



Do You Really Love Jesus?

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (Jn. 14:15)

"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him. (Jn. 14:21)

"He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. (Jn 14:24)

"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. (Jn. 15:10)

Many say they love Jesus, even the plethora of false teachers leading millions in their false movements, so is there a way to prove this? Or should we be respectful and just accept them at their word? The visible truth of the matter is that such a declaration is readily measured by one's equal love for His Word. If they don't love their Bible, they do not actually have a real love for Him. But this is a measurement we must all undergo. We may regularly read our Bibles, but do we have the all-consuming passion for His Word that we profess to have for Him? We can point it out in others, but what happens if we point that finger at ourselves?

When figures such as those from the Emergent Church Movement (and other popular "ministries") say we don't really need His Word or can change it as we please, no matter what they profess, by Jesus' own words recorded above they cannot really love Him. Notice how positive motivational speakers like Joel Osteen begin by waving his Bible and even reading from it, but then provides a sermon which never refers to it. His love of Christ is immediately suspect. We could take example after example of the endless number of such false personalities, but we also need to take a long, hard look at ourselves. Do we prove our own love for Christ with an equal passion for His Word?

"Do You Really Love Jesus?", Page 1 of 7

The biblical definition of “love” is to be completely devoted and willing to personally sacrifice for the object of such a passion. I have no doubt that each day we all pray to Christ and even regularly express our love to Him, but are we equally devoted to His Word? And keep in mind (this is *really* important) that listening to someone preaching it or watching someone on YouTube who is a good provider of the Word is *no substitute* for personally studying it. When you truly love the Word you voluntarily open your Bible and dive in as often as you can. You can’t love by proxy. You should naturally know they’re good teachers of the Word because you’re so familiar with it to begin with. It becomes an all-consuming passion that supersedes all other influences in our life. Jesus even said that merely listening to Him was not enough, that we are still required to consistently be in His Word!

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” (Jn. 8:31-32)

“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. (Jn. 17:16-17)

The Bible is the principle device by which we become sanctified and eventually become distinguishable from the world and the old life we’ve committed to leaving. This is a motivation in and of itself to immerse ourselves in the Word. But it can’t just be another task we have to do, but something born out of our love for Him. Notice in the quotation from John 8 above that Jesus was speaking “to those Jews who had *believed* Him”. Only true disciples express their love for Christ with an equal relationship with His Word. It doesn’t end with belief but must continue with His Word.

When Jesus first appeared to the Apostles, He breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit (Jn. 20:22) and “Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures”. (Lk.24:45) It wasn’t a spiritual gift which He first imparted, but the priority of the Word. They were to commit themselves to the Scriptures, because whether it was the Old Testament or the New one to come through this group, Christ IS the Word. And, by the way, this shows that we must be equally committed to the Old Testament as we are to the New for many of God’s answers and examples found within it are not repeated in the New Testament. At the time, the only Scriptures available for opening their minds was the Old Testament. But note that the very first Christ-given priority was to understand and commit to His Word.

“Do You Really Love Jesus?”, Page 2 of 7

Modern English translations of the Bible contain just over 776,000 words. Every single one of them is the Word of Christ. Are you familiar with what He has **already** spoken? Is it possible that we often pray for situations and things which have **already** been answered in the written Word? (776,000+ words mean Christ has probably already provided the answer we're seeking.) What are the odds we are already bringing to Christ in prayer something not addressed by Him personally in His written Word? Is it also possible our Christian faith is held back or hampered in some areas because we haven't sought the whole counsel of God's Word? Or worse, have failed to study it to know all that has already been spoken?

This is why an often-used term in Scripture for how we are to handle Scripture is "meditate".

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. (Josh. 1:8)

I will meditate on Your precepts
And regard Your ways (Ps. 119:15)

*Even though princes sit and talk against me,
Your servant meditates* on Your statutes (Ps.119:23)

*Make me understand the way of Your precepts,
So I will meditate* on Your wonders. (Ps.119:27)

*And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments,
Which I love;
And I will meditate* on Your statutes (Ps.119:48)

*May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a
lie;
But I shall meditate* on Your precepts. (Ps. 119:78)

*My eyes anticipate the night watches,
That I may meditate* on Your word. (Ps. 119:148)

In other words, we are supposed to bring our Bibles into our prayers and worship so as to allow Him to point out what He has already spoken on the subject. Notice how in just these few sample verses the situations we are to bring before God and His Word rather than undertake them on our own because Scripture already provides His answer.

It is no coincidence that the book of Psalms begins the way it does in order to set the precedent for not just the rest of the book, but the entire Word of God.

*How blessed is **the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,***

Nor stand in the path of sinners,

Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

But his delight is in the law of the Lord,

And in His law he meditates day and night.

He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,

Which yields its fruit in its season

And its leaf does not wither;

And in whatever he does, he prospers.

The wicked are not so,

But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.

Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,

Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

*For the Lord knows **the way of the righteous,***

But the way of the wicked will perish. (Ps. 1)

Even if you think you've avoided associating with the wrong worldly influences, if you have no enthusiasm nor attraction to God's Word, you cannot be that tree planted in the right place constantly nourished by the water of His Word in order to produce biblically qualified fruit.

Notice that continual sustainment by His Word eventually produces people who are "righteous". This intimidating word is only practically achieved by an equal love of Christ the **Person** and Christ the **Word**. It only becomes impossible when we do not pursue an equal love of Christ and the Word. But notice how two of the most intimidating terms in Scripture, sanctification and righteousness, come into the very simple view that both are achievable by not just reading the Word, but meditating on it in our prayers and worship; not when we all get together each Sunday, but in the course of our **personal** prayer and worship life.

The common testimony I have heard in parallel with those who have finally left false movements is that they realized for some time before leaving that what they were experiencing in those environments was not in compliance with God's Word. It gnawed at them. Eventually they knew they had to leave and seek something committed to Scripture and which would encourage them to personally seek the same. They were still able to follow the Holy Spirit's prompting as saved Christians. There are many calling

themselves “Christian”, however, who have walked away from the Word of Christ and the Holy Spirit’s repeated attempts to draw them back for whom it is too late.

*For in the case of those who have once been **enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift** and have been made **partakers of the Holy Spirit**, and have **tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come**, and then have **fallen away**, it is **impossible to renew them again to repentance**, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. (Heb. 6:4-8)*

Yes, it is absolutely true that no one can snatch us from the Father’s hand. (Jn. 10:29) But because we still have free will even after being saved, nothing prevents us from **choosing** to walk away. Not everyone is like the Prodigal Son who has a realization of what they did and return to the Father. For those who continue to consistently resist the Holy Spirit’s calling to the point they become hardened of heart, they eventually experience Hebrews 6:4-8. There is a huge metaphor in this passage relating to their rejection of God’s Word, “*For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it*”. They steadfastly walk away from God’s Word and ways to eventually produce a life of “*thorns and thistles*” which “*ends up being burned*”. They did not “lose” their salvation nor were they somehow snatched from the Father’s hand but **chose** to walk away from Him.

I have not known large numbers of authentic believers who I can definitively say meet these criteria. (It usually takes years if not decades before we can tell for sure.) But one case I know who has traveled out of the Father’s hand and now scoffs at his former life in Christ after several decades of personal observation, breaks my heart. But as the growing apostasy of this final time on God’s calendar multiplies, we’re going to see many, many more.

On the other hand, God’s Word is filled with passages such as the following which document the personal and increasing benefits of loving Scripture to the point of being immersed in it daily:

*The law of the Lord is **perfect**, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is **sure**, making wise the simple.
The precepts of the Lord are **right**, rejoicing the heart;*

“Do You Really Love Jesus?”, Page 5 of 7

*The commandment of the Lord is **pure**, enlightening the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is **clean**, enduring forever;
The judgments of the Lord are **true**; they are righteous altogether.
They are **more desirable than gold**, yes, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. (Ps. 19:7-10)*

I have highlighted all the benefits we experience when we make the Word our priority over everything else in our personal prayers and worship. Take particular note how the many passages like this describing the effects of God's Word are easily transferable to Christ Himself. In this case, "perfect", "sure", "right", "pure", "clean", "true", "more desirable than gold" and "sweeter also than honey" are attributes shared by the Person of Christ. To love His Word works to love Him by learning every aspect of His character and will.

Not long ago, I had a bizarre experience after a major surgery when the anesthetic used provided lingering effects for the better part of three or four days. The very thing that allowed me to properly navigate the delusions caused by the drug was the Word. I constantly compared each thing I experienced with the Word, relying on what was true or false based on Scripture. At the beginning, for instance, I thought a large number of people were gathered in a nearby room to vote on who would assume the roles of either Elijah or the False Prophet. It seemed real, but I kept rejecting it based on knowing this was not the process specified in His Word even though the delusions continued. Many such things like that transpired for about three days but relying on God's Word kept me safe in a state of assurance that anything not meeting the standard of Scripture was false no matter how real it seemed. This is actually the very thing we're supposed to do every day as we live in a world just as crazy and filled with the counterfeit when we're fully awake and sober. We're kept spiritually sober by measuring all things according to His Word.

In the end, this is a test we can equally apply to ourselves and others: By Christ's own statement, if we don't love His Word, we don't love Him. I have found that this is the common issue with struggling Christians and every false movement in the Church today, that the absence of the Word always results in the absence of biblical love in their life. This seems to be obvious in a myriad of false personalities which we are able to spot, especially those leading movements who relegate the Word to something merely

"Do You Really Love Jesus?", Page 6 of 7

written by man. The tough question we face, however, is, “How are **you** doing in this regard?”

In Him,

Servant@WalkWithTheWord.org