

PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Thus Saith the Lord

VAIN LOVE

By Jeff Sweeten

John, often called the Apostle of Love, bears his moniker exceptionally well as one reads his record of Christ's life and his epistles. However, his writing conflicts dramatically with modern notions of love. The misconception about what love is, according to John, involves the mistaken idea that this essential element of a child of God involves a wholesale toleration of whatever anyone wishes to do along with a toleration of every deviation, perversion or departure from revealed revelation. John describes love quite differently. He says, *"This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it."* (2 John 6).

The simple truth is that a person can profess all the love in the world for God but if he or she is unwilling to obey Jesus, it is just a vain profession, worth nothing on the divine market. Jesus has given us commandments that He intended for us to keep and deviating from or rejecting wholesale directives He has given is actually ***not*** love at all. Therefore, John records it thusly: *"If you love me, keep my commandments"* (John 14:15).

It is just that simple. Therefore, when Jesus commands or forbids, and a person ignores it with intentions of doing whatever he or she pleases to do (and the reason – rationalization – is irrelevant), the love of God is not in them, no matter what they may say. The words, like the love, are useless. The principle is not hard to understand; the issue is more often the unwillingness to accept and submit.

So, for example, when Jesus says *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned"* (Mark 16:16), if you love Him, you will do what He says in order to be saved. When He says, *"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life"* (Revelation 2:10), we must continue to walk in Christ for the sake of our soul's salvation; straying from His word jeopardizes the soul.

It is not enough to profess loyalty to Christ (1 John 3:18); talk is cheap. You will submit to him wholly if your love is genuine (John 8:42). If you profess to love Him and refuse to obey, your love is vain.

JOIN US ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY!

SUNDAY: 9:30 a.m. Bible Study • 10:25 a.m. Morning Worship • 1:30 p.m. Bible Study

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