

God's Glorious Commands - Exodus 35:1-35

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- [0:00] All right, well, good morning. Welcome to Calvary Chapel, Charlotte. Turn your Bibles to Exodus 35. When you get in Exodus, when you begin to read Exodus, it's very exciting. It's like, it's almost like a movie. It's like, whoa, there's like miracles.
- There's bad guys. There's bad guys getting whooped on. There's the good guy who's just like untouchable. No matter what happens, it's just like keeps coming around that things are looking up for him. And then you get into like, they come out of Israel.
- I mean, out of Israel, out of Egypt. Israel comes out of Egypt. They get into the wilderness. They get to the mountain. And everything just kind of gets like this. It's like, what is happening? Are we on the mountain? Are we off the mountain? There's all this stuff that's being talked about.
- And so I put together this little slide for us so we can kind of like see where we are. It's very simple because I like things very simple. Just see, where are we? What's been going on? So back way back in Exodus 24, when we covered Exodus 24, Moses goes up to the mountain to receive from God the first time, the Ten Commandments, where God writes them on tables of stone.
- And he's up there a long time. And that's where he's given the tabernacle, the whole design for the tabernacle.
- [1:07] And there's all this stuff. We looked at all of that. How it looks like Jesus. And where the tabernacle is where God comes to dwell with man, to tabernacle among them, ultimately pointing forward to when Jesus would come and tabernacle.
- Moses is so excited. And then God gives him the downer of, hey, you need to go back down. I need to deal with the people down there because they've made a golden calf. So Moses comes down the mountain after being up there 40 days and 40 nights.
- He deals with that. And he says, hey, I'm going to go back up to the Lord. Perhaps I'll make an atonement for you. Does Moses make an atonement? No, he does not. He intercedes.
- And God says, I will forgive them. But he did not atone for them. There was not a blood atonement that Moses made. Why? How could God forgive? Because God forgave off the basis of the atonement he will make, that he will make.
- The same basis he forgives us off the atonement that he did make in the blood of his son. Moses then comes back down and God gives him the not so great news again of, hey, Moses, I'm going to go with you and the people up to the promised land.
- [2:10] You have my promise. You have my blessing. But I'm not going to be among you. I'm not going to be dwelling with you in your presence, in my presence with you. I'll be at a distance. Because this people is a stiff-necked people.
- And I don't want to consume them. And Moses does what? He again intercedes. This is where he takes his own tent and runs outside the camp and makes the tabernacle of meeting with his own tent. He meets with God there.

And he again intercedes. And that's where he says, Lord, show me your glory. Or as we just sang, Lord, show me your face. I want to see your face, Lord. And God says, okay, Moses, prepare again.

This time you prepare the two tablets. Come on up to the mountain and I'm going to give you again the Ten Commandments. And that's what he did last week in Exodus 34. He went up to the mountain and he received again those Ten Commandments.

Now he's coming back down again. One, two, three, this third time. Coming back down the mountain in chapter 35 here. And this is going to, for all intents and purposes, be the first time that the people are going to really get to receive what God has spoke to Moses back on Exodus 24.

[3:11] Back on the mountain. The first time they're going to get to understand what the tabernacle is. As Moses is going to give them now the shopping list, essentially, for the needs of the tabernacle.

And all of this is in relation to what we looked at last week. And it is God's covenant with Israel. His alliance. His pledge. That he has pledged himself to Israel.

God's covenant was based on God's word. And yet it involves man. God says, this is my covenant based on my word. But it involves you. It has to do with people. God doesn't need to make a covenant with himself.

It's with us. It's with people. And Moses, when he came back down the mountain that last time, what was unique about him? Right? He was lit. Right? He was glowing.

His face was glowing. But it faded. It eventually faded. And I didn't mean to tap that right when it faded. It said fade. But that was pretty cool. It faded. What was left after the glory faded?

[4:10] What was left to be seen? All that was left was the tables of stone. It was God's word. When the glory fades, God's word was still there. And Jesus, our man of the covenant, God's word made in flesh.

His glory doesn't fade. But we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He veils nothing of God's goodness from the people of the covenant. Psalm 36 verse 9 says, For with these the fountain of life, in thy light we shall see light.

Man, there's nothing hidden in the presence of God. God's light, God's glory, that which makes manifest in our lives, the word of God, the light of God, is light.

It is the definition of light. You know, it says in the New Jerusalem and the new heavens, there'll be no sun. There'll be no need of the sun or the moon. For the Lamb himself will be the light.

That's going to be true light. That's going to be a light that's not just seen. That's going to be some kind of something that permeates and is felt and is like, it's going to be most real light we've ever experienced.

[5:13] So God's covenant, his glorious covenant, is based in his commands. It's based in his word. And that's what we're going to look at today. God's glorious commands. Moses is going to take this covenant, these promises that God has given him.

He's going to take this alliance and this pledge and he's going to apply it now to the lives of these people through God's commands. Commands. A covenant is an alliance or a pledge. And I want to make a distinction a little bit because last week we looked at this covenant, this covenant with Israel that God has.

And we looked at a lot of the attributes and that carry over from God's covenant with Israel into his covenant with us. Every covenant of God involves what? God.

It's the same God across every single covenant. But not every covenant, not every alliance, not every pledge of God is the same. They're not all the same, even though it's the same God. So all of God's covenants exhibit the same nature and character of God, even if they're not for the same people and purpose.

Right? All of God's covenants are going to contain the same nature and the same character because it's God. But his covenant may not be for the same people and the same purpose. So we looked at all these attributes of God's covenant and those attributes that are displayed in God's covenant with Israel.

[6:29] They're the same attributes displayed in his covenant with the church, with us. Even if the conditions, promises, and purposes of the covenant are not the same.

So God's conditions and promises and purposes of his covenant with Israel, those are not the same as his conditions, promises, and purposes for his covenant with the church. But it's the same God.

So it's the same attributes. He's going to be just as faithful to one as he is to the other. He's going to defeat our enemies and it's an exclusive covenant. It reveals a one true God. It's based upon God's word.

All of that applies to every single covenant across the board. If you want, you can turn to Genesis chapter 12 briefly. We're going to be in 12 for a couple of verses and then 17.

But there's a covenant there in Genesis 12 that the Lord gives to Abram, not yet Abraham. He makes a covenant. In Genesis 12, beginning in verse 1, he says, Now the Lord had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and thy father's house and the land I will show you.

[7:33] A very lonely step for Abram. A very faith-filled step for Abram. And I will make of you there a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great and you shall be a blessing.

This is God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would be a great people group, a great nation, the nation of Israel. And on top of that, I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee.

And in thee shall what? All families of the earth be blessed. There's two promises there. There's two covenants aspects of the Abrahamic covenant. One, God says to Abraham, I'm going to make of your descendants a great nation, a great people group.

And I'm going to bless all people groups of the whole world. Can those two promises and covenants exist together? Genesis 17, if you want to flip over there.

A few verses down into Genesis 17 and verse 7. God is again reiterating this promise to Abraham. But Abraham at this time is in the land of Canaan.

[8:40] He has left Ur of the Chaldees. He's now in the land of Canaan. And God says, I will establish my covenant between me and you. I will establish my alliance and pledge. And your seed after you in their generation for an everlasting covenant.

To be a God unto you and to your seed after you. And I will give unto you and to your seed after you the land wherein you're a stranger. All the land of Canaan for what? An everlasting possession.

How long is everlasting? Well, this is an everlasting battery. But it doesn't last everlasting. Right? We can slap a name on it. When God calls something everlasting, it is everlasting.

How long is eternal life? It's eternal. If it can end, it's not eternal. Very basic here. I will give you an everlasting possession and I will be their God.

And God said unto Abraham, then you shall keep your part of this covenant, which is what? Circumcision for the Jews. So here you have a promised possession of land. An everlasting promise to this people group that God says will come from Abraham.

[9:45] In Galatians chapter 3, Paul is speaking of how one promise superseded another promise in time.

But it did not then displace that promise in its ability for God to keep it. So he says, hey, the promise that Christ would come and redeem was given before the law.

But the law did not then make the promise of God of none effect, that Jesus would come by faith. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith.

He says, listen, it's not that this one supplanted the other. Well, now the law is here. There's no promise left that Jesus, that the Messiah will come and we will receive him by faith.

No, no. The law and the promise of God's Messiah work together perfectly. They complement one another. God's covenants work in perfect harmony together. They can be fulfilled, but they cannot be disannulled.

[10:46] There's no promise of God that disqualifies another promise of God. There's no promise of God that counteracts or conflicts with another promise of God. They all work together perfectly.

This is the same God who says, all things work together for good to them who love God and are called according to his purposes. God has a purpose for Israel. As we looked at their covenant last week, the church does not replace Israel.

There are those today who would say that all the promises that were meant for Israel, they become the churches because we are spiritual Israel.

We become the children of Abraham by faith. Well, they're right in one sense. We are part of Abraham's promise. But as we saw in Genesis chapter 12, there's two parts to that.

There's the part that God says, I am going to bless you. I'm going to bless the people that come through you. And I'm going to bless all peoples through you. Romans chapter 9, Paul is talking about this.

[11:46] He says, for they are not all Israel, which are Israel. Neither because they are all the seed of Abraham are they children. But in Isaac shall their seed be called. What does he mean there? Well, Abraham had other children. He had Ishmael.

But Ishmael was not a Jew. He's not Israel. He's not the way that the promise came. Abraham had a few other children through Keturah. After Sarah died, he had other kids.

So Paul's making the point here that being a physical descendant of Abraham did not mean you're part of God's promise to the national people group of Israel.

Right? God's promise to the national people group that would come from Abraham came through who? Isaac. He said, through Isaac shall the seed be called. That is, they which are the children of flesh.

These are not the children of God. Not just because they're part of his family heritage. But the children of promise are counted for the seed. Jesus makes the same distinction when he comes and says to the Pharisees, Don't think because that you are of the flesh of Abraham that you're God's chosen people spiritually.

[12:52] You must become part of God's spiritual chosen people in the same way that I chose a physical people. God's covenant works in perfect harmony. His covenants don't contradict.

In Romans 11, Paul answers the question of those who would say, well, is God through with Israel then? Because now there's a spiritual Israel. Do we not need this physical promise to Israel anymore?

When Paul says, I say then, has God cast away his people? Israel. God forbid. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall be the receiving of them?

What shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? Paul is saying, listen, God's not through with Israel. That's the whole point of Romans chapter 9, where he talks about Pharaoh and how God's able to use Pharaoh.

Where he says, does not the potter have right to use the clay how he would? Yes, Israel is a marred vessel, but God's grace and God's glory is able to use a marred vessel to bring about his end.

- [13:59] So yes, does Israel appear to be cast away? They do. And look what's come from it. The fact that God's chosen people in this world rejected him. Well, because of that, God fulfilled his promise to Abraham that through him, all families of the earth would be blessed.

Because Israel rejected their Messiah, then the gospel has gone out to the Gentiles and to all the world. And Paul makes the conclusion here and says, guys, if they're rejecting of the promise led to salvation, what will their fulfilling, their belief in the promise be?

What will it be when Israel says, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord? And Paul says, but life from the dead. Then will we really know what it is to live when God's promised people in the flesh unite with and become God's promised people in the spirit.

And the two are one. That'll be amazing. Israel's covenant is not for the church. But it did birth the church. The church was birthed out of Israel's covenant.

And our covenant, the church, is for Israel and the Gentiles and all who would come. Because it births a spiritual Israel. Does it negate the fact that God has a covenant with his people in this world, with Israel, an everlasting covenant that has to do with the land and has to do with what he promised Abraham?

- [15:17] It does not negate that at all. But it does not mean just because they came through Abraham, they're part of spiritual Israel. They have to come the same way we do. God's promises to spiritual Israel, blessed as the seed of Abraham.

Are they blessed as the seed of Abraham? They are. They don't disannul his promises to the people of Israel that are spiritual Israel. Right? And in reverse.

God's promises to spiritual Israel, the fact that we have received the promise and are part of the spiritual chosen people, do not then negate God's promises to his physical chosen people. So as we look at these scriptures and as we, as Paul says in Romans, that whatever things were written beforehand were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope.

We're not trying to fit ourselves in and replace what God did. We're not trying to say, well, we're going to look at the Old Testament and we're going to find out how we fit in there. No, no. What we're going to do is we're going to look at the Old Testament and we're going to see, whoa, look at what God did for a people that was rebellious and stiff-necked.

And he loved them and he cared for them and he gave them an everlasting covenant. And he's still doing the same today, loving them and caring for them. And the same God turns to you and me and says, hey, would you like to be part of an everlasting covenant?

- [16:34] Well, God, I'm not a Jew. He says, no, no, no, no. You don't need to be. But you can become a spiritual chosen people. Would you like to be part of that everlasting covenant? How do you know God's going to keep his covenant?

How do you know he's going to? How do you know that when you die, you have a place to be with him? What if it's all just a big joke? And God says, well, look at my nation. Never in the history of the world has a people group been out of their land for over 200 years and survived.

Look at what I've done. I've kept and I've blessed and I've fulfilled my promises. In the same way God will for us. So when we look at the different attributes going through the law, we're not looking at the law of how can I apply the law to my life?

Or how can I replace the law with the church in some way? No, we're going to look at the law and say it was valid. It was true. And it came from the same God who promises us promises.

And we're going to look at those attributes of God and say, wow, God, you put this beautiful picture in here of Jesus buried in the law so that I could understand what it is. With that, turn to Exodus 35.

[17:35] I think you're already there. The same God who said to Moses, Moses, this is my name. I am merciful and gracious and long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth and keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgressions and sin.

It's the same God who promises us everlasting life. It's the same God who revealed himself to Moses, who's revealing himself to us today. And the covenants and promises of God stand for all time.

And they're everlasting covenants because God makes them. God doesn't do things halfway. And God doesn't do things temporarily. Again, you can fulfill God's covenants.

God's promises can be fulfilled, but they cannot be negated. And Moses now has come down from the mountain. I think Moses is so excited. His face has been glowing. He's got to put the veil over it so he doesn't scare all the people off.

He's like, come on, come close, everybody. And he gathers all the congregation of the children of Israel together. And he said unto them, these are the words which the Lord has commanded that you should do them.

[18:40] I think some of us, we hear that and we go commands and do them. Great. Knew it. Wonderful. So much for not applying the law to my life. Now I got to do. What we miss is these are the words which the Lord has spoken.

Moses is like, guys, I was there. I heard his voice. I wrote it down. These are his words. These aren't just do's and don'ts. This is the voice of God. Command isn't quite as bad as we think it is.

It means to charge, appoint, or commission. You have a charge. You have an appointment. You have a commission. That's been given to you. It's not. That can be something negative, but it can be very positive.

I hope that all the appointments in your life aren't negative. I hope all the things you've been commissioned to do aren't negative. I hope you don't look at everything that is a charge as negative. I was charged, appointed, and commissioned to care for the children I brought in.

That, you know, my wife and I brought into this world. I didn't bring them into the world. She did, but I was there. That was a wonderful thing. It's going to be difficult at times.

[19:46] But being commanded, being charged and appointed in a commission to do something shouldn't be always negative. We live in a world where we believe freedom and liberty means nobody ever charges me to do anything.

Nobody ever points me to do anything. Don't you command me. I'll do what I want. But God's word, it doesn't give us commands but burdens on us. It gives us commands to give us, as we read, life.

These are the words which the Lord has commanded. That you should do what? That you should read them and ponder them and cherish them in your heart. You should do them. It's pretty basic.

God's word is wonderful to read and it's marvelous to understand, but it's always intended to be done. But there's not much point other than a good story if we don't do it, if we don't accept it, if we don't believe it.

You know, Matthew chapter 7. Jesus gives this parable, and we all know it. If you've been in Sunday school or grew up in the church or even if you haven't, probably know this one. That, you know, he who builds his house on the rock and he who builds his house on the sand.

[20:48] And then the floods came and I can't remember the song, but there's a little Sunday school song. And you don't want me to sing it anyway. But, you know, the floods come and the winds blow and it beats on the house that's on the rock and it stands.

Beats on the one on the sand and it falls. So don't build your house on the sandy land. Build it on the rock. But the point he's making there is he says, those who build their house on the rock, I will liken it unto who they are.

And they are those who hear the word and do it. Those who hear my sayings and do them is like one who built it on the rock. Those who hear my words and don't do them is like one who builds it on the sand.

Now, before the flood comes, before the winds come, what do you have? They look the same. You have two what appears to be structures, right? Because they've heard the word.

And you can have people where it's like, man, they are. They know the word. They're an amazing believer. They're an awesome Christian. And then all of a sudden a trial comes into their life and they got nothing to stand on. Why?

[21:46] Because they don't know the word? No, because they're not putting it into practice. We walk by faith. If you don't act upon the word God has spoken to you, then you have no foundation in your life to deal with the things that come into your life because you don't know how to apply God's word to your life.

You have an experience God applying his word to your life. Jesus, when he finished that section of teaching, it says that the people were astonished because he taught his one having authority, not as the scribes.

In other words, where did that authority come from? Not only did Jesus speak it, but he lived it. The scribes, they could tell you all about the Bible. They could tell you all about the law. They could tell you a lot of things.

But you look at their lives and you're like, you're not doing any of it. There's no foundation. And so we see that God's word is for all. It's commanded to all.

And it's to be obeyed by all. Six days you shall do work. As now Moses gets into this, he says, okay, these are the words which God commanded. And here God's going to give them this whole laundry list of things they need to do for the tabernacle.

[22:52] But he starts it with what? Six days shall work be done. But on the seventh day, there shall be a rest, a holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord. Whosoever does work therein shall be put to death.

Man, you shall take the day off or you will die. All right, I'll take the day off. God's commands, they will result in work, but they always begin in rest. Rest is foundational to the work of God.

Jesus would say in Matthew 11, 28, to come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden. I'll give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. For I'm meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest unto your souls.

My yoke is easy and my burden is light. What is the point of a yoke? It's to do work. An ox to yoke together is to do work. Jesus is saying, yoke yourself with me in the work that I have for you.

But it's rest. It leads to rest. It's founded in rest. God's work has rest as its foundation.

[23:56] Does it mean we don't work? No. But it means we're not doing it because we need to earn something. We're doing it because we already have something. And one of today's themes is work.

Work appears over a dozen times in this chapter. There's a lot of work to be done. But that work is only for those who first enter God's rest. It's not for those that are outside of his rest.

You shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day. What does that mean? They have to be cold?

It means you can't start a fire, but you can maintain a fire. Right? Rest. And when we enter into rest, we don't have to start the fire, guys. We don't have to kindle it. We don't have to work it up.

We don't have to figure out how to get this thing going. In Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit came down and it said that there appeared unto them cloven tongues of fire. It wasn't actual fire, but it appeared it.

[24:51] Think of the context of the pillar of fire by night that represents God's presence. They, as good Jewish boys and girls, would know what that was. And there would be in the midst of them.

And all of a sudden, it separates. And each person gets their own individual fire, in a sense. Their own individual walk with the Lord. Their own individual move of the Spirit in their lives.

So we don't have to kindle that. We don't have to try and churn something up and work it up. But we do maintain it. God's people at rest do not kindle fire, but they maintain fire. We maintain our relationship with the Lord.

Through how? Through rest. Through resting in his work. Ephesians 5.18, be filled with the Spirit. Doesn't say fill yourself with the Spirit.

Allow yourself to be filled. Allow the fire to be maintained. And then Moses now speaks unto all the congregation of the children of Israel. And he said, okay. Now that we got that taken care of.

[25:50] We got a lot of work to do, guys. But we're not going to set aside rest to prioritize work. Okay? It works together. So we got a lot of work to do. And this is the thing which the Lord commanded. Saying.

Very specifically, this is the thing God commanded. God didn't just say, you know what? Guys, go do things. Go do whatever you feel led to do. Just go do it. Just go. You know, maybe God's calling you to do something.

And just do it. There's a lot of things today that people put the name of God upon. That are not after his commands. They're not going to be found in here. Again.

Not exactly what he says to do. Well, what if he didn't say to go have a, you know, outreach to children. Where we have a little fun day and kids come and we share with them.

I don't see that in the Bible. But it will be of the same attributes, nature, and characteristics that we find in God's commands. God's commands are not vague. They're very specific.

[26:49] This is the thing which the Lord will command you. Saying. Take you from among you an offering unto the Lord. Whosoever is of a willing heart. Let him bring it. An offering of the Lord.

God's commands are only for the willing. God desires to bring us into his work. But it's only for those who are willing. It's another word we're going to see.

It appears about five times in this chapter. God will only receive that which is willingly given. Second Corinthians chapter nine. Paul is talking about giving materially. He says, but this I say, he which sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly.

He's likening giving to the natural principle of seeds. That if you have a lot of grass seed and you overseed your yard. A lot of it comes back. If you don't, you don't get very much. Every man according as he's purposed in his heart.

So let him give not grudgingly of necessity. We're not going to give God something we owe. Or we feel that we're being forced to. For God loves. In your script, your text may say a cheerful giver.

[27 : 53] Or hilarious giver. The word means joyful and willing. God loves a joyful and willing giver. And God is able to make all grace abound towards you. That you always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work.

In other words, God says, hey, I'm going to give you all that you need. I'm going to equip you so that you can give. So that you can sow bountifully. So why? So there can be a harvest. So there can be a bountiful harvest that's reaped.

He is able to make all grace abound towards you. That you would have all that you need for every good work. Moses is going to put before the people now all that's needed. There's going to be this whole laundry list.

And we'll move pretty quickly through it. Don't worry. Where are they going to get these things? Gold and silver and brass and all this linen. And where are they going to get that?

Well, where did they get that? They took that from Egypt. And they left the Egyptians. They plundered the Egyptians. They went next door and God said, hey, go ask them for things and they'll give them to you. God supplied everything that was needed.

[28 : 56] God supplied all that was needed so they would have to give to God's work. And after they did that, it wasn't like, well, now we got nothing left. No, Paul says here he'll continue to give. And I wanted to take a second because there's something else that must be willingly given and willingly received that I want to talk about that I think is very important in today's world and within the church even.

Just as God only receives that which is willingly given, God willingly gives his love, but it can only receive, be received willingly as well.

You see, love cannot be coerced. Love must be freely given or it's not love. It doesn't exist otherwise. Love must be freely given and freely received.

God doesn't want, not doesn't want, God doesn't accept what we give him as love. That's not love, right? Where Paul talks about that which is grace and that which is works.

He says, if it's grace, it's no more works. If it's works, it's no more grace because it can't be of debt. So I can't come to God and say, God, receive what I bring to you out of effort.

[30 : 05] That's, that's Cain, right? He brought that sacrifice. Abel's was accepted. Cain's wasn't. Cain's was out of his own effort. Love must be freely given or it's not love. Love cannot be by manipulation.

To manipulate is to control or influence a person or situation to one's own advantage, right? Love cannot be manipulated. Love cannot exist in an atmosphere where I'm seeking my own advantage at your expense and calling it love.

God doesn't love us that way. He's not seeking his advantage at our expense. Man, if I could just get these people to give to my work. Unfortunately, there are people out there who would put that on us and say, well, you need to give to God.

You know, even if it disadvantages you because, because God needs this. No, God is not seeking to advantage himself at your disadvantage. Manipulated love.

How do you recognize that? In relationships or in trips people are putting on you regarding a relationship with God or one another? Manipulated love is conditional. God's love is unconditional.

- [31 : 14] The place is a condition on it. Well, I will love you if you act a certain way or do a certain thing or if you maintain a certain type of behavior. Well, then I will love you.

Well, it's not love. Love must be freely given as no strings attached. Manipulated love is guilt laden. Well, I would love you if you didn't do what you did.

And it's really your fault that you're not feeling love. It's really all your fault that I'm not loving you right now. It's guilt laden. Manipulated love is by obligations obligated.

You owe me. You owe me because I did whatever I did. You know, we see that with people who try to buy love through like, through material blessing or whatever. Love can't be bought. 1 John 4, 19.

We love him because he first loved us. And I think we can insert in there. We willingly love him because he first willingly loved us. God was not obliged to us, guys.

- [32 : 16] God didn't owe us anything. And though we owe God much, our love to God is not a debt that we owe.

It's a response to a debt that was paid. Love can only be given and received willingly. God will never force us to receive his love. God, the great God of the universe, will never force one individual, despite the fact he went to the cross for them, he gave his life for them, he poured out his blood for them, he will never force anyone to love them.

So why do I think I can? Why do I think I can force someone or convince someone to receive my love? I'm freely giving it. Please receive it. I can't. I can never force someone to love me.

God will never force us to receive his love and he'll never force us to love him. Because love is not by debt.

Romans 13, 8. No man anything but to love one another. For he that loves another has fulfilled the law. And if you're like me, I'm growing up in the church and you read that and you think, Oh, so the debt I owe is love.

- [33 : 25] Oh no man anything but. You owe them love. You better love me because the Bible says. Well, actually that's a contrasting word. Oh no man nothing but instead love them.

Instead of owing, choose love. Which is a free gift. Which is given freely. There's no owing there. You see, love is not a debt because love cancels all debts. Love owes nothing.

It's freely given. God only receives that which is freely given. That which is willingly given. Whether it's our love, our time, or our money. And may I say on behalf of the Lord, his word, and on behalf of this church, if you're giving out of debt or obligation, if you're giving out of guilt, don't.

Don't. Don't do that. Stop. Man, receive God's love. We love him because he first loved us. Let God love you more. Receive more of his love.

And then you'll understand what it is to truly love. So Moses says, Let all those of a willing heart, let him bring an offering of the Lord.

- [34 : 34] This isn't something you have to do. Who wants to do this? Who wants to be part of God's work? Look at all that God's done for us. No, I don't bring this out of debt. Love is not obligated. I'm not obligated to love my wife.

She's been with me now. You know, this today is our 25th getting together anniversary. We've been married 23 years.

And, you know, she's been with me. And she makes great food. And I owe her. No, love is not by obligation. But love does obligate itself. Love chooses to obligate itself. God owes us nothing.

But God has chosen to obligate himself to us. He's chosen to do that freely. I freely choose to obligate myself to her. But it's not something that's out of debt. And so Moses says, Take you from among you an offering unto the Lord.

Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it. An offering of the Lord. Gold and silver and brass and blue, purple and scarlet. And fine linen and goat's hair. And ram's skin dyed red and badger skins and acacia wood.

[35 : 35] And oil for the light and spices for anointing oil. And fruit of sweet incense and onyx stones and stones to be set for the ephod. And for the breastplate. And again, that's way back in Exodus 24 there.

We went through all of that. And so Moses here is laying out the laundry list of what's needed for the items in the tabernacle. But we see here that God's commands are ultimately for what?

They have value. They're for things that are of value and of purpose. And every wise hearted among you shall come and make all that the Lord has commanded. So first he says, bring willingly and now come and work wisely.

The wise in heart will obey God's commands. God's commands are to be wisely applied. Okay, we have all of this stuff. We brought it willingly. But what do we do?

Well, now every wise hearted among you come and apply that. Make it. Do it. Wisdom is the application of knowledge. Right? You say, well, what is wisdom? You should be wise.

[36 : 35] Isn't that the same thing as understanding and knowledge? Not exactly. Wisdom is, so if you have the situation is your bread and the knowledge to be applied to it is your butter.

How do you get the two together? You need a knife. Wisdom would be the knife. It takes the butter of knowledge and applies it to the toast of your situation. But that's what wisdom is.

So God's commands are to be wisely applied. They're meant to be applied to our lives. They have value in our lives. But we have to apply them to our lives. The tabernacle, his tent, his coverings, his tatches and his boards, his bars, his pillars, his sockets, all of the structure of the tabernacle.

And then the ark and the staves with the mercy seat and the veil of the covering. What does that represent? That represents a place of worship. So when we willingly and wisely apply God's commands, it results in a place of worship.

The table and his staves and all his vessels and the showbread, this is the table of showbread and the candlestick. Also for the light and his furniture and his lamps with the oil for the light.

[37 : 40] And here we have the bread of life and the light of the world. When we willingly and wisely apply what's been revealed to us in God's word, well, it reveals the bread of light, bread of light, bread of life and light of the world.

When we willingly and wisely apply God's word, it reveals the bread of life and the light of the world. And the incense altar and his staves and the anointing oil and the sweet incense and the hanging for the door at the entering of the tabernacle.

So the altar of incense and also the, not the veil between the holy and most holies, but this is the veil into the tabernacle. The altar of burnt offering with his brazen gate, his staves and all his vessels, the laver and his foot, the hangings of the court, his pillars and their sockets and the hanging for the door of the court, the pins of the tabernacle, pins of the court and their cords.

So you have two altars, an altar of incense and altar of sacrifice. And here you have two doors, one to enter into the outer court, one to enter into the holy place. When we willingly and apply, willingly and wisely apply God's commands, it results in a place where we can meet with God, where we can come into God's presence.

And again, we went through all of these in depth and they're going to come up multiple times again because next week they're going to then build everything that they just talked about.

[39 : 01] And then they're going to talk about it again. It comes up a lot. The clothes of service to do service in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron, the priest and the garments of his sons to minister in the priest's office.

And so here you have all of these things. This is why we need this. This is how it's going to be applied. This is what needs to be willingly brought and it needs to be wisely implemented. God's commands willingly and wisely applied.

They provide robes of righteousness for those who are called to serve. Revelation chapter three in verse four, thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments and they shall walk with me in white for they are worthy.

He that overcomes the same shall be clothed in white raiment and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I'll confess his name before my father and before his angels. And how do we overcome?

We overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony. We are clothed in white when we willingly and wisely apply God's commands. When we do what it says here, we do not defile our garments.

[40 : 05] Does that mean, well, I don't have sin in my life? No, that's not what it means. My garments are defiled by my rejection of Jesus. When I receive Christ, my garments are washed white and then I can stand righteous before God.

But for what purpose? When God desires me to serve. He desires us to be those who are willingly and wisely applying his word. In verse 20, all the congregation of the children of Israel, they left.

But it's a good thing. And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses. They said, yes, let's go do this. A willing offering will be brought.

The congregation, they left edified and they left equipped. They were ready. They were told why. They were told what. And they were told how. They left equipped and they left edified and they left willing to apply God's commands.

They were ready to go do this. In Ephesians chapter 4, Paul writes in speaking of what we read about in Corinthians, that there is a grace, a gift given to each one of us.

[41 : 12] For what purpose? To hoard it up? To store it up? No, but to spread it abroad. God will make more grace abound to us. He says, You say, well, what if I'm not an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher?

Will you fit into verse 7? We all do. Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. For what purpose? For the perfecting, the completion of the saints, the wholeness.

For the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. Unto a complete man, a whole man. Unto the measure, the stature, the fullness of Christ.

So they all laughed, equipped, and ready to go and be part of God's work. And they came then, everyone whose heart stirred them up. Well, that means there were some whose heart didn't stir them up.

It doesn't mean there's some that laughed and said, well, I don't even want to be part of that. Everyone whose heart stirred. The word stirred means to be burdened. But God put it on their heart. And everyone within whose spirit was made willing.

[42 : 32] And they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation. For all his service. And for the holy garments. God's commands. They stir up hearts.

And direct willing spirits. Man, when we receive God's word into our lives. It stirs our hearts. It makes our spirits willing. We realize who God is. We realize what he wants to do.

And that he wants to include me. And all I have to do is be willing. All I have to do is be willing, God, to bring what I have. God's commands lead to hearts being burdened.

Spirits being readily given to the work of the Lord. And here we see that the Lord's offering is for three things. The Lord's offering given freely from the heart. It accomplishes three purposes.

And they brought the Lord's offering for the work of the tabernacle. The Lord's offering when freely given. It accomplishes work. God's work. And for service.

[43 : 33] It accomplishes God's service. And for the holy garments. For equipping. It accomplishes God's work. God's service. And God's equipping. God's offering. When we freely bring.

These hearts that have been burdened. These hearts that have been stirred. And these spirits that have been made willing. And they came both men and women. As many as were willing hearted. And brought bracelets. And earrings.

And rings. And tablets. All jewels of gold. And every man that offered. Offered an offering of gold unto the Lord. And every man with whom was found blue. And purple. And scarlet. And fine linen.

And goat's hair. And red skins of rams. And badger skins. Brought them. How many of these people. I had no idea what this was for this. That God had given us this beautiful gift.

Maybe they treasured it. And they're like wow. This is valuable to me. This is amazing. That God would give me this gift. That he would give me goat's skin. Goat's hair. Great.

[44 : 30] Bracelets. And earrings. And rings. And tablets. And then to find out. When God turns around. And says hey. I want to use that for my work. In my ministry. Wow God. First that you would give me something so valuable as a gift.

And then that you would say. Bring that to me. And willingly offer it to me. Because I've given it to you. To be used for a purpose. See the value of the offering. Was not in the amount. Or the substance. Well they brought gold.

And I just brought. Ram skin. Died red. But it was in the attitude of the heart that gave it. God was looking to the heart. Is it a willing heart? Is it a wise heart? A stirred up and willing heart.

Must also be accompanied by. Willing and active hands. It doesn't do any good. To have a stirred heart. And a willing heart. Say yes God. All this is yours. But never bring it.

But never do anything with it. But just to leave it there. You know. Your neighbors are heading off to. Where are you going? Oh I'm taking all this stuff to Moses. It's going to be used for the tabernacle. Oh I got this.

[45 : 28] And I got this. Oh wow. I'm going to do that too. Later. I got things I need to do. And it's the next day. And the next. And before you know it. You see your neighbors. Where are you going?

We're going to the tabernacle. It's completed? Yeah they completed the tabernacle. You should have been there. Oh man. I wish I could have been a part of it. I wish I could have been a part of what God was doing.

2 Corinthians chapter 8. Paul is writing to the Corinthians again. And he's writing regarding their promised gift. For when he was there the first time. Saying yes. We want to be a part of the work God is doing in Jerusalem.

We want to send back a gift to the church in Jerusalem. Because all of these Christians. That have come out of that Jewish faith. Their livelihoods and their families. Are no longer accessible to them.

They've been cut off. And so the church is having to support them. And so Paul says. Now therefore perform the doing of it. Paul's pretty bold. That is there was a readiness to will.

[46 : 25] So there may be a performance also. Of that which is what you have. So you are willing to do it. So do it. It's time now. For if there first. Be a willing mind.

It is accepted according to that a man has. And not according to what he has not. I love that scripture. There's first a willing mind. That's what God's looking for. Is your heart willing to give to God?

Then guess what he's going to do? He's going to stir your heart. He's going to put upon your heart. What to give to him. He's saying now do it. Take opportunity to do. What God's put on your heart. But I love where it says.

It's accepted according to what you have. God's not going to go. You know what? The guy two shares over from you. Gave ten times as much as you. Gave ten times.

God only got ten bucks. Yeah. Too bad you couldn't have given more. No. God says. It's according to what we have. God looks at what we have. And says. Will you willingly use that?

[47 : 23] Will you willingly give that to me? He says. Well then it's accepted. Just as much as the person who gave. However much. Because the value of service. Is not in who brought it. But in who they brought it to.

Not about how much they brought. Or who brought it. It's who they brought it to. And everyone. Everyone that did offer. An offering of silver.

Verse 24. And brass. They brought the Lord's offering. Whoa. All of a sudden. This thing that I have. Becomes the Lord's. That's pretty crazy. And every man with whom was found. Acacia wood.

For work of the service. Brought it. And all the women. That were wise hearted. They did spin with their hands. Didn't mean they're Italian. And just were hand talkers. And they brought that.

Which they had spun. Both the blue and purple. And scarlet. And fine linen. Women. They were wise hearted. They applied. What they. What they had. That God had given them.

[48 : 18] To the work of the Lord. The application of knowledge. And all the women. Whose heart. Stirred them. The ones who stirred them up. In wisdom. Spun goat's hair. God's commands.

Lead to very practical. Active lives of service. It's very exciting. To be used by the Lord. It's exciting to see the work. That God is doing. It's exciting to come in. On the front end. Of it be like. Wow. God wants me to.

To give into this work. But it's also very practical. It's a very practical thing. We have to clean the toilets here. I mean. Even though it's God's house. We still have to clean.

Think like he'd send a toilet cleaning angel. Or something. But it's very practical. God's commands lead to practical. Active lives of service. God's work. Involves man.

Remarkably. God's work involves man. God's work receives from man. And God's work depends upon man. So. Whoa. Wait a minute. Now that might be a little too far.

[49:15] You might just become a heretic there. God doesn't depend upon man. But God does make his work. Dependent upon man's involvement. Now again. It doesn't matter who. You know.

You think in Isaiah. When the. Isaiah hears the Lord say. Who will go for us? Whom can we send? And Isaiah goes. Send me. I'll go. The Lord says. Fantastic.

Well Lord. I don't have much. He's like. That's all right. I'll take what you have. And I'll multiply your seed sown. No problem. God's work involves man. It receives from man. And it depends very much. On those who are willing.

To live practical. Active lives of service. Because we are his workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus. Unto good works. Which God has before ordained. That we should walk in them.

We're his workmanship. It's his work. We're his instruments. What's our only part in that? Walk in it. Just walk. In the work. God has placed before you. Willingly.

[50:12] There were many hands. At work here. To build a tabernacle. But there was one heart. And it was the heart. That the Lord had for his people. And then the rulers.

Moses is good to point this out to us. That the leaders of Israel. They led by example. It wasn't about how much they gave. But that they gave. And the rulers brought onyx stones. And stones to be set. For the ephod. And for the breastplate.

And spices. And oil for the light. And for the anointing oil. And for the sweet incense. They led by example. Jesus would say in Matthew chapter 6.

To take heed. How you give. How you do your alms before men. To be seen of them. If you do that. You have no reward of your father. Which is in heaven. Therefore when you do your alms.

Do not sound a trumpet before you. As the hypocrites. You know. Okay. This is a little tongue in cheek. There's no pressure here. But if you're like.

[51:05] Hey. I'm going to give. And you go up to the offering. You know. Thing in the back. Don't rattle the thing. You're like. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. Bang, bang, bang. And then throw your money. You know. I'm going to get. I'm going to get all \$10.

In pennies. Because one. Pennies have got to be at least worth. 1.004 cents now. Because you know. And I'm going to put it all in. At once. It goes. Clangity, clang, clang, clang, clang, clang. Clang. It sounds like so much more.

Right. All you're going to do is wear out the poor guys who got to count it. It's tongue in cheek. But the idea is. We're not going to. We're not going to be like. Hey. Let me tell you. No. He says.

Hey. You have your reward. But when you do your alms. Let not your left hand know what your right hand does. That your alms may be in secret. And your father which sees in secret himself. Should reward you openly.

And I think that's an attitude of the heart. Right. When these guys are all coming to the tabernacle. I don't think they're going. Oh my goodness. Don't look at what I'm bringing. That's not it. But it's the heart behind it. I'm like. I am so excited to contribute to God's work.

[52:00] I don't care what I give. It's just that I get to give. The children of Israel. They brought a willing offering unto the Lord. Every man and woman. Whose heart made them willing. To bring for all manner of work.

Which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses. God's commands. By God's man. To God's people. Result in God's work. God's commands.

By way of God's man. To God's people. Result in God's work. God's work is only accomplished. When willing hands contribute from willing hearts.

When those hearts are stirred by God's commands. It's God's word that stirs our hearts. It's God's word that speaks to us. We see the need out there. We say God. What am I to do? And as we're in his word. His word will speak to us.

And will stir our hearts. It will put upon our hearts. What he has created us for. That workmanship. What has God created you for? What's he called you to? What does he put in your hands? That he says, hey, just come and offer that to me.

[52:57] And I'm going to show you how to work with that. So we're stirred by the word. And Moses said to the children of Israel. Good job, guys.

He's got this pile of stuff. And maybe they're like, well, now what do we do? I mean, we were slaves in Egypt. None of us know how to do this. We just did what we were told. Put this brick there.

Move this here. Do that. And Moses said to the children of Israel. See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel. The son of Uri. The son of Hur. Of the tribe of Judah.

Bezalel. This man that God has called by name. God called Bezalel according to who God knew him to be. He called his name because he knew who he was. The name Bezalel means in the shadow of God.

In the shadow of God's presence. In the shadow of God's protection. You know, God only calls those he knows. God doesn't call anybody he doesn't know. He only calls those he knows. In Matthew 7, we all know this passage.

[53:56] That not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. But only those that do the will of my father, which is in heaven. And many will say unto me that day, Lord, have we not cast out demons? Have we not raised the dead?

Have we not done marvelous things in your name? Prophesied in your name. It's interesting that it's always the big things. Have we not prophesied in your name?

Cast out devils and done many wonderful works. Guys, there are a lot of wonderful works out there. They get the name of Jesus slapped onto them. That know nothing of who he is. And he knows nothing of them.

And then, well, I profess unto them, says Jesus, I never knew you. Depart from me, you that work iniquity. God's work is based in our relationship with God.

God only calls those he knows. It doesn't matter what we do. It matters who we are and who we are to God. And what is our heart and our attitude towards him? And he has filled him.

[54:55] He's filled this guy, Bezalel, with all the spirit of God and wisdom and understanding and knowledge and all manner of workmanship. God's people and God's spirit, they come together to confirm God's call upon a man.

Here is God's, Moses saying, God has commanded this. This is God's spirit that has filled him. And Moses and the people are confirming this and saying, yes, there's God's call upon this man. God's call is not based upon skill or ability.

I think we think that sometimes. What do I have to offer? It's based on relationship. Because all those people who read about Matthew 7, they thought they had a lot to offer, but they didn't know the one they were offering it to. God does not call the equipped, but he equips the called.

God's not looking for people who are equipped. Oh, I can use you. No, he's looking for those he can equip. He's calling those who will respond willingly with stirred hearts and will apply what God gives them to be wise.

He says, I'll equip you for everything you need. Believe me, I'm not equipped apart from the Lord equipping me. I can't spell. I can't talk slow. And I run my words together.

[56:01] And half the time that comes out between slides and talking. But what do I have? I love God's word. And I love talking about God's word.

I just willingly bring that. And that was a turning point in my life of being okay with the fact that I have all these hangups and all these shortcomings and all these areas that I'm not equipped. And where God just said, would you offer that willingly to me?

And I said, all right, Lord, if you want to use me with all my shortcomings and hangups, great. And the next thing that he stirred my heart for, that he burdened my heart for was, go pastor a church.

That's not what I was thinking. I was thinking something else. But God is so good to call and then to equip.

God's spirit calls, it fills, and it equips God's people according to God's commands. How do we know a true move of God's spirit? How do we know if it's something that's really of God?

[57:00] In 1 Corinthians 12, 11, it says, but all these work that one and self same spirit. All of the gifts, they're all by one spirit dividing to every man severally as he will.

How do we know? How do we know this person claiming to be gifted? Is it really a move of the spirit? A true move of God's spirit is characterized by wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and work.

Wisdom is skill. Understanding, intelligence, knowledge, perception, and work is practical. Now, wait a minute. You say there's a lot of things out there that, you know, we could do all that through GoFundMe.

How do we know if it's a move of the spirit? Because it's all according to God's word. It's all according to God's commands and our relationship with God. Yes, there will be wisdom and understanding and knowledge and work.

It will be practical and all these things will be happening. And you can almost look and say, how's this different from that? Oh, well, wait, there's a relationship here with God. It lines up with God's word and his commands.

[57:58] And he has given this man to devise curious works or intricate work. To work in gold and silver and brass and the cutting of stones and to set them.

And in carving of wood and to make any manner of cunning work. He's put it in his heart that he may teach. Both he and Aholiab, whose name means my father's tent.

One who dwells in the tent of his father. The son of Ahissamach of the tribe of Dan. He's given him all of this. To do what with? To go out and make a great name for himself?

To open a really cool Etsy shop? The man, he can carve and he can make things. And no, what is he going to do with it? He's going to turn around and he's going to teach. He's going to teach. Him and Aholiab.

2 Timothy 2.15 Study to show yourself approved unto God. A workman that needs not to be ashamed. Rightly dividing the word of truth. Aholiab and Bezalel.

[58:53] They didn't say, well, we're the anointed ones here. We'll take care of everything. Don't worry about it. You just bring the stuff to us. And we'll make sure it's, you know, got our name on.

Everyone that goes out the door and they know. No, they're going to pass this on. They're going to teach this. God's spirit calls and equips teachers for the work of God. As we read in Ephesians 4.

He gave some to do what? To teach. You say, well, that's great, pastor. See, that's what you're called to. You're called to teach. I don't need to worry about that. You just teach me. Well, Hebrews 5.12 says, For when the time came that you ought to be teachers, you have need again that one teach you the first principles of the oracles of God and are become as such as need of milk and not of strong meat.

Meaning what? That instead of growing in your faith to where you have the maturity and ability to pass on what God has given you, whatever he's gifted you with, whatever is reread here for our friend Bezalel, whatever he's given you by his spirit and wisdom, understanding and knowledge, you should be able to pass that on according to his word.

There should be a point in your life where, okay, maybe you're not teaching a congregation, but are you teaching your children? Are you teaching friends? Are you discipling? And Paul says, well, not Paul.

[60:12] I always attribute Hebrews to Paul. I'm sorry. Whoever the writer of Hebrews is. You have need of milk. In other words, you can't handle more mature things. God desires us to pass on the work that he's called us to do.

Last verse. And then has he filled with wisdom of heart to work all manner of work of the engraver, of the cunning workman, of the embroiderer, and blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen of the weaver, even of them that do any work and those that devise cunning work.

You got two guys who we just read about eight to 10 things. And none of those things are done quickly, especially then. How are these two guys going to do all this?

It's going to take them 15 years to build a tabernacle. How are they going to do all this? They're going to equip others. They're going to pass on what God has given them. These men were called and they were equipped because they were willing and they were wise.

They were willing to apply and to pass on what God has given them. Proverbs 9, 10, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

[61:21] They knew God. They knew who God was and they were willing to not only work in his work, but they're willing to take the time to pass that on to others. Matthew 22, 14, for many are called, but few are chosen.

Few are chosen. How do I get chosen? Respond to the call. The Spirit of God is given for the work of God and yet we cannot expect God to fill us and equip us for his work if we're not willing to do it.

It's like, God, fill me. God, equip me. You know, I used to pray that. I used to say, Lord, fill me. I still pray that. But there's a season of life where like, God, I want to know you more. I want you, I want to be filled, but I wasn't doing anything.

And I don't mean this. Before I was sitting up here pastoring a church, I was setting up chairs at churches and whatever needed to be done. But the Spirit of God is given for the work of God, but we can't expect God to fill us and equip us if we don't then use what he's given us.

And sometimes I think we have a wealth of stuff like these Israelites. They come out of Egypt with all this stuff. And we're kind of like, well, God, why aren't you using me? He's like, well, because you haven't used that yet.

[62:31] Use what I gave you and then I'll give you more. Because he said, I'll make all grace abound to you. God will willingly equip those who willingly keep his commands and who wisely enter into his work.

He'll equip you. Just be willing and wise. God has willingly given us the commands of God so that we might be equipped by the Spirit of God for the work of God.

God has willingly, freely given us this. You don't have to pay. I mean, we didn't take a collection on the way in. You know, 10 bucks a seat. God doesn't charge us for this.

He willingly and freely gives us his commands so that we can be equipped by his Spirit for his work. That's a pretty good deal. You know, if you were going to enter a race, maybe 5K or something, you're like, man, I hope I can win.

And if on the entrance forum it said, if entering and if run, you will win, would you do it? Sweet. That's all I got to do is enter and then just keep going and then I win and not participation trophy.

[63 : 50] You will win. You will, I'm going to do that. I'm going to run the race. I'm going to enter and all I got to do is just keep going. God, there's people passing me left and right.

It's like, that's all right. All you got to do is keep going. You will win. You will finish your race and who's going to be at the finish line? Who's going to be the one handing out the victory crowns?

It's Jesus. And, say, I know, but pastor, you keep saying commands. Can we not use that word anymore? I'm having a little PTSD because growing up all I heard was you have God's commands.

You got to obey God and it's these heavy trips. Well, the Bible addresses that too. In 1 John chapter 5, John writes, whosoever believes that Jesus Christ, that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

Let's stop there. Have you been born of God? Have you been born again? How were you born into this life? How much participation did you have in that? Well, you were there. It was the greatest day of your life, right?

[64 : 50] Second greatest, being born again. But you were there, but you had no choice in the matter. You didn't help. You might have even made it worse. You don't even have any memory of it. You are not born by your effort into this life and allows you to participate into this life.

Well, have you been born of God? To be born of God is to be born again of his spirit. You don't participate by effort in that either. You just willingly choose to receive and be a part of that. And everyone that loves him that begat, loves him also that's begotten of him.

That's a wonderful King James way of saying, hey, if God begot Jesus and you love Jesus, you're going to love the one that begot him, God. What also means that if we love Jesus, we're going to love the ones that are begotten of him, his funny kids.

We're going to love God's people. By this, we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments. How do we guard against manipulative love? How do you know if the person's saying, you don't love me because you're not doing this.

This is love. Oh man, how do I know if I'm loving them? By this, we know that we love the children of God when we love God and we keep his commandments.

[66 : 04] Hey, I love God and I'm keeping his commandments and I'm giving that love to you. I can't give you love how you say I need to give you love. I can only do it as the scripture declares what love is.

See, there's that which is love and there's that which is not. And if it's not love, we cannot manufacture love. We can't create love. We can only pass it on and receive it. For this is the love of God that we do what?

Keep his commandments. And I love this. And his commandments aren't grievous. They're not heavy. They're not hard. Like, all right, well, what's the list of them? What all do I have to do?

Jesus says in John 13, a new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you that you also love one another. by this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one to another.

If we do all those wondrous works, if we participate in the work of God and bring a lot of stuff, if I cast out demons and if I do all these things, no, by love. But if we love one another, how do I do that?

[67 : 10] So I want to love God's people, but where do I find that love? How do I get that love? Well, Romans 5, Romans 5 says that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.

I don't even have to come up with it. I don't have to kindle the fire. All I got to do is maintain. Just keep running the race. Just keep going forward. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto me.

What does that mean my part is? I just need to be willing. I just need to be willing to receive that love. We have been gloriously equipped to keep God's glorious command and that command is love.

That's His command. That's the command that God puts upon us. It's not conditional. It's not guilt laden. It's not by obligation. It's freely given to us. And if we would freely receive it, we can then freely give it.

It may not be freely received by the people that you want to freely give it to. It may not be received by them. It may be rejected. But Jesus knows what that's like. His love is rejected all the time by many people.

[68 : 23] Here in His love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. And that love must be freely received or it's not love.

And then that same love must be freely given or it's not God's love. If you're attempting to serve God or bring to God something that's conditional or guilt laden or by obligation, if you're attempting to pass on His love to people and trying to convince them that God loves them and come to church and you're doing it through conditions and guilt and obligation, that's not love.

You know, none of us are perfect. And as much as we don't want to be manipulative in our love, all are sinners and we all have contaminations. We have little bits of that contaminated in our love.

It doesn't mean someone doesn't love you because they're just so lost in that. It doesn't mean they don't love you because they don't know how to display love. But what they need to experience more is God's love.

We love Him because He first loved us. And if you find yourself today in a place of condition, obligation, or guilt, the solution is to receive more of His love, to have more of a heart that's willing to receive what can only be freely given.

[69 : 42] We willingly love Him because He first willingly loved us. And only after we do that can we give. Freely we've received, so freely give.

So we're going to end and close in song. And as we do this, let go of that conditions, guilt, and obligation in your life. Whatever on your part you're trying to convince God that you're doing because you love Him, then let it go.

It doesn't mean we don't do stuff for God in the sense of God wants us to be part of His work. God wants us to come freely, willingly, and wisely. He wants us to participate. But it's because He loves us.

Why do you participate in things with your kids? Oh, it's an obligation. Should have never had these little urchins. No. No. Because you love them and you want them to be a part of your life and you want to be a part of their life.

Right? God's heart's the same. What happens when they don't receive love? Sorry, I'm going to tell a story. Sorry, kids. There's times where, you know, I'd be coming home from work and we were talking on the phone like, oh, let's go do this tonight.

[70:50] Yes, let's go. One of our favorite things to do was back when kids eat free at Chili's. Man, that was the best. You got like three or four kids and kids eat free. That didn't last too long. Then it was kids eat free per adult entree, but it was still good.

But we would go and the town we would go to had Chili's and then it had, in the same plaza, it had a Kohl's and like a Petco. And across the street was Bass Pro Shop. So we'd go to Chili's and the kids, we'd all eat and then Sue would go to Kohl's to get a break and then I would take the kids to the little fish store and then we'd go across the street to the big fish store and it was great.

But I mean, there's one time I came home and it was like they were just naughty. And it was so disappointing because I was so looking forward to getting to do that with them. And I wanted to like express love, but they couldn't receive it because they were naughty.

And they couldn't be rewarded for that. And I think sometimes God's heart for us is he's like, man, I got so much, something so much better than a big fish store for you. God wants to reward us. God wants to pour out his love on us, but we're not in a place to receive it.

And it's not because of our sin. I was taken care of on the cross. It's because I'm unwilling to walk in the love of God. Right? Father, thank you so much, Lord, for that wonderful love.

[72:08] Lord, thank you for being a good father who wants to include your children, Lord, in everything you do. You don't want to exclude any of us. And how amazing, Lord, that you reach out that love to a world that is excluding you, that has nothing to do with you.

And you are continually expressing that love, even when it's rejected. Thank you, Lord, that your love does not manipulate. Lord, we don't owe you.

And yet, Lord, we look around at all you've given us and we're like, God, I should owe you. You say, no, no, no. Just come and hang out with me. Lord, you don't obligate us to anything, but Lord, may we choose willingly and freely to obligate our lives to you.

Lord, we put our feet on that path and we're going to continue to walk it and to run it and be a part of it. And it's not because we have anything to bring, Lord. It's because you equip us and you fill us and you give us all things freely.

And so, Lord, now as we stand in your presence, Lord, as we worship you, remind us, God, that you love us first. In Jesus' name, amen.

[73:14] You know, God's word declares to you that his desire for you to have a giving heart, a wise heart, but also a willing heart because that is a heart of love.

That is his heart for you. God loves you. He's not rejected you, but he never will. He's not rejected his covenant with Israel. He won't with you. 1 John 4, 21 says, In this commandment have we from him, that he who loves God love his brother also.

It's very hard to love people when you're not around people. Enjoy some fellowship. God bless you. Don't forget your kids. If you need prayer, I'd love to pray with you and talk with you.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you. The Lord be gracious unto you. And the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. God bless you. Have a great week.