

**John 14:21-24**

21 They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

Jesus is in Jerusalem with his disciples. He knows that he is returning to God, he knows his purpose, and he tells his disciples not to be troubled. They do not need to worry because he is going to prepare a place for them. He is not leaving just to be leaving. He has a very specific purpose. He is leaving for a very good reason. He is leaving for you. He is doing this for you. He is going home to get it ready for you. Jesus is forging ahead. He is confident because he knows the details. He is omniscient while the disciples are timid because they do not know.

There are three fundamental principals in his teaching. The commands are more than a suggestion, they are commandments. These are demanded by Jesus and required for the people to follow. Obedience to his commands is absolutely necessary especially in regards to respect, reverence, and compliance. Love is what Jesus and God are all about. You obey the commands due to love. The lesson is plain and simple. There is no gray area. There is no playing outside of the rules. There is no room for confusion. There is a positive correlation between love and obedience. If you love him then you obey him. It is those that do not love him that disobey. You cannot love Jesus and go in another direction.

The Scripture reveals a lack of understanding among the disciples. They fail to understand their destiny within the overall mission of Jesus. Our responsibility is to love and obey. Jesus is very specific. The ones who have his commandments and keep them are the ones that love Jesus. There is no room for hypocrisy. The number one thing that Jesus condemned more than anything else is hypocrisy. You will keep the commandments if you love Jesus. Love is reciprocal. You obey the commandments not out of duty but due to love. Jesus reveals the love of God which is for all humanity. God's love is fair and equal and is based on relationship. Loving relationships have very important characteristics of communication so that you can get to know the likes and dislikes of the other, mutual respect and honor, and reciprocal love.

Love is essential. Jesus teaches obedience but it is encapsulated in love. What God wants is love. The lesson is obedience by the virtue of love. The Gospel of John is clear. The facts verify that Jesus is the Son of God. John's purpose in writing the gospel is clear; it is written so that you may believe. The purpose of Jesus is clear; he came to deliver the word of God and the love of God to us in person. God's purpose is clear; Jesus is sent to us in order to bind together a conjugal relationship so that we are joined together in love. The law of God is a law of love.

We all grow up in family relationship. I am the baby. My mama said "You will always be a baby." I said "I will not." She said "You will always be my baby." The mother and child relationship began before I can remember. I can only imagine women gathering around the new baby and getting all squishy-squashy as most everybody does. They say things like "Oh he's so cute, what a beautiful baby." They ruin me for life. Because then I grow up and I'm not cute and

beautiful anymore even though I'm still the same person. Everybody wants to hold the baby. You can't resist it. As he wraps his tiny hand around your little finger everybody smiles. At that moment, love is pure.

Our relationship with God is one of love and purity. Obedience comes from love. The more you love the more motivated you are to honor, respect, and obey because you value the relationship. God created us in God's own image. God desires a loving relationship. God sends God's love to us due to the value that God places on the relationship. God gives to us the very best gift possible. Our only response is to love God back.

If you are convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, then you know the love of God is manifested for us, and materialized in flesh for us. As Christians, we are to treat others like we are Christians. The love of God is manifested within us. We are to love them as God loves them. We are no longer cute little babies but we are God's beautiful children and God loves us just as we are. We are not measured by the standards of the world: beauty, prestige, wealth, and social status. We are measured by the heart, soul, and love. Jesus said "They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me."