

# New Love or Old Love?

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The subject at hand concerns statements made by the Messiah in the book of Saint John. These statements deal with loving our neighbor or brethren. It has become a belief of the majority of Christendom that somehow or another, what Yeshua meant was that He was declaring that love, and love **alone** is now required by His followers. This problem increases when modern Christendom gives a limited definition of love when teaching this doctrine. I strongly feel that if this issue is not dealt with it could lead to only more licentiousness<sup>1</sup> in the body of the Messiah, and in turn rob us from entering into His kingdom. Yes, you read me right, only those who **do** the will of the Father will enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven. [Matthew 7:21]

Most professing Christians are adverse to the words do or doeth when it comes to salvation or inheritance of the kingdom, nevertheless our Savior was quite clear in His saying in the above verse.

It has become a major doctrine of Christianity that Yahweh's laws are no longer for today; that they were contrary to us and against us, nailed to the torture stake of the Messiah, and have been replaced by a better thing, that is belief in Christ and love towards our brethren. This belief they teach is some kind of mystical teaching, one which appears to teach that it is only a thing in the mind. In their minds, the love towards the brethren simply means being nice to one another. The problem is this: some of what Christians normally declare is indeed *true*, but on the other hand some of what they declare is indeed *false* in light of the Scriptures. Mixing truth with falsehood can become very confusing, and lead to beliefs that are erroneous. I do believe that we all have or have had an amount of error in what we teach. The problem lies in not being able to let go of error when truth is shown to us, in whatever way it is shown. It is difficult to begin a new belief system in regards to a certain doctrine, especially when we have believed falsely for so long. I have given the following example to several people. Let's say that from a child I was taught that two plus two equaled five, but my neighbor was taught correctly that it equaled four. This teaching infiltrated my thinking all the way up into college until one day I met my

neighbor and somehow got on the subject of simple mathematics. He began to realize that I thought the simplest math problem, two plus two, equaled five, and tried to show me that this was not the case. Even though he was correct, and it was easy for most everyone else to see, I somehow could not fathom how he was getting four out of two plus two simply because I had been taught different my entire life. Surely he was not right. I mean, my mother, father, teachers, professors, (Bible instructors, seminaries, Theological colleges...) could not possibly be wrong, could they?

Not until I accepted the possibility of my being incorrect, as well as whoever taught me being wrong, I had no hope of knowing the truth. The same goes for Biblical doctrines. Just because the majority of Biblical adherents do not believe something does not automatically make it wrong, in fact there is a good chance it could be right. Keeping all of this in mind, let us journey through the Bible to see what the Messiah meant when He made certain statements concerning a love for Yahweh as well as for our neighbor. We shall see if this is really more “fuel to the fire” for the no law doctrine today.

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

This is my commandment, **That ye love one another**, as I have loved you. [John 15:12]

These statements by the Messiah have been taken as though they did not exist under the “harsh, grievous times of bondage”<sup>2</sup> or rather, the times of Moses. Is this the case? Did the Messiah bring a completely new doctrine on the scene? Not at all, Yahweh spoke through Moses that a love for your brethren was needed then just as now.

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, **but thou shalt love thy neighbour** as thyself: I *am* Yahweh. [Leviticus 19:18]

The command to love one another is here seen in the laws of holiness (Leviticus 19:1) contained in Leviticus. This law is also seen further back in time in the discussion between Abraham and Lot concerning property rights.

Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and

tents. And the land could not contain them while dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together. And there was strife between the herdsman of Abram's livestock and the herdsman of Lot's livestock... Then Abram said to Lot, **Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsman and your herdsman, for we are brothers. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me: if to the left, then I will go to the right, or if to the right, then I will go to the left.** [Genesis 13:5-9]

Abram was willing to give Lot the first choice of the land. This was for the purpose of leaving off strife. This action of Abram was one of love towards his neighbor.

The loving of one's neighbor was definitely not a command that came about at the commencement of the New Covenant, as some have suggested, it rather was **always** the second greatest commandment. The greatest command has always been the same as well. The fact that Yahweh is one, and that we are to love Him with everything is not a brand new commandment put forth by the Messiah (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). These two great commandments existed under the Old Covenant as well as under the days of the Patriarchs. The Messiah did make an interesting statement concerning these two commands.

On these two commandments **hang all the law and the prophets.**  
[Matthew 22:40]

The underlying Greek word for hang here is *kremanumi* and is partially defined by Vines as follows:

...intransitively, in the middle voice, in Mt. 22:40, of the dependence of the Law and Prophets (i.e. that which they enjoin) upon the one great principle of love to God and one's neighbor (**as a door hangs on a hinge, or as articles hang on a nail...**)<sup>3</sup>

It is also interesting to note what another Greek lexicon says concerning this passage.

Mt. xxii. 40, where the meaning is, **all the Law and the prophets** (i.e. the teaching of the O.T. on morality) **is summed up in these two precepts.**<sup>4</sup>

These two reference works indeed bring out the true meaning of this passage.

The Messiah was teaching that the Law is to be kept in the proper motivation, out of a love for Yahweh and our fellow man. This love is not a mere telling Yahweh or man that we love them, but rather an *action* of obedience to Yahweh, and an *action* of respecting towards our neighbor. Notice what the Apostle John said.

My little children, **let us not love** in word, neither in tongue, but **in deed and in truth.** [I John 3:18]

Love is action. We can say that we love our neighbor, but do we *really* love our neighbor? We can steal, cheat, lie on, murder, dishonor, etc. our neighbor, and even still proclaim with our lips we love our neighbor, but as the old saying goes, "Actions speak louder than words".

Our keeping of the commandments **need's to stem from a love for Yahweh, and a desire to please him.** Sometimes men attempt to keep the letter of the law in order to receive the praises of men, this is not out of love but merely out of pride. Those keeping the letter of the law only do not manifest the spirit of the law in their lives. They never will manifest such until they realize that they must be seeking praise from Yahweh and not from men.

For he is not a Judahite who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. **But he is a Judahite who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter [only]; and his praise is not from men, but from [the] Almighty.** [Romans 2:28-29]

This passage deals with certain Jews who were circumcised, or fulfilled (at least part of) the letter of the law, but yet were still transgressors of the law. This is the same matter Yeshua dealt with in the fifth chapter of Matthew concerning our righteousness exceeding the Pharisees and scribes<sup>5</sup> who were only keeping the letter of the law, but transgressing the true meaning of the law. **The law can truly be kept, but only when the motive behind it is a love for Yahweh; i.e. the spirit of the law.** We have seen that this love or spirit is taught in the Old Testament writings and not only the New Testament writings.

Another quick thing to point out is that circumcision of the heart is nothing brand new, as seen by the fact that term existed in the days of Moses.

**Circumcise then your heart,** and stiffen your neck no more...  
[Deuteronomy 10:16]

Circumcision of the heart existed then and existed in the days of Paul and

exists now. The problem is that no one wants to be obedient to the two great laws the Messiah spoke of, but instead receive the praises of men, and by doing so reject the true obedience. Yeshua made this statement in Matthew 22:40 for this very reason, to show us that our motive should be love for our Creator and brother, and that if we do have this genuine love, we **will obey** Yahweh's commands. Our hearts will condemn us when we do something against either Yahweh or our neighbor, simply because we are true New Covenant people<sup>6</sup> with Yahweh's law on our inward parts.

Apostle Paul seemed to have dealt with this problem in Galatia, most specifically with circumcision in chapters 5 and 6. The problem he was battling was one of certain men only considering the letter of circumcision.

Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Messiah shall profit you nothing. [Galatians 5:2]

If we take this verse literally, then there are several Christian men with good intentions who are seeking to serve Christ, but doing it all in vain. **Even Apostle Paul was circumcised. Was Christ of no benefit to him?** Obviously Apostle Paul was addressing another problem. The problem was the *letter verses the spirit* as the next verse shows.

For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. [Galatians 5:3]

Paul here begins to clear things up. He is explaining to us that if we think that fleshly circumcision justifies us apart from Messiah we are fallen from grace. This is seen by the fact that Paul tells them that they are a debtor to all of the law, not just circumcision. The majority of the people to whom he was addressing had been properly circumcised at eight days old and somehow thought this (by itself) was a sure ticket to the kingdom of heaven. **These people were not keeping the spirit of Yahweh's Law. Their circumcision was thus counted for un-circumcision. It meant nothing to Yahweh. In their minds as long as they were fleshly circumcised they were okay in Yahweh's eyes.** This is seen in more detail later on in chapter six of Galatians.

As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, **they constrain you to be circumcised, only** lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. **For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law;** but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. [Galatians 6:12-13]

As I make this next point, keep in mind that the Greek text of the New Testament did not contain any punctuation marks. I feel that according to the context of what we find in Galatians 5-6 **the first comma in the aforementioned paragraph should come after the only instead of before the only. They *only* wanted to get people circumcised, but they did not even obey the law themselves.** You may ask, “Did not they obey circumcision?” **The answer is that they obeyed the letter but not the spirit. They were merely going through the motions and the rituals of circumcision not understanding the deeper spiritual significance of true heart felt spiritual worship or circumcision of the heart.**

This is letter worship seen once again. This is the type of “worship” our Messiah came to free us from. A “worship” of going through the motions or the letter and never understanding the importance of having a complete love, and letting that love drive you to be obedient. Children sometimes only go through the motions of being obedient to their parents when told to do something like take out the trash. They take it out, but do they really take it out? Yes, as far as the letter goes, but **no** when it comes to the spirit and love of the matter. There will probably come a day (and already has come with some) when the letter of their parents law does not matter either, just as it will come or has already come in keeping the letter of Yahweh’s law as pertaining to such things as murder, adultery or theft.

With all of this in mind we can understand what the Messiah meant when he made his statements in John chapters thirteen and fifteen concerning a new commandment. He was not abolishing his Father’s commandments in the least fashion. Furthermore, the underlying Greek word for new in these verses is *kainos*, and is *sometimes* used, not to denote brand new as we would think of it, but new as **fresh** or **unaccustomed**. Thus, in these passages, our Savior was doing away with or condemning letter worship, and promoting and commanding love or spirit worship. W.E. Vine defines this word *kainos* in the following manner:

...denotes new, of that which is unaccustomed or unused, **not new in time, recent, but new as to form or quality, of different nature from that which is contrasted as old.**<sup>7</sup>

There is another Greek word for new as opposed to *kainos*, it is *neos*. In light of understanding the Messiah’s statements thus far please examine this verse.

And now I beseech thee, lady, **not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.** And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, **as ye have heard from the beginning,** ye should walk in it. [2 John 5-6]

John could just have easily said this is how we love one another, by the keeping of his commandments, most specifically the last 6 of the 10 commandments.

Brethren, **I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning.** The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, **a new commandment I write unto you,** which thing is true in him and in you: **because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.** [1 John 2:7-8]

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<sup>1</sup> Jude 4

<sup>2</sup> The Law of Moses is sometimes considered to be bondage or burdensome. Consider the following. Yahweh delivered his people out of Egypt, the house of bondage (Ex. 20:2). He led them out with a high hand, allowed them to cross the red sea (Ex. 14), fed them with food from heaven (Ex. 16), provided water from a rock (Ex. 17), allowed them to defeat the Amalekites (Ex. 17), and then brought them back into bondage by giving them commandments?!? This would indeed be absurd. Read Psalm 119 and see if the saints of old considered the law as bondage.

<sup>3</sup> *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, by W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger & William White Jr., 1984 Thomas Nelson Publishers, pg. 523.

<sup>4</sup> *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, by Joseph Henry Thayer, 1977 by Baker Books, pg.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 5:20

<sup>6</sup> Hebrews 8:7-12; 10:14-16

<sup>7</sup> *An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, by W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, and William White Jr., 1984 Thomas Nelson Publishers, pg. 781.