

# The Eleventh Commandment

John 13:34-35



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**FOCAL Read Responsively** John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. {35} **By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**

When I was in the military we often had to go out to the rifle range to "qualify" with our M16s. To those of you unfamiliar with this process it meant that we went and sat under an instructor for about 8 hours. During instruction he's teach us how to use our eyes, our hands, and even how to control our breathing when we were going to shoot our weapon. If you hold your weapon too tight the pulse in your hands will cause the gun to move off target. If you aren't careful in how you breath your exhale can cause you to drift off target. If you don't look through the sights of the rifle in the correct manner you'll find yourself shooting off target. You see, the *purpose* of a rifle is to stay on target so that you can shoot your enemy. If you can't hit the target all you've really got in your hands is a very loud noisemaker!

We live in an off target world.

Our *government* is off target, and has been for many years. The purpose of government - according to the Scripture - is to be "**a minister of God to us for good**" (**Romans 13:4**). This doesn't mean that the government is necessarily to be filled with professed Christians. When God wrote the Book of Romans the government of that time was filled with pagans who worshiped many different gods and goddesses. Nonetheless the Lord said that the purpose of government is "**to execute wrath**

**upon those who *do evil***". Government, in short, exists to protect the freedom of its citizenry. It does not exist to participate in the economic free market, nor to compete with or uphold businesses, but it does exist to *protect* our freedoms so that we can live our lives *in* freedom.

**Science** is off target. The purpose of Science should be to make our lives better through technology. We're in the 21st century, and we should be in the age of flying cars. Instead of finding a *better* way of transportation, or a *better* means of fueling our vehicles, Science spends its days trying to be God. In their latest hair brained scheme Scientists are trying to take a 20,000 year old Woolly Mammoth hair and recreate this extinct animal.

**Pennsylvania State University biochemist Stephan Schuster** was quoted as saying "**It may one day be possible to mammoth-ify an African or Asian elephant genome**". Fascinating! But what good is it? How does this benefit mankind in any way. These things became extinct for a reason. Other than giving us an interesting zoo to visit (like we saw in the movie Jurassic Park several years ago) what value does such nonsense have. If Science would get out of the realm of religion and God and turn its mind to something useful we'd have flying cars that ran on water!

**Medicine** is also firing everywhere but where the target is. The purpose of medicine is to make humans better and therefore improve the quality of our lives. I'm sure you've all recently heard of a person called **Thomas Beatie**, a man who got himself pregnant. When I first heard that I thought to myself "ouch". I have never wanted to carry a child other than in my arms. God bless

you women, I thank my God daily that you have the God given right and responsibility of bringing life into this world. When I heard about a *man* having a baby I knew there had to be a catch. There was. It seems that Thomas Beatie was actually *born a woman* but - because she felt that God had robbed her of her *maleness* - she went and had her body medically altered. A man didn't have a child. This confused woman stopped taking male hormones and had a child. That's not amazing - that's tragic. When you think of all medical Science could be doing, things like curing Alzheimer's and Cancer or even the Common Cold, it ought to cause you to weep. Oh that Medicine would get on target and cure, instead of convert and kill through abortive processes!

What about the **local Church**? Many local Churches in America aren't on target. Many are involved in the *entertainment industry*, providing chills and thrills for the audience. Other local Churches are *campaign headquarters* for local and national elections, promoting politicians instead of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some local Churches are *factories of prejudice and hatred*, places where bigots and the self righteous gather. What is our target? Quite simply, the target of the Church is LOVE.

The local Church was founded by our Lord Jesus Christ to preach the Gospel of Love. **God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16)**. Anyone can be saved if they will but give their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ. YOU are God's target of love. He is calling YOU to salvation. Once a person is saved by **believing in Christ**

the target is still the same, it just *expands*. If you are born again by faith in Christ you are *commanded* to love. You are to love the way that Jesus loved. You are to love God, and to love one another. How do we know that the local Church is on target? Jesus gave us an eleventh commandment, telling us **"love one another, as I have loved you"**. You must, if you are Christians, **have love one to another. God is love (1 John 4:8)**, and God lives inside the Christian **(Romans 8:9)**. The only way the world knows that Christ is real is through the faithful love that His disciples - the true Christian - shows to one another.

Are you on target? Are you following God's eleventh commandment?

### 1. To Whom Is The Command Given?

**FOCAL John 13:34-35** A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another ...

Jesus said **"A new commandment I give unto YOU"**. Who did Jesus give this commandment to? Who was Jesus' audience? Jesus identifies His audience in our context. We read:

**CONTEXT John 13:33** Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as **I said unto the Jews**, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

Well, we know who it isn't. **It isn't the Jews, the religious crowd of the Scribes and Pharisees.** Jesus

said **"as I SAID unto the Jews"**, not **"as I SAY unto the Jews"**. The Jews were not with Jesus now, but were out plotting His death.

The Scribes and Pharisees were people who professed to know the Lord, but only knew tradition and ritual. They didn't love the Lord Jesus Christ nor His disciples, but constantly found fault. We are told in the Gospels:

**Mark 7:2-3** And when {the Pharisees} saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. {3} For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

Jesus told these fault finders, these *religious ritualists*:

**Mark 7:6-9** ... Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. {7} Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. {8} For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. {9} And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Who else did Jesus *not* address? **He didn't address that false disciple called Judas Iscariot.** Before Jesus gave His commandment to love we see that **Satan entered into Judas**, and the Master told him:

John 13:27 ... **That thou doest, do quickly.**

Go make your deal with Satan, false believer! You followed Jesus for what you could get out of Him. You never cared for the Master, nor for the poor, but were a thief and kept the bag that contained the disciples meager money (John 12:6). The false believer follows Jesus to fill his pockets with money. He follows Jesus when the Master will supply bread to fill his belly, or when the Lord might heal his aches and pains. The Judas Iscariots of this world are not commanded to love - nor can they - for they love themselves all too well.

Whom did Jesus command? He said:

**CONTEXT** John 13:33 **Little children ...**

This is a significant phrase. **Little children.** Earlier in His ministry the disciples asked Jesus "**Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?**" I suspect they were having an argument among themselves as to who was the *better disciple*. The Bible tells us that

**Matthew 18:2-4 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, {3} And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. {4} Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.**

Our Lord Jesus *never* gave a misleading or an incomplete answer to those who seriously sought the

truth. Like God He was always ready to help, always ready to explain. "**Come, let us reason together, saith the Lord: thou your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool**" (Isaiah 1:18). Jesus wouldn't give an incomplete answer now. **Except you be converted<sup>1</sup> - turn around, quit going in the direction that you're going - and become as little children you shall not ENTER into the Kingdom of Heaven.** You must turn from the ways of this world. You must quit operating along the lines of the *selfish, pitiful ways* of this current age. You have to turn away from the *me above all others* mentality and **become like little children.**

A Christian is **a little child**. I remember as a child falling and scraping my knee. When I did I didn't try to doctor it myself. With tears streaming down my face I would run into the house calling out for momma, knowing that she would make it better. **A Christian is someone with a boo boo that needs to be fixed.** The whole world is in darkness, and the Bible tells us that

**John 3:19-20 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. {20} For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.**

The world is in sin. Every son of Adam is naturally drawn toward sin and evil. Man is not inherently good. You never have to teach a child how to lie or how to

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<sup>1</sup> G4762, στρέφω, strephō, *stref'-o*, Strengthened from the base of G5157; to *twist*, that is, *turn* quite around or *reverse* (literally or figuratively): - convert, turn (again, back again, self, self about).

steal. When a child steals a cookie from the cookie jar and you ask him, "Did you get a cookie when I told you not to do so", that untrained child - breathing out the crumbs of theft - will with a straight face say "No I didn't". Sin is not taught - it is inherited. The Bible tells us that **"the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19)** because of Adam.

**Romans 5:12 ... by {Adam} sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**

We all have a *boo boo*. We all have skinned spiritual knees. The Christian is the person who - realizing he is fallen - runs to the arms of Christ. The Christian is the person who *sees Christ crucified for him*. **His arms were outstretched and nailed to a tree, though nails did not hold Him in place.** He was crucified because we are sinners. He was punished in our place. He gave Himself for the believer **because He loves us**. Therefore the Christian can say with every Christian who has ever - **like a little child** - come to the Lord:

**Galatians 2:20-21 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. {21} I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.**

The commandment to love comes to **"little children, because your sins are forgiven for His Name's sake"**

**(1 John 2:12).** The commandment to love is given to **"little children who abide in Him, so that when He returns for us we will not be ashamed" (1 John 2:28).** We love because this alone *proves the reality of our salvation*. We follow a **new Commandment**, a Commandment that the unsaved *cannot hope to follow*. Only those who are **little children, born again into the Kingdom of Heaven by trust in Christ** can do what Jesus set before us.

Having said this, let's *define the Command*.

## **2. What Is The Target That Jesus Commands His Church Hit?**

**FOCAL John 13:34** **A new commandment I give unto you, That **ye love one another; as I have loved you**, that ye also love one another.**

When we hear Jesus command **"that you love one another"** our initial response is **"O.K., no problem. We'll do this."** Dear friends, the love that Jesus commands *cannot be done in your own power*. How do I know this? The Lord wanted us to understand His definition of love, so He devoted a whole chapter of Scripture to the subject. **1 Corinthians Chapter 13** gives us a very detailed view of what God expects of Love. We read:

**1 Corinthians 13:4-8** **Love suffereth long, and is kind; Love envieth not; Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, {5} Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh**

**no evil; {6} Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; {7} Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. {8} Love never faileth ...**

This is the type of love that the Christian **is commanded to show to other Christians**. Look at the definition for love for just a moment. **Love suffereth long** - that is, it is **long suffering, patient with others**. There's a reason that this quality of love is placed first in this spiritual definition. **By definition love is patient with others when they do not meet up to your expectations**. The Pharisees and Scribes were always looking for fault in others. God, on the other hand, is very patient with us. When God first called you to salvation you rolled your eyes, laughed at the idea that you were lost, or began to look for fault in those sitting in the pews around you so that you would have justification in your own mind for rejecting Him. Yet the Bible says that:

**2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**

Each day could have been your last. Yet God, because of love, tolerated your mockery, your ignorance, your foolishness, and your apathy. If you're saved you're saved because **God in love was longsuffering to you**. As He was longsuffering to you, He expects you to be longsuffering to one another! It is a shame that those who profess to be pastors of God's heritage so easily fail into impatience with God's people. Our Lord Jesus Christ

preached for over 3 years while He walked this earth, and died with few friends standing at the foot of the Cross. At the end of His earthly ministry He had only 120 converts who went to pray in an upper room until the Day of Pentecost. **Love is longsuffering, regardless as to what others do.**

**Love is kind**. It's not brutal, nor mean, nor bigoted, nor hateful. When **Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well** His kindness impressed her. She asked Jesus:

**John 4:9 ... How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.**

Jesus was kind to her when He gently rebuked her for false worship and for living in sexual sin. He **presented Himself as the Source of Eternal Life (John 4:13-14)** without ever mocking or belittling her. At a later date the Pharisees would **drag a woman taken in adultery before Jesus to be judged (John 8:3-11)**. He would never call this woman "whore" nor would He call her accusers "hypocrites", though either label could have been applied. Instead we see how Love in Kindness speaks:

**John 8:10-11 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? {11} She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**

Jesus Christ is the **Light of the world**. Those who follow Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12). Biblical Christian love:

**1 Corinthians 13:4-8 ... Love envieth not; Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, {5} Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; {6} Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;**

**Avoids envy, avoids pride, avoids the "look at me, do for me" standard of the world.** We are to remember that Satan was lifted up with pride and led a revolt against Almighty God. **Where pride is, it is not too long before *unseemly living* occurs.** As believers together in Christ we all are sinners saved by Grace. **Love is not easily provoked, and does not think of evil.** Oh Beloved, look to the Cross! Look to His standard of love. Look as they revile Him. Look at His example! Hanging in agony He cried:

**Luke 23:34-35 ... Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.** And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. {35} And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

Here is Love. Here is your Pattern. Here is your Example.

**1 Peter 2:21-23 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an**

**example, that ye should follow his steps: {22} Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: {23} Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:**

Like a Little Child Jesus committed Himself to the Father. Like Little Children we are to love one another, as Christ has loved us, and shown us the pattern.

### **3. The Importance Of The Eleventh Commandment**

**FOCAL John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. {35} By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.**

The eleventh commandment is the target of every local Church. Jesus said "**as I have loved you, that ye also love one another**". Are you aiming at this target?

Going back to my initial illustration of my military training, you need to understand that Christians do what they do for a reason. I was commanded to periodically go through firearms training. I went and listened to an instructor who showed me how to stay on target. We trained *together* in the classroom, then we went out to the range and shot at the target. The first few times I went out I failed to qualify. So did a number of other people. You see, I didn't grow up in the hills of Tennessee, and wasn't trained in how to use a rifle. After

remedial training I began to hit the target. In time I earned *four marksman medals* for superior shooting. I *became better as I practiced what I was taught.*

Jesus commanded His local Church to **love one another as I have loved you**. This is the target we shoot for. You will never hit that target unless, first of all, *you are born again*. Like a little child you must come to Jesus, confessing yourselves to be sinners.

**Proverbs 28:13** **He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.**

You must turn from your own works to His work of salvation. Do as the Scripture says, for God has promised

**Romans 10:9-11** **That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. {10} For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. {11} For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.**

If you are born again as **little children** then, dear friend, **you must practice the love of God**. You cannot do this at home sitting in front of Charles Stanley or Adrian Rogers watching the television. We gather together as believers **to love one another**. You cannot love one another from afar. You are called to be *together*, to practice *loving one another*, to actually help each other by:

**Hebrews 10:24** **And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:**

You need to hear that a little plainer? Read further:

**Hebrews 10:25** **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

We gather together to **provoke one another to love and good works**. Just like we encouraged one another to hit the target in the military, we as believers encourage one another to hit the target of love. We must - for Christ's sake - fulfill this eleventh commandment, else the midnight hour will come to our land. **Love one another so that all men will know you are Christ's disciples.**

**Jude 1:21-23** **Keep yourselves in the love of God,... making a difference: {23} And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;**

May God touch your hearts with His Word!

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**John 13:33** ; Mark 7:2-3; Mark 7:6-9; John 13:27; John 12:6; Matthew 18:2-4; Isaiah 1:18; John 3:19-20; 1 John 5:19; Romans 5:12; Galatians 2:20-21; 1 John 2:28 \_\_\_\_\_  
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1 Corinthians 13:4-8; 2 Peter 3:9; John 4:9; John

4:13-14; John 8:3-11; John 8:10-11; John 8:12; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Luke 23:34-35; 1 Peter 2:21-23

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**3. The Importance Of The Eleventh Commandment**

Proverbs 28:13; Romans 10:9-11; Hebrews 10:24; Hebrews 10:25; Jude 1:21-23 \_\_\_\_\_

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