

A COMMENTARY ON THE SERIES

The commandments of Jesus

A.W. Bowman

Over the past several weeks we have been looking at the “universal” instructions Jesus gave His disciples. There are a bunch of them! I also included a couple of instructions that He gave that were not universal, but specific to either particular individuals or situations. These were included for additional study.

First, there is nothing in the New Covenant writings that was not first brought up under the Old Covenant writings. No, nothing new! Be it grace, salvation, judgment, circumcision of the heart, or baptisms, or the identity of the “Son of God”, etc. In the New Testament we have over one thousand direct quotes or references from the Old. That alone should give us all pause to stop and reflect on the importance of the Old Covenant writings to our better understanding of the New Covenant scriptures. Yet, there is more.

It is written that the Old Covenant writings were given to us as a “school master”, to lead us to Jesus Christ, even for the Old Covenant hearers/readers. Those writings are also identified as “types and shadows”, which would be fully expressed in the coming Messiah. Something to consider: In order to have a type of anything, or its shadow, there must first be an original somewhere. What and where was the original? Then there is the question of authorship of the scriptures. If the “living word of God” was also the full deity of God manifested (expressed) in the flesh, who was the source of the patriarchs and prophets’ inspiration, from where did they receive their instructions/revelations? Right, they received their instructions from the deity what indwelt the man, Jesus, the anointed one of God (the Messiah). Remember, Jesus had the Holy Spirit poured out upon Him without measure.

So, what does all of this Old Testament – New Testament stuff have to do with this series on the instructions (commandments) that Jesus gave to His disciples? These were not some holy sounding suggestions given by a man, but rather instructions, teachings, and commandments given by God Himself through the man Jesus Christ! Therefore, what did every Apostle teach? Well, since there is no record either in the Bible or in secular history concerning any Apostle going astray (except Judas Iscariot, of course), even when they were facing death for their teaching (faith expressed, lived and shared), then we can safely assume that each and every one of them taught exactly what Jesus taught them, just as any good disciple (student, Talmid) of a teaching master (Rabbi) would have done. We have neglected the teachings of the Apostles by neglecting the teaching of Jesus. How do I know this? Simply because most of us, including me, do not know, understand, nor practice all His teachings! How can I be so sure? Because I have never been in a church (and I have been in many churches representing almost every major Christian denomination), nor heard of a church, that taught everything that Jesus taught! Actually, in some of those churches the minister even repudiated some of Jesus’ words! Some even have said that they no longer apply to the “modern day church”.

What we are doing here is to bring back to light the neglected instructions that God gave to mankind so that we might live a life pleasing to Him. Not to be hearers of the word only – but also to be doers of the word. To live, and yes, even to walk in the Spirit.

Going through this study I have been driven to my knees in repentance simply because I did not

know all of these instructions that I have listed in this series. Among those that I did know, many I did not fully understand, and what I did understand I often failed to obey. Now, consider the consequences of the failure to know, understand, and obey God's instructions (commandments). Consider also the judgment reserved for those who teach error (incomplete, misleading, or even outright false doctrine, or who willfully omit some of God's instructions for righteous living) to a congregation. What price shall we be called upon to pay for our failures?

Whatever happened to allowing members of the congregation to share and discuss what God has given them concerning Himself and His word? That is, to take personal responsibility for their own salvation? Who ordained any of us to be "the final spiritual authority and resident expert" and all things biblical in a congregation, when there may be others sitting in the pews who know more and/or have a better understanding of what God is teaching us on any particular subject? Whatever happened to a teacher's proclamation of "I don't know"? My answer is, "I don't know."

So, where do we go from here?

Perhaps one place would be repentance, confessing our sin before God and our congregations. To hit the Book once again, leaving behind our religious indoctrination, church dogma, personal doctrines and allowing God to open up the scriptures to our understanding. To test what we think we know and understand against The Word, the Spirit, and other Disciples of Christ.

Perhaps that is why I am more known for the questions that I ask, than I am for the answers I give. I freely admit that I am frightened for myself, as well as for the souls that I have mislead or acted as a road block to their salvation and spiritual growth, rather than pointing them past me and on to Jesus Christ. May God forgive me, even all of us. Meanwhile, I try to drive, push, pull and encourage folks to get into the word for themselves, and not to take my words too seriously – unless and until they have been proven to be correct –that includes even this commentary.

The Godhead. Neither the term nor its equivalent exists in any original biblical language texts. It was a term made up by the translators to express in one word three different aspects of God's deity in English. Colossians 2:9 should be translated as, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the state of being God, i.e. the (full) essence of God's deity expressed bodily." For a more complete discussion on the subject see:

<http://hatalmidim.boards.net/index.cgi?board=language&action=display&thread=61>

Also, here is another common biblical term that is NOT found in the Bible, church, and of course neither is the common term, rapture. But at least most Christians agree that the rapture represents 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Review again Revelation 12:17; 14:12 & 22:14. Obeying all of God's commandments is not something I think we should treat lightly, or to add to or take away from, or otherwise modify in order to meet our own desires, wants, or personal agendas. Review Deut 4:2, 12:32, Prov 30:5,6.

Also please note the following:

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not

burdensome” (1 John 5:3) Now compare this with Acts 15:10, "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear (Peter, speaking about the law)? Who is telling the truth? Please think about it - study it.

Hint: They both were right, from a Hebraic worldview. One of them must be wrong from a Western, Greek world view. If you really get stuck on this one, let me know.

Again, this series was never intended to answer all of the questions that could arise from their reading, nor does it address all of the possible issues that can come up for discussion. Rather, its single purpose is to encourage everyone to go back and study the scriptures from a fresh point of view. And, to bring to light some topics that need to be taught within the church today.

Shalom Aleichem (Peace be unto you)

A.W. Bowman

The primary source material for this study was compiled from several open-source publications.

¹THE COMMANDMENTS OF JESUS - wowzone.com. www.wowzone.com/commandm.htm

Compiled and published by Evangelist. J. S. McConnell in 1925.

This copy is being made available in 1999 by his son,
John McConnell, Founder of Earth Day.

Also compared with:

The Commandments Of Jesus: the complete list from www.loveallpeople.org/pearl-thecommandmentsofjesus.html

Just to list a few. Additional resources can be found at:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=commands+of+jesus&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a>

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May the God of our fathers find your labor pleasing to unto Himself. Amen.