

## 50 Commands of Jesus Christ

### Christian Bible Study ~ Introduction and 15 Lessons

The commands of Jesus embody much of his fundamental teaching and should be taken seriously. Some of them are relatively easy to apply (rejoice, keep your word, pray in faith), others are more difficult (repent, choose the narrow way, be born again) and some seem next to impossible (love your enemies, judge not, and be perfect). We like to read Scripture about how God loves us and may be tempted to think that we really don't have to obey all these commands, that Jesus still loves us, and his grace will cover all. That is all well and good, but as we look at his commands, we see that he emphasized, "if you love me, you will obey my commands" (*John 14:15*) and, conversely, "obey my commands and the Father and I will love you" (*John 14:21, 23*). He didn't give us much wiggle room there.

**Just how many commands are there?** That is not an easy question to answer. In 1925, J.S. McConnell developed a framework of 21 categories with 7 commands in each group for a total of 147 called simply "[The Commands of Christ.](#)" A book by Peter Wittstock is titled, "Hear Him! The 125 Commands of Jesus." To my eye, these longer lists tend to have a lot of duplication or commands that are very nearly the same ("Believe in Me" and "Believe in Him who God sent" seem to me to be the same but McConnell lists them as separate commands).

More recent lists tend to home in on 50 commands, but not necessarily the same 50. Bill McGinnis published 50 commands in what he calls the "Complete List of the Commands of Christ." Matthew Robert Payne wrote an article, "[The Fifty Commands of Jesus.](#)" Pastor Howard has a web site called "The Commands of Jesus Christ" that also lists 50 commands, and a slightly different list of 49 "Commands of Christ" was assembled by Bill Gothard. It is this last list that serves as a basis for this Bible study. Are these *the* definitive 50 commands? Maybe, maybe not, but they are an excellent starting point. Feel free to augment the list.

**Jesus' commands are found in all four gospels.** The Gothard list I started with most often cites the command as it appears in Matthew, but more often than not, the commands are also found in Mark, Luke, and occasionally John.

**If you plan to lead a group** in studying Jesus' commands, I recommend you look over and allow yourself some time to delve into the leader's notes from the first lesson before you get going. Also, print out the entire list of commands and give everyone in your group a copy that they can refer to as your study progresses.

I've found with my groups that each lesson or discussion takes about 45 minutes to go through. I've also found that people can get passionately involved in these lessons and they can easily run much longer if the leader doesn't keep things moving along.

The discussion questions are slightly different from traditional Bible studies in that they **emphasize the application of the scripture to your life today**. Unlike some of my other studies, the Leader's Guides do not have "answers" for all of the questions. Many of the questions are designed to be a springboard to further discussion and there is often no truly right or wrong answer. If you have questions or comments, please use the "Send Mail" button on the menu below. I guarantee that I will read your comments, however, as this web site gets more than 3,000 visitors per day, I can't possibly answer every one.

In response to your requests, **these studies are in Adobe PDF format**, so they can easily be printed out. The first page is the handout for the group with the discussion questions. Pages 2 and higher are notes for leaders. If you cannot read PDF files, click to [download Adobe Reader](#).

Some discussion questions are borrowed or adapted from the book *New Testament Lesson Maker* from NavPress (ISBN 0-89109-688-4). I highly recommend this book, which, although out of print, is often available from on-line Christian booksellers.

Help build  
a house for a  
needy family in  
Guatemala.

- List of 50 of Jesus' Commands Statement of each command and scripture reference.
- Commands #1-6 Repent, do not be troubled, follow me, rejoice, let your light shine, honor God's law.
- Commands #7-12 Be reconciled, no adultery, keep your word, go the second mile, love your enemies, be perfect.
- Commands #13-17 Practise secret disciplines, lay up treasures in heaven, seek the Kingdom of God, judge not, Don't throw pearls to pigs.
- Commands #18-21 Ask, seek, knock, do unto others, choose the narrow way, beware of false prophets.
- Commands #22-25 Pray, be shrewd as serpents, fear God, listen to God.
- Commands #26-29 Take my yoke, honor your parents, beware false teaching, deny yourself.
- Commands #30-32 Do not despise children, go to those who offend you, forgive offenders.
- Commands #33-34 Beware of covetousness, honor marriage.
- Commands #35-37 Lead by being a servant, make church a house of prayer, pray in faith.
- Commands #38-39 Bring in the poor, render unto Caesar.
- Commands #40-41 Love the Lord, love your neighbor.
- Commands #42-43 Be born again, await my return.
- Commands #44-45 Celebrate the Lord's supper, keep my commandments.
- Commands #46-47 Watch and pray, feed my sheep.
- Commands #48-50 Make disciples, teach disciples to obey, receive God's power.