

Love VS Keeping HIS Commandments

For some strange reason, traditional Christianity has decided that the concepts of "biblical love" and that of "keeping the Commandments of GOD" are in opposition to each other! The Holy Scriptures (both Old and New Testaments record otherwise). It is because of numerous conversations with professing believers, as well as many teachings that I have heard on these two subjects, that I write this brief article.

First off, let's look at the so called "proof text" that is used by those who have decided that JESUS (YAHSHUA) taught that there are only two Commandments that believers today need to worry about, as found in the gospels.

Matthew 22:37 – 40

When Messiah is asked by a lawyer "which is the great(est) commandment in the law?", JESUS replies "“*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*”³⁸ *This is the first and great commandment.*³⁹ *And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*⁴⁰ *On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”*

Some interpret Messiah here as saying that these two are THE summary, synopsis and embodiment of the entire Law of GOD, as recorded by Moses in the TORAH (Gentle instruction). Some interpret this text as saying that the Mosaic Law has been done away with and that YAHSHUA is now instituting once and for all, the only laws that HE requires of HIS disciples. Is either of these accurate biblically? Let's see if the concept of "love" is seen in the Scriptures to cancel out "the Law of GOD."

Beginning with the giving of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:6, "but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments." We must notice that, according to GOD, loving HIM is included with keeping HIS Commandments.

Deuteronomy 7:9 – “Therefore know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

Deuteronomy 11:1 – “Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always.

Deuteronomy 11:13 – “And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴then I ^o will give *you* the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.”

Deuteronomy 11:22 – “For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do—to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him—

Deuteronomy 19:9 – “and if you keep all these commandments and do them, which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and to walk always in His ways,…”

Joshua 22:5 – “But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Daniel 9:4 – “And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, “O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,…”

It appears, from these verses, that the concepts of “biblical love” and that of “keeping HIS Commandments” are synonymous...But wait! You might say, “Those are all Old Testament verses! What does the New Testament say concerning these two subjects???” **I’m glad you asked! Let’s take a look;**

John 14:15 – “If you love Me, ^okeep My commandments.

John 14:21 – “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.”

John 15:10 – “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.”

At this point, you might be tempted to suggest that the Commandments of The FATHER and those of JESUS were different. Is that what JESUS says?

John 5:30 – “can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.”

John 10:30 – “I and My Father are one.”

John 12:49 – “For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. ⁵⁰And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”

John 17:8 – “For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.”

Not only does JESUS identify the author of HIS message as HIS FATHER, but HE also identifies HIS message with what Moses wrote!

John 5:45 – 47 “Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is *one* who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. ⁴⁶For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷But if you do not believe **his writings**, how will you believe **My words**?”

And lastly, the apostle John, in his epistles years later, clearly instructs us as the LORD’S disciples to obey HIS Commandments...

1John 5:2 – 3 “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we **love God and keep His commandments**. ³For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

2John 1:6 – “This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.”

So, what we see throughout the Holy Scriptures is that the concepts of “biblical love” AND “keeping the Commandments of GOD” seem inseparable. JESUS may have given a quick thumbnail sketch of this in Matthew 22:37, but it is this author’s opinion, based on the Scriptures above that JESUS was not giving a new standard to live by. HE was only reiterating what HIS FATHER had stated previously to Moses in the Torah!