

Berryville Bible Beacon

Commandment Keeping

There are those in the religious world today who ridicule the idea of keeping commandments. They claim that keeping God's commandments have nothing to do with our salvation today. If someone objects and says that we must keep God's commandments to be saved, the charge of legalism is leveled against him. Is it true that keeping God's commandments has nothing to do with salvation? Are we legalists because we demand that those who follow Christ keep his commandments? Let's examine these questions in light of the New Testament scriptures.

Often, Jesus Himself is cited as one who criticized the Pharisees for being commandment keepers. However, such was not the case. We should note well that Jesus never condemned anyone for keeping **God's** commandments. Jesus, however, did condemn the Pharisees for placing their own commandments above God's! This is an entirely different situation. Matthew 15:1-9 is one such instance. Jesus confronted the Pharisees in regard to transgressing God's command to keep their own tradition (15:3). He said that they had made God's commandment of none effect by their tradition (15:6). Then He says that they in fact have taught for doctrine their own commandments, the commandments of men (15:9). Keeping such commandments should not be placed into the same category as keeping God's commandments. To equate the desire to keep God's commandments with the desire to keep man's commandments in place of God's commandments is to pervert the words of Jesus and entirely miss the point. Jesus expected others to keep God's commandments. It is because these Pharisees had set aside God's commandments, that Jesus' anger was kindled against them.

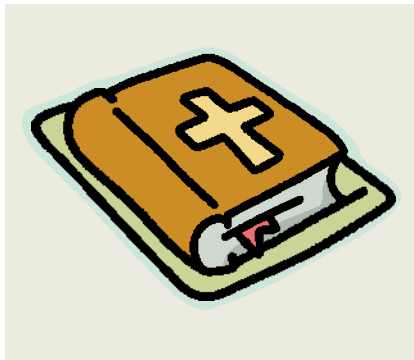
In contrast to ridiculing commandment keeping, Jesus Himself preached it! In Matthew 19:17, Jesus told one asking about obtaining eternal life to keep God's commandments if he would enter into life. The man asked what he lacked and Jesus added another commandment, namely, to go sell all that he had to the poor and follow Jesus (19:21). In John 14:15 Jesus said to the apostles, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Loving Jesus is dependent upon keeping His commandments. To say that we love Jesus, yet fail to keep his commandments is hypocrisy at best and outright lying at worst. Jesus reiterates in John 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." Note two things about this scripture. First, Jesus equates keeping commandments with abiding in His love. When you note John 14:15 (that you can't love without keeping the commandments) along with John 15:10 (that you can't keep the commandments without abiding in love), one gains a very firm conclusion: we can love Jesus if and only if we keep his commandments. But second, what is even more remarkable about John 15:10 is that Jesus himself is a commandment keeper. He abides in the love of the Father through keeping the Father's commandments. Here is a one-two-knockout for those who claim that commandment keeping has nothing to do with salvation.

The apostle John explains further in his first epistle just exactly what the relationship between commandment keeping and salvation is. In 1 John 2:3, 4 we read, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in

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Wonder If God Knows He Has Only One More Chance

A recent book announcement tells of the turmoil in one of the prominent religious denominations of our time. The struggle in that denomination reaches across the parties that are considered fundamental, moderate, liberal and ultra-liberal. The conventions have been meetings of warring parties whose agenda has resulted in more and more internal warfare. The advertised book deals with all of that. We are not in promotion of the book, but we note what has been said by the publishers/authors in their promotion of it ... yes, in the very title of it! And here it is: **GOD'S LAST AND ONLY HOPE**, and to point out that it is God's LAST HOPE!



If one really, by the Bible, thought of God's hope, it was that no denomination would ever exist, including this one (John 17:20-21; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:4-6)

Bill Jackson (deceased)
Via THE SOUTHWESTERN,
November 7, 1990

(Continued from page 1)

him." The simple conclusion is that one cannot come to know God without keeping the commandments. If you don't know God, you can't be saved (2 Thess.1:8). The apostle John comments further in 1 John 5:2, 3 "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." We cannot even love God without keeping God's commandments. In fact, John defines love for God in

exactly these terms. He says, "This is the love of God." Let us not forget, love for God is the first and greatest commandment. Loving our neighbor is like this commandment, but ultimately comes second (Matthew 22:37-39). My relationship with God

always takes precedence over my relationship with other people. This means that I must be concerned about keeping God's commandments.

The bottom line is ultimately this. Those who ridicule commandment keeping, ridicule Jesus himself, for He was a commandment keeper

(John 15:10). Those who ridicule commandment keepers, ridicule the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit was only promised to those who kept Jesus commandments (John 14:15-17). And those who ridicule commandment keepers, ridicule God the Father because we can neither know Him or love Him without doing such (1 John 2:3; 5:2). Such has nothing to do with being a legalist; and has everything to do with our being saved. So let's keep those commandments and show God that we truly do love Him!

Kevin Cauley



Sermons and Study Topics

Week of 1/18/04

Morning	For Obedience To The Faith
Scripture	Romans 1:1-5
Evening	Questions and Answers
Scripture	NA
Sunday Morning Bible Study	Guest Presentation
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	Our Christian Passion

Weekly Record

Week of 1/11/03

Sunday Class.....	61
Sunday A.M.	77
Sunday P.M.	66
Wednesday	58
Contribution.....	\$1694.86
Budget.....	\$1760.00

The Real Thanksgiving Feast

No moment in the week can be more sacred to the disciples of Jesus than when we gather at the Lord's Table. Here we meet to partake of that which feeds the soul, not the body. This weekly observance came to be called, in the early centuries of the church's history, "the Eucharist," this being the Greek word "Eucharistia" with an English pronunciation. It means "Thanksgiving" or "the giving of thanks." It must be admitted by all that a very prominent feature of our Lord's memorial supper was the giving of thanks. Before breaking the bread and drinking the fruit of the vine, our Savior offered thanks to His Father (Mark 14:22-24; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

This should emphasize to

us that we are to remember, with thankful hearts, what the bread and cup symbolizes. While we may remember many things for which to be thankful, these are not to be our concern as we prepare to eat the bread and drink the cup of the supper. Our minds and our utterances of thanksgiving need to focus specifically upon the symbolic elements and that atoning sacrifice which they silently declare. Prayers for the orphans and the missionaries and gratitude for our jobs and our families are much in order at other times during the worship hour, but not during the solemn moments of this holy feast.

At no time do we show our consciousness of God more than when we meet together at the Lord's Table. The supreme sacrifice of Jesus, the unfathomable love of the Father, and our own unwor-

thiness fill our hearts and flood our souls. This being the case, thanksgiving for such a Savior and for so great salvation cries out for expression!

Hershel Dyer
via The Voice of Truth International



Kevin's Korner

Believe it or not, now is the time for us to start planning for our VBS and Family and Friends day. This past Sunday evening, it was decided that we would have a one day VBS on Saturday and that we would follow up that day with our Family and Friends day on Sunday. This combination of events ought to be great for inviting those who live around us to come and be with us. The opportunity for their children to learn will be on Saturday and then the opportunity for the adults to learn will be Sunday. These two events will be held on June the 12th and the 13th respectively. I sincerely hope that we will begin to make every effort to invite our friends and family to these activities. Make your plans now to have

those days available on your calendar!

It was a delight to present to you this past Sunday evening a report of our trip to Costa Rica. I hope that this report was edifying for you and that you can see the wonderful work that is being accomplished in that country. Now, if you have a computer, you can access the full text of the report on the Internet. I finished uploading the text of the report this past week and it can be viewed at the following web site: <http://www.the-churchofchrist.com/CR/2003/>. I hope that you will avail yourself of this opportunity to learn more about that report or you may want to forward this web site to some others who would be interested in learning more about our work in Costa Rica. God has certainly blessed our efforts there.

Let's spread the word.

Next week Mary Lynn and I would certainly like to enjoy the pleasure of your company at our open house. This celebrates our two-year anniversary with the church here in Berryville. We hope that you will be able to come and visit for a few minutes next Sunday.

Elders:

Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan,
Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn
Quigley

Deacons:

Ken Smith, Brent Stevens,
Rusty Windle.

Preacher:

Kevin Cauley... 870-423-6707

News, Notes, and 'Noucements

- We are truly thankful to God for the wonderful new Lord's day that he has given us today to worship him in Spirit and in Truth!
- Let us remain constant in prayer for the following individuals: Brian Guess.
- Please remember our shutins: Curtis and Opal Hull, Art Roberts, Mary Patterson, Edith Mischler.
- Our monthly elders and deacons meeting has been postponed to next Sunday evening.
- There will be a sweethearts banquet in Joplin on Thursday, February 19th at Granny Schaefer's Restaurant. Wayne Deffenbaugh will be the speaker. Cost for the banquet is \$9.85 per person. Please RSVP with Kevin by February 9th if you wish to go.
- Ladies, you are requested to briefly meet after services this evening to discuss reorganization of ladies night out.
- Our monthly potluck is today after the morning services. If you are visiting with us, we invite you to stay and have lunch on the house!
- Everyone is cordially invited to an open house to be held at the Cauley's marking their two year anniversary. Times are Sunday afternoon between 2 and 5 PM. You may come and go as you wish.
- As I mentioned in the "Korner" VBS and Friends and Family day are coming up. Please start praying for the success of these events.
- The pantry item for this week is rice.



Welcome! To the Berryville church of Christ.

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:..... 9:30 AM
 Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
 Sunday Evening Worship: 6:00 PM
 Ladies Bible Class: 10:30 AM
 Wed. Evening Bible Class: 7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

January 18th, 2004

January 25th, 2004

Sunday Morning

Songs:	Ken Smith	Bill Fort
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bruce Foster	Bob Moore
Scripture Reading:	Leon Duncan	Matt Bassing
Lord's Table	Dan Hand	Bill Fort
(assist)	Rusty Windle	Bruce Foster
	John Gass	Ray Duncan
	Matt Bassing	Jack Gentry
Closing Prayer	Dan Hand	John Gass

Sunday Evening

Songs:	Hugh Atchley	Rusty Windle
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Larry Elliott	Ken Smith
Scripture Reading:	Brent Moore	Bruce Foster
Lord's Table	Leon Duncan	Dale Pinkley
	Ray Duncan	Perry Foster
Closing Prayer	John Gass	Brandon Foster

Wednesday

Songs:	Kevin Cauley	Sandy Nieves
Opening Prayer:	Brandon Foster	Ray Duncan
Invitation:	Leon Duncan	Matt Bassing
Closing Prayer:	Matt Bassing	Glenn Williams