

It is important that others can trust the things which you say. One's whole reputation rests on it. The best way to build up your reputation is to have your words and actions be in agreement. One definition of a hypocrite is that he says one thing, but does something quite the opposite. It is rather easy to make promises of things which you are going to do, but then it is important that you follow through on those promises with your actions. On the day of our confirmation, we were able to stand before the Lord's altar and we promised to remain true and faithful to our Lord and Savior in both words and actions as long as we lived. In order to be faithful to that promise, we will seek to show our faith through the actions which follow throughout our life. Today, we are taking a closer look at the words which Jesus spoke to His disciples in the upper room that night before He was betrayed, tried, and finally crucified. What He said to them is also meant for us today. He said, **THE ONE WHO LOVES ME WILL OBEY MY COMMANDS**. The two really go hand in hand — love for our Savior and the desire to do those things which He wants us to be doing. But He does not ask us to do this on our own. 1) Love for Him is worked in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and 2) Then this love shows itself in our actions.

There is a big difference between what Jesus does for us, and what we do for Jesus. Jesus loved us even before we were lovable. While we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. While we were dead in sin, and unable to do anything for Jesus, He laid down His life for us on the cross so that we might be given a new life in Him. Through the season of Lent we were reminded of all that Jesus endured for us. At Easter we rejoiced over what that sacrifice accomplished for us. But if that were as far as it went, it still would not have done us any good. The work which Jesus accomplished for us was complete, and there is nothing that needs to be added to it. The perfect forgiveness and eternal salvation for every person on earth has been accomplished. It is all stored up, ready to be given to men.

But until the Holy Spirit comes and works faith in our hearts, we will not even desire to receive this gift which is being offered to us. In fact, without the Holy Spirit, we would not even know about what Jesus has done for us. Jesus had promised His disciples that after He had left them, He would send to them another Counselor, whom He called the Spirit of truth. The Holy Spirit works upon our hearts through that powerful message which we have come to know as the gospel. Once we realize our sinfulness, and then hear the wonderful things which Jesus has done for us, the Spirit works in our hearts the desire to have them for ourselves. Now, if I were to tell you that scientists had just discovered a simple cure for AIDS, you might be impressed, but since you do not suffer from that disease, it really would not affect you much at all. But if I were to tell you that medical science had an quick and easy vaccination for the coronavirus, that would probably catch our attention because that would allow our lives to get back to normal. Because of that, you would want to know where you could get this cure. That is what the Holy Spirit does within our hearts when we hear that good news that Jesus has provided the cure for sin. Each one of us knows full well that we suffer from that dread disease, and we truly desire to receive the cure which our Savior has won for us. It is in this way that the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts so that we receive the forgiveness which Jesus has already won for us.

But the Holy Spirit's work is not finished when we are brought to faith. He continues to live within our hearts, and continues to work upon us with that same powerful word. He not only shows us the Savior, He also reveals to us the Father, and His holy will for our lives. Using that same Word of God, we are shown how we will be able to show our love for what the Father has done for us in sending Jesus as our Savior. None of these are demands that we have to do to receive forgiveness, for our salvation is complete in Jesus. But the more we realize how much our Savior has done for us, the more the love in our hearts for Him will desire to put into practice those things which are pleasing to Him

And that is how it happens that the one who loves Jesus will obey His commands. It is not a requirement that we have to fulfill, but it is a desire within us that truly wants to show this love through our actions. The faith which the Holy Spirit works within our hearts is something that is visible only to God Himself. It is a change in our heart and in our attitude. It is not something which anyone else is ever able to see. But when this faith is created within the heart, there is going to be a drastic change that is also going to

take place in our thoughts, our words, and our actions. No longer are we going to want to pursue the things which we know our Savior considers to be sinful.

So the faith which is worked in our hearts shows itself in our actions. Just look at the trees at this time of the year. A month or so ago, if you looked at any tree that normally has leaves, you would not know for sure whether it was alive or dead. After all of the leaves fell off last fall, those trees looked as though they were dead. But those which still had life in them are now showing that life this spring by budding and producing leaves. The leaves do not make the tree alive — the leaves are produced because the tree is alive. In much the same way, the actions which you and I produce in our lives are also a result of the faith which has been worked in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit brought us to faith in Jesus, thus receiving from Him the complete forgiveness of all of our sins, then we begin to seek a way to show that love back to our Savior for all that He has done for us. And one of those ways is by avoiding those things which our Savior calls sin. The other way that we show our love for Him in our hearts is by doing those things which we know He wants us to be doing. Our thoughts, our words, and our actions are going to follow what Jesus desires us to do in this life.

Certainly we know that we are not saved by anything that we do. We know so very well that Jesus has done everything for us to win our salvation, and to wash away all of our sins. But that does not mean that we can now do anything that we want. Sometimes it is necessary for the rubber to meet the road in our lives — to put our faith into practice. The one who loves Jesus will obey His commands, not as a way to earn eternal life with Him in heaven, but because he has been given eternal life.

Do you consciously study God's 10 commandments to see what it is that God would want you to be doing in this life? If you don't, then you may be well intentioned, but still doing exactly the opposite of what God wants of you. On mother's day, children may decide that what mom really needs on this day is to have breakfast in bed. So they get up extremely early that morning, prepare breakfast for mom, and then, at 5:30 AM, come barging into her room with this wonderful breakfast prepared just for her. While she will probably appreciate their intentions, what she would have preferred would have been to be able to sleep in that morning. The same thing holds true for our ways of seeking to show God the love which we have in our hearts. We need to listen to His Word, and do those things which He asks of us.

The one who loves Jesus will obey His commands. That means that we will take time for Him during our hectic week. Does worship on Sunday, and devotions during the week have a priority in our lives? If that is not a priority, then Jesus tells us that we have a different god ahead of Him. Do we remember to take all of our cares and worries to Him first, or do we remember to do that only as an afterthought, when nothing else seems to work? Then we are not using His name in the way that He wants us to use it as we are to pray, praise, and give thanks. Do we respect all those whom God has placed over us as His representatives on this earth? Do we honor and respect our parents, our government officials, and Called workers? If we do not, then we are not honoring God, either, for if we cannot love those whom we have seen, how can we love the One Whom we have not seen? I could go through all of the commandments, but I will leave that to your daily devotional life as we seek comfort from His Word, as well as guidance in how He wants us to show that love in our life.

The point is still that we will want to do what our Savior says if we truly believe what He tells us. We can easily see the hypocrisy of those who publicly confess their faith on Sunday morning, but do not live it throughout the week. How dare they do that, we think! Don't they know what Jesus has to say about any action which goes against His holy Word? May we look as sternly at our own lives and see if there are parts of our lives which are not what our Savior has asked of us. The one who loves Jesus obeys His commands. May we show our love for Him in everything that we say and do in this life! May we remember our confirmation vow, and recommit ourselves to being faithful to our Lord in both word and deed.