

True Love Equals Obedience to God's Moral Law

by Phil Beach Jr.

True love is demonstrated through obedience to God's moral law, reflecting a genuine relationship with Him.

Scripture: Isaiah 40:28, John 14:15, 1 Corinthians 13:1, Hebrews 12:5, 1 John 5:3, Revelation 3:8

Topics: "Obedience To God", "Authentic Faith"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the importance of genuine love for God being inseparable from obedience to His commandments, contrasting it with the prevalent misconception of love in modern Christendom. He warns against the danger of claiming love for God while living in disobedience and sin, highlighting the necessity of authentic faith expressed through obedience and selfless service. Drawing from the example of the church in Philadelphia, he underscores the significance of unfeigned love, faithful obedience, and endurance in suffering as evidence of a transformed heart truly pleasing to the Lord.

Transcript

Jesus said, "if you love me...keep my commandments." Nothing less than this can ever be accepted by or be pleasing to the Lord! This age in which we live has so misrepresented love, reducing it to a very selfish, soulical, and emotional, physical thing! There is such power in the words of Jesus when He said to His followers that if they loved Him then they were to keep His commandments! Love for God cannot be separated from obedience to Him. Yet, in Christendom today these concepts have been separated, and, as a result, we suffer great loss.

It has become an accepted fact that love for God in today's modern idea does not necessarily produce obedience to the words of Jesus nor to the way of the cross. Many can claim to love God today and yet, live in open sin and have no desire to obey His teachings. Some time ago, I visited a very large church. The sermon was filled with hope for those who simply profess faith in Jesus and claim a position of being in Christ, but made no demand to obey His Word. After the service, I spoke to a couple who were living in adultery, but praised the sermon, finding false hope in their agreement with the sermon.

They felt no conviction over their sin nor sensed the need to authenticate their confession of faith with a life of obedience to the Word of God. to them, all that was necessary was to claim Christ as Savior and profess that they were in Christ, possessing all His blessings and promises. Though this may be acceptable in today's modern church world by undiscerning folks, it is not acceptable to our Lord--the One

to whom we all must give an account. Surely it will be true that as our hearts are being filled with unfeigned love for our Lord and for those born of Him, we will find in us a growing prayer, being uttered at all times: "Oh Lord, show me where I must yet learn obedience to your words in my life, and Lord show me where I must yet learn to lay my life down for the saints"!

If this kind of heart is not growing in us and yet we believe that we are growing in love, we are simply deceived. Here let's look at what Jesus said in Rev. 3:8, 10: "...for thou hast a little strength, and has kept my word, and hast not denied my name... Because thou hast kept the word of my patience...". How clearly we can see the evidence of unfeigned love working and being perfected in these dear saints. You see how the major feature of these Philadelphian saints is the obedience to Christ's word, motivated by the love of God pouring into their hearts and faithfulness to His name?

That is unfeigned love in action, in its truest form, actually its only form! Out of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation chapters two and three, only two received no rebuke from the Lord. Four other churches received a mixture of praise as well as rebuke. But remarkably, the last church, the church of the Laodiceans received absolutely no praise at all, just rebuke. Here we can see that the farther we fall from living and walking in unfeigned love and obedience to the words of the Lord, the less the Lord can see anything in our lives and churches that pleases Him, and the more we become filled with self-deception and selfish passions resulting in blindness of eyes and fatness of ego and pride.

In such a state, we possess only an empty confession, but our Lord is outside, and no where to be found, except knocking on the door, hoping we will let Him back in! Oh yes, there may be a lot of noise, a lot of music, a lot of preaching and activity, lots and lots of fellowship and music, and even works... but where there is no divine love being expressed by obedience and selfless serving of one another, there is nothing but an empty shell of religious flesh. Actually, the Lord was so displeased with what He saw in the Laodician church that it made Him sick, so sick that He warned them that He would vomit them right out of His mouth!

Wow, now that is some serious rebuke. Hearts filled with pride, fullness of this world's goods, drunken with the wine of this age and a sense of having no need, evidenced by trusting in human resources rather than the Lord's word.. make the Lord so sick, he threatens to fully reject such a people! Yet He clearly stated that He spoke these hard words because He loved them enough to care for them and tell them the truth. His last words to these loved but backslidden saints were, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent..."

These are words that we all should take deeply to heart. Sometimes when the Lord speaks like this to a group of professing saints, they become offended and resent such correction, even imagining that the Lord would never say such things to them. Yet, clearly the Lord does say such things. The Actions of Godly Love Paul said that faith, which works by love (the God-kind of love, which produces obedience to the Lord's words and selfless service toward on another), fulfills the whole law.

Then of course we have his great description of love in action, "If I had the gift of being able to speak in other languages without learning them, and could speak in every language there is in all of heaven and earth, but didn't love others, I would only be making noise. If I had the gift of prophesy and knew all about what is going to happen in the future, knew everything about everything, but didn't love others, what good would it do? Even if I had the gift of faith so that I could speak to a mountain and make it move, I would still be worth nothing at all without love.

If I gave everything I had to poor people, and if I were burned alive for preaching the Gospel but didn't love others, it would be of no value whatever. Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud, never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong. It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out.

If you love someone you will be loyal to Him no matter what the cost. You will always believe in him, always expect the best of him, and always stand your ground in defending him. All the special gifts and powers from God will someday come to an end, but love goes on forever" (The Living Bible). Beloved, this is so very heart searching, is it not? Fathers and mothers, what good is all our profession if we can't love our children with the kind of love described above? Husbands what good are all of our labors for our families, all our great leadership skills, all the gifts we buy our wives, all the money we provide... etc., if we cannot love our wives with this kind of love, even with the kind of love Christ has for His beloved bride--an emptying, selfless, serving love?

Young people, what good are all the youth group activities, Bible studies, and all the evangelistic events if when you go home you talk back to your parents, make haughty remarks to them, and show disrespect? Preachers, what good is all our preaching, all our teaching and words being done if we are given over to unclean hearts, words that are filled with the venom of criticism, backbiting, pride and sowing discord among the brethren? Oh beloved, what good is anything in the house of God today if not born of the Spirit, and fueled by this kind of love?

Paul said all things done, even in His name, and that seem to be glorious and most commendable, if not done from the love of God are empty and of no eternal value! When His love is being perfected in us, we do not need to be patted on the back because of our service to one another. Husbands and wives do not serve one another based on condition of reward, be it expressions of appreciation, emotional or physical, when they are being moved by divine love! How often folks get bitter and hard because they feel nobody sees what they are doing in the church or nobody cares about what they are doing in the home.

These feelings should be a warning signal to us that we yet need to pray for perfect love to grip our hearts, lest we submit to these impulses and surrender to the lie of the devil. This is true in the home too. It is so easy to love our children when they are very young and innocent. But what happens when they get older and do not appreciate our love and sacrifice for them? What about when they actually do things that seem to suggest that they despise or even take advantage of our love and kindness toward them?

Unless we meet the Lord in a very deep way during these times and die to our human tendencies, we will submit to earthy fears and sins and allow bitterness, resentment, anger, impatience, and unforgiveness toward our children to grip our hearts resulting in untold damage to our families and relationships. The Lord says that an offended brother is harder to win back than a walled city. This means that if we fall prey to bitterness and become offended toward any human being, there is a great danger of being swallowed up by this sin and being unable to find freedom.

How dangerous to allow an offended spirit to live in our hearts! Are you offended? Have you been wounded by the truth or hurt by another person's actions? Are you given over to the cancer of bitterness? There are times when we will be required to love, over a long, long period of time, people, perhaps members of our own family or church family, who simply do not express any form of appreciation in return for our love or who have hurt us by telling us the truth we were not able to receive at the time, or perhaps

are not able even at this time.

What will we do? God's love does not become tired, beloved. "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not neither is weary...?" (Isaiah 40:28a). His love does not faint. Yet how quickly our does! If we do not make the great exchange from our human love to His divine love, we will faint, give up and get bitter, closing our heart and ceasing to pour out our lives into our loved ones. Bitterness is the food satan feasts on when he find it in the hearts of men and those who are filled with bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness are eventually swallowed up by satan and end up in his grip, mirroring his likeness and ways.

Oh, to know the great escape from the wretched man within, Christ our life and love!! Child Training--the Way to Christ's Fullness Of Love So here we have seen some very attractive qualities that are found in this church in Philadelphia, among them endurance in the midst of great suffering, unfeigned love for the brethren and faithful obedience to the Word of God. Will we be very earnest to ask our Lord to grip our hearts with a passionate desire for these truths to be deeply wrought in us?

If so, there is the need for us to become subject to the "child-training" of our Father in heaven and learn obedience by enduring His hand of discipline. Only as we are subject to the scourgings of His love and remain subject to them, allowing them to work the full intention of His heart in us will we be able to know the realities of such things. How deeply we need to pray for the power to endure His hand of discipline and not despise, as the scripture says, the chastening of the Lord or become weary when we are corrected!

It is all too easy to buck up against the very things God is bringing to us to produce maturity, and run the risk of failing to enter into the Lord's highest intention for us. Remember, God's perfected love working in us enables us to satisfy the whole moral law of God and hence, truly obey His commandments, which are all fully satisfied by the nature and outworking of His love in our lives. Remember Israel in the wilderness: God never wanted them to die without entering the Promised Land, but they did!

Why? Because they only allowed God to deliver them out of Egypt, but failed to let God deliver Egypt out of them. You see beloved, God brought very deep and hard testing to Israel in the wilderness, intending to bring them to the end of trusting in themselves and their own power and resources, but time after time they rebelled against Him. Finally, God became upset and told them they would not obtain the full plan of His heart but would instead wander, and wander and wander in the wilderness until they all died.

God delivered them as little babes, spiritually speaking, and wanted to mature them into full-grown adults so that they could enter Canaan and, by His great power and wisdom, drive out every enemy! But they would not have it. They refused to endure God's child training. The wilderness experiences that Israel was called to endure were intended to reveal to them what was in their hearts, to produce in them a deep repentance and sense of need to depend on God's help. God said repeatedly that he wanted to humble them so that they could learn to live on and obey every Word of God and depend on His guidance rather than on their own worldly wisdom.

But alas...the pride in their hearts, the ego driven passions working in their minds prevented them from being humbled, and they suffered the consequences and were forbidden to enter the promise of the Lord. In spite of their wilderness rebellion, the Lord never forsook the nation of Israel nor allowed them to starve. Contrariwise, He provided all their needs, feeding them and not even allowing their clothes or shoes to wear out. Yet, they constantly rebelled against Him and were always grieving His heart.

So we can learn that just because our Father takes good care of us by providing all our needs, that is no sign that we are pleasing Him or being subject to the correction that He may be bringing into our lives. We can see that the thing that pleased God was what He saw in Joshua and Caleb. He said of them that they were of another spirit--they believed God, and were willing to obey Him, allowing His discipline to work in them the dependence on His power that was necessary for the conquest of Canaan.

God said of Caleb that he wholly followed the Lord! What a thing for God to say! Both he and Joshua were Philadelphia saints in heart and spirit, "without rebuke", and God rewarded them by allowing them to enter the Promised Land! Joshua and Caleb were not "super-saints". They too, were subject to temptation, sin, and rebellion just like their brothers. The difference...they allowed the wilderness to humble them...to take away from them confidence in flesh, in human wisdom, in human strength, in the numbers of Israel's army and in finding help or confidence in human resources...and to produce in them a heart that trembled at God's Word and feared God with a godly reverence.

Yes, they too failed at times and doubted, just like all men do. But they refused, like Paul, to fall prey to the powers of darkness, and as they cried out, the Lord met them and helped them. Never, could Joshua or Caleb ever brag or feel superior to their friends and fellow saints. They knew they were prone to sin, far more than their brothers..and that the victory they were walking in was NOT theirs, but the Lord's very power, that He promises to those who admit to their sins and failures!

God Always Helps the Humble and Repentant of Heart Oh, how we should long so very deeply that our Father may say of us that we are wholly after Him, seeking only to please Him, pursuing wholly after His interests and not our own. How hard it is to find this kind of Christian heart in these evil days of religion and pleasure hungry lusts. Yet the Lord is able to give us the same heart that these godly men had, if we will but ask and keep asking and are willing to admit our failures and often pride filled reactions to God's corrections.

Yes beloved, we too can know the joy of being dead to the world and to the devil, and alive to God in Christ if we, as they, would seek Him with a whole heart. He promised not to withhold any good thing from those who walk in His way. Do you walk in His way, seeking to please Him with all your heart? If so, then be encouraged to believe that He is faithful to perform in you all His good pleasure. Just be earnest and diligent, not slothful or lazy, and you will receive! God has said it and He is not a liar.

It cannot be emphasised enough...if and when we fall short of God's full promise to bring His moral likeness and victories to us..it is because of our own rebellion and never because He refused to grant it to us. When we seem to be experiencing a deficiency in grace and have become hard in heart, addicted to some grievous sin or life-controlling habit or problem, or just lose our first love and just live life to survive, which keeps us bound to darkness and self...it is never because God is not offering us help.

It is always because we are too proud to accept His help and unwilling to be humbled deeply enough, in our own eyes and the eyes of others. God says, that he gives grace to the humble but resists the proud of heart. He promises to teach and guide the meek and humble and to revive and strengthen the contrite and broken hearted believer. Well beloved, to sum up what we have said, it seems that there is a sure way to bring pleasure to our blessed Lord Jesus, to the point where we can be without rebuke before Him, filled with the precious fruit that so brings joy to His heart.

It is clear as we give ourselves to much prayer over this letter to the saints in Philadelphia, that the Lord will open our eyes to see those qualities which abounded in them, including His power to endure great

suffering, His perfect love for the brethren, His faithful obedience to God's commands. As we continue in deep, earnest, and diligent seeking, we will begin to have these very things abound in our own lives, homes and churches, thereby being assured of bringing much pleasure to our Savior as He sees the qualities of His very own life blossoming in us!

In closing, may we prayerfully join in heart together and pray this prayer, asking our Father to help us to be sincere and most earnest, knowing God longs to grant us these requests. Our heavenly Father, we thank you so much for your love, mercy and grace that you have so freely poured out to us through your Son. We look to you for all the grace we need to become a people in whom you may take great delight and pleasure. Through your Word, we have become so very aware that our human strength, human wisdom and human love fail to measure up to Your holy standards.

The only eternal, moral qualities you can use are those heavenly attributes that are formed in us by the power of your precious Holy Spirit that reflect your own moral excellence and likeness. Father, give to us a humble and meek spirit so that we will both admit to our many faults, and submit to all your dealings in our lives. Give us patience so that we may be able to endure to the end... and so be made into a people in whom there is no rebuke, and by your abounding life in us we may indeed be blameless.

We freely acknowledge that you Son is our hope and in Him alone do we trust and find perfect salvation. Help us to deny our soul and its selfish tendencies and to truly live in union with the Lamb, in whom there is no guile and from whom we find grace to obey Your every Word. Thank you dear Father, and through your lovely Son we pray. Amen!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/phil-beach-jr/true-love-equals-obedience-to-gods-moral-law/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net