

## 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.

