability a barrier to obedience, it means that we are telling God there is something that **HE** has not taken into account. Every element of self-reliance must be slain in the power of God. Complete weakness and dependence will always be the occasion for the spirit of God to manifest power."

We are **not requested to love** - we are **commanded to love** - this is an essential element to **abiding in Christ**, which is **the essential element in fruit bearing which is our principal goal**, following closely on the heels of our chief goal of **glorifying God!**

John 15:4, and 5, and 6 and, 7: ABIDE, ABIDE, ABIDE, ABIDE !!!

10 KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS

12 1ST COMMANDMENT - LOVE ONE ANOTHER!

II. THE DEMONSTRATION OF TRUE LOVE -

*"Years ago, the ship known as **"The Express Of Ireland"** sank, and many passengers were drowned.*

*Among those who perished were **129 Salvation Army officers.***

When their bodies were recovered later, not one of them had on a life jacket!

*Survivors told how these **servants of God** had reacted with calmness and courage when informed that the vessel was sinking.*

*There were not enough life preservers to go around, **so they bravely removed theirs and gave them to people they felt were not prepared to meet the lord.** Some witness told of hearing those gallant crusaders say, **"we know the savior, so we are ready to die!"***

*Prayerfully, the courageous soldiers of the cross remained on deck until the waters engulfed them and they were welcomed into God's eternal haven." **DB 7-14-74***

JESUS SAID:

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS. John 15:13

(In one of the North. **American. Indian** languages,

"FRIEND" = "ONE-WHO-CARRIES-MY-SORROWS-ON-HIS-BACK."

Indeed, **all the sorrows of this life flow from sin**, and that is the very thing that Jesus bore on that cross that he dragged through the streets of Jerusalem.")

LET ME ASK YOU THIS MORNING - DID CHRIST LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR YOU?

IF HE DID, HAVE YOU ACCEPTED BY FAITH THAT WHICH HE HAS DONE ON YOUR BEHALF? **BELIEVE HIM, TRUST HIM, PLACE YOUR FAITH IN HIM - FOLLOW HIM**

OBEY HIM!!!!!! START WITH THE OBVIOUS THINGS, THE CLEAR COMMANDS!

START RIGHT HERE!

DO YOU LOVE ONE ANOTHER?

ARE YOU NURTURING IT, CULTIVATING IT, EXERCISING IT?

ARE YOU REALLY A FRIEND OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST?

For those who think they are Christ's friend, b/c they have not sinned,- (**much**) "I never killed nobody"

Turn it around, if you have killed someone, but have not stolen or broken any other commandment, do you think a judge will let you off on a murder rap?!

IF YOU HAVE NOT ACCEPTED HIM AS YOUR SAVIOR, YOU CERTAINLY CANNOT BE OBEYING THE WILL OF GOD FOR YOUR LIFE.

Matthew 22:36 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 neighbor as thyself.

III. THE APPLICATION OF THE EXHORTATION TO LOVE V. 14

V. 14 HAS A TEST TO SEE IF YOU ARE REALLY A FRIEND OF JESUS.

John 15:14 YE ARE MY FRIENDS, IF YE DO WHATSOEVER I COMMAND YOU.

JESUS IN THE UPPER ROOM WAS SPEAKING TO A GROUP OF TRUE FRIENDS - JUDAS LEFT - 11 CLOSE ONES REMAINED. NOT PERFECT MEN, BUT MEN WHO HAD MADE A CHOICE TO FOLLOW JESUS WHATEVER THE COST. TO FOLLOW HIM BY OBEYING HIM!

I JOHN 2:3 Gives Us Proof Positive Concerning Our Relationship To Jesus Christ!

"AND HEREBY WE DO KNOW THAT WE KNOW HIM, IF WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS.

I John 3:23 And this is **his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.** And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.