

# Whatever I Have Commanded

- We've come to these conclusions so far in our Basics of Christianity study
- First, that we must come to Christ alone by faith, turning from sin
- Second, that everything we learn to do - to be obedient to Christ - must be done on the basis of loving God with everything and loving our neighbor
  
- Tonight, we'll talk about our responsibility to know what He says and to live by it
- And we'll begin in Christ's Great Commission, when He commands His disciples to make disciples and says...

Matthew 28:19-20

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

- It is the responsibility of those discipling us, which could be many people throughout the course of our lives, to teach us "to observe all things whatsoever [He] ...commanded"
- This is a comprehensive requirement
- It means there is no part of God's word with which we should be unconcerned
  
- And it is not just a call to "being taught," but also a call to personal study
- Take these passages for instance...

2 Timothy 2:15

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

- This is an encouragement to Timothy in his ministry
- To show himself approved by diligence
- Translated in another way it says...

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

- As one of those who must pass on the teaching we receive, this call is to us as well

- Also consider...

Hebrews 5:13-14

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

- We move from a diet of milk to a diet of meat in the word of God because our senses have been exercised by it

- We are built up because we use it to determine what is good and what is evil

- And again in 2 Timothy...

2 Timothy 3:15-17

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

- Timothy has had the benefit of learning the scriptures from a young age

- And they have shown him the way of salvation

- They have done this because they come directly from God

- And are useful in every believer's life to reprove and correct and instruct in righteousness

- So that we can grow to maturity in all that which God intends and therefore be capable of achieving the good God will empower us to achieve

- Even Jesus mentioned our learning and growing in His word when He prayed for all His disciples...

John 17:15-17

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

- Our sanctification (being set apart for God's use) cannot happen apart from the truth of God's word
- It is the key to our growth into the kind of people that can face all manner of difficulty and hardship in His service
- The church as a whole can expect growth, as God uses His word to mold and shape us
- As Ephesians makes note...

#### Ephesians 5:25-27

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;  
 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,  
 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

- And the purifying work of the word is mentioned again and again throughout scripture
- As God is using it for our good and for His glory
- Just see 1 Peter...

#### 1 Peter 1:22-23

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:  
 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

- Our understanding of and obedience to the truth, by the Holy Spirit, changes the way we relate in the body of Christ
- It is of eternal use
- Because as this passage states, and as 1 Peter goes on, it is forever...

#### 1 Peter 1:24-25

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:  
 25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

- Our investment in the reading and study of scripture is an eternal investment
- It is a survey of the mind of God to man

- And it is better than God's audible voice to our ears
- Its commands, written and delivered in a book, are "more sure" than spoken declarations and prophecies
- This is confirmed in 2 Peter...

#### 2 Peter 1:16-21

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

- Peter himself was an eyewitness on the mount of transfiguration
  - He heard these words from heaven
  - They were true words and words he remembered
  - But he insists we have something better
  - And he calls it a "more sure word of prophecy"
  - It is the written word
  - Not to be privately interpreted
  - Meaning, each of us do not have our own personal reading of it
  - For it was not written as an act of human will
  - But men that God chose were moved by Him
  - And they wrote the very words He chose
  - Those words are to be examined and rightly defined and studied by future generations
  - For the purpose of know God's mind
  - And for the purpose of being equipped to live according to His will
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- For the believer in Christ, the words of scripture are words to live by
  - Because, as Jesus declared when He was tempted in the wilderness...

#### Matthew 4:4

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

- So, how do we do this?
- Well, first I would encourage you to do what those in Berea did when they were taught...

Acts 17:10-12

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

- If you have the privilege of being taught, go back and read for yourself
- Test that which is spoken to you
- Have a "readiness of mind" to hear what God, not just any preacher, has to say
- And conduct a search
  
- But do so with a Biblical, contextual, and historical method
- Compare scripture to scripture, pay diligent heed to the context of every passage, and do your best (using the resources you have available) to understand the historical context as well
- Deal honestly with every passage
- Don't hesitate to get help
- And ask God, without exception, to teach you by His Holy Spirit

Christopher Harper, October 2021