

9. 5 Last Days Commands

Stand Fast In The Faith-Part 9

a message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(3-1-26)

Find this week's sermon audio and video message [HERE](#).

For those who are new, we have started a series to remind us as Christians that, we are soldiers of Jesus Christ and we're fighting in a war—a war that's taking place in the last days (the time just prior to Jesus' return).

The question we've been dealing with is—are we doing what the Word commands for those living in the last days?

Today, we are continuing our series, “**Five Last Day's Commands**”—or “*Five Commands to Christians Living in the Last Days*”—which comes out of:

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 (NKJV)

¹³ Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all *that you do* be done with love.

This morning, we find ourselves looking at (and finishing up) the second command in this series where Paul tells us as Christians to—“**Stand fast in the faith.**”

The term “**the faith**” of which Paul speaks here is referring to **New Testament truth in general** but also the **truth of the gospel** in particular. I think Paul primarily had the gospel in mind—“*Stand fast and fight for the truth of the gospel.*”

The gospel has been under attack from the beginning. Everywhere Paul took the truth of the gospel he was confronted with the lies of the devil—and 2000 years later nothing has changed. Only the true gospel can bring new life in Christ, a false gospel, no matter how sincerely it is believed and embraced cannot save anyone—and no one knows that better than the devil!

The Lord has commissioned us to go into all the world preaching the gospel to the lost—which is why we must know the *true* gospel so we can share it accurately with those we come in contact with! This is why we have set aside a few weeks to study what the true gospel is all about and how to share it with others.

We need to remember that the gospel is designed by God to be a message of hope to a dying and condemned world, a world that Jesus entered on a search and rescue mission to save people drowning in sin and doomed to spend eternity in hell.

The true gospel message isn't, “*God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.*”

The true message of the gospel is—“*Run to Jesus and take refuge in Him for safety from the judgment that is coming.*” (1 Thessalonians 1:10; John 3:16) That should be the heart of our gospel presentation to those we witness to—as it was in all apostolic gospel presentations in the Book of Acts.

1. There is a day of judgment coming

As we have already said, this isn't really a part of the gospel itself—it is more the introduction, the *motivation* to get people moving in the direction of *salvation*.

Unfortunately, as we said last time, many Christians today have been taught to share the gospel, not as a warning urging people to receive Jesus as a Savior Who will save them from the fires of hell—but as some kind of '*self-improvement program*' that will make their lives better and more comfortable here on earth (i.e., '*help them stop drinking or taking drugs—give them a better marriage,*' etc.).

2. Repentance

The Greek word for **repentance** is *metanoia* which literally means—“*to have a change of mind*”—but a change of mind that leads to a change of life.

No one can be saved who isn't willing and wanting to have the course of their life changed from rebellion against God to obedience toward God. In other words, a person can't just 'add' Jesus to their life and go on living the same rebellious, sinful life they've always lived and expect to go to heaven someday.

Jesus said, "*I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish... I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.*" (Luke 13:3, 5)

3. Jesus Christ is Almighty God—Lord of all

Many of the people we share the gospel with think that Jesus was a good man, a wonderful moral example, and maybe even a prophet—but stop short of believing in Him as God Almighty.

Therefore, we need to make sure they know Who Jesus really is—which is absolutely essential for their salvation:

John 8:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

You'll notice that the word "**He**" in verse 24 is in italics, which means it's not there in the Greek but was added by the translators in an effort to help clarify what Jesus was saying—but here it only clouds what Jesus is saying about Himself!

What Jesus really said was, "**Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins [go to hell]...if you do not believe that I am [‘Jehovah God’], you will die in your sins.**"

This goes '*hand in hand*' with another biblical declaration concerning Jesus Christ—that He is not only Almighty God in human form, the Great I AM—but that He is also the Lord of all!

Acts 10:36 (NKJV)

[Peter presenting the gospel] ³⁶ "The word which *God* sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace [*‘peace with God, salvation’*] through Jesus Christ--**He is Lord of all**--

Romans 10:9 (NLT)

⁹ If you openly declare that Jesus is [your] Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Salvation is inextricably linked to the doctrine that Jesus Christ is God Almighty and Lord of all! The reason these go *‘hand in hand’* is because—as God He *created* all things, and therefore He has the right to *control* all things as sovereign Lord (Master) of His creation!

Colossians 1:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

Jesus is God (that’s who He is)—but salvation only comes to those who *believe* He is God and then *receive* Him as the God and Master (Lord) of their lives—

John 1:12 (NKJV)

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name...

The Bible is clear that we are saved by faith—but not all ‘faith’ is saving faith!

Even the devil and his demons believe who Jesus is and what He did on Calvary’s Cross—but they aren’t going to heaven!—because they refuse to submit to Him as Lord. And verbally acknowledging that Jesus is Lord is not enough—

Luke 6:46 (NKJV)

⁴⁶ “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”

Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

4. Jesus Christ Died for Their Sins

When you present the gospel to people, you need to make sure they understand that God’s Word clearly teaches that—being “good” (whatever that means) won’t get them into heaven.

Most people will say, *“I know I’m not perfect, but I think I’m good enough to get into heaven.”* But God is telling us in His Word that if you’re not perfect, you’re not good enough—

Romans 3:23 (NKJV)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (sinless perfection),

Romans 6:23 (NKJV)

²³ For the wages of sin *is* death (eternal death—hell), but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Only Jesus is the perfect One and salvation is only ‘in Him’ by faith.

At this point some people you’re witnessing to will respond—*“Well, I still believe I’m good enough to get into heaven, and besides that, God is a God of love and I don’t believe He’s going to send me to hell because He loves me!”*

We dealt with this concept last week in our study, looking at a ‘good’ man who came to Jesus seeking to receive eternal life (Matthew 19:16-22).

Mark tells us something that the other gospel writers leave out of their gospel narrative with regard to Jesus’ interaction with this young, moral seeker of eternal life—“*Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him...*” (Mark 10:21)

Why does Mark tell us that—doesn’t God love the whole world? Yes, He does but this is telling us that Jesus felt love for this young man at that moment because he was sincere, his heart was open, his spiritual search was genuine—and that moved the heart of Jesus toward him.

Yet even though Jesus loved him and was about to demonstrate it by dying for him—He wouldn’t give him eternal life without repentance, and a person can’t repent for their sins who doesn’t acknowledge that they are a sinner.

(This shoots down the belief that because God is love, He won’t send anyone to hell)

We are fallen sinners, condemned to spend eternity in hell—and the only way we could escape that judgment was if God *redeemed* us (to buy out of slavery by paying a price)—a price so great that no human being could pay it:

Psalm 49:7-8 (NKJV)

⁷ None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him-- ⁸ For the redemption of their souls is costly...

The redemption of a human soul is costly because no amount of money can purchase it, nor can another human being die to ransom it because—sinners can’t die for sinners.

The only ransom God would accept for the souls of sinful humanity was the life of His sinless Son sacrificed on Calvary’s Cross—

1 Peter 1:18-19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold...* ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (The innocent for the guilty)

Under the old sacrificial system, God mandated that He would only accept the innocent dying for the guilty (an animal without spot or blemish)—and as such under the Mosaic covenant the blood of the animal would *atone* for their sin.

The word ‘**atonement**’ in the Hebrew is *kapher* and means ‘*a covering*’.

For the Jewish people to have fellowship with God their sins would have to be atoned for (covered), and God made it clear that being ‘good’, keeping commandments, and offering God religious rituals and ceremonies wasn’t going to do it—it would take a blood sacrifice:

Leviticus 17:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

But even then, the blood of animals would only *temporarily* cover their sin—until the next time they sinned and had to bring another animal to atone for their sin once again.

Of course, this looked forward to the sinless, perfect, Lamb of God (the Lord Jesus Christ) Who would die in our place, and Whose blood would—forever take all our sins away! (John 1:29)

When we share the gospel with people today, since everyone thinks they're a 'good' person ("*not perfect, but certainly good enough to get into heaven!*")—we must communicate to them, that if our good deeds and religious works could atone for our sins then—why did Jesus have to die?

And since He did die—did He therefore die in vain (Galatians 2:21b)! Of course, this goes hand in hand with the last piece of the gospel message—

5. Jesus Christ Rose from the Dead

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single greatest event in the history of the world—and the cornerstone of the Christian faith. It is so foundational to Christianity that anyone who denies the physical, bodily resurrection of Christ cannot be a genuine Christian—it is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith for salvation!

**You see, without the resurrection there is
no Christian faith, no salvation—and no hope for man.**

As Paul the Apostle said, *"If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is useless, your faith is meaningless, we are still in our sins, those who have died believing in Christ are lost and we are of all men the most pathetic. We might as well eat, drink, and be merry for there is nothing more to life than this."*

However, Paul went on to say, *"But now Christ is risen from the dead and is the first fruits from the grave of those who have died believing in Jesus."*

The truth of the resurrection was first proclaimed to the women who came to the tomb the Sunday morning after Jesus was crucified to finish preparing His body for burial. Jesus died on the cross at 3 o'clock in the afternoon (on Thursday) and by the time the four Roman executioners (required by Roman law) had certified He was officially dead, and His body was removed from the cross—the sun was starting to set.

Jewish law mandated that a dead body had to be buried by sundown—so Joseph of Arimathea (one of Jesus' disciples) asked Pilate for Jesus' body and then quickly wrapped it in burial cloths and put it into his own never used tomb.

The women purposed that they would come back early Sunday morning (after the Sabbath) to finish properly preparing Jesus' body for burial by placing the spices in the windings of the grave clothes.

The gospels tell us that the women were worried that Sunday morning, as they made their way to the tomb, about the stone that had been rolled over the opening of the tomb (weighing between three and four thousand pounds).

They had no idea how they would ever be able to roll it out of the way so they could enter the tomb and finish preparing the body of Jesus for burial. Yet when they got there, they saw the stone had already been moved from the opening and looking inside they saw an angel who said to them: *"Do not be afraid, for I*

know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (Matthew 28:5-6)

At this point let me quote from one well-known Bible apologist on the subject of Jesus' resurrection—he said and I'm quoting him:

"All but 4 of the major world religions are based on philosophical and ethical principles. Of the 4 that are based on personalities only Christianity claims an empty tomb due to the resurrection of its founder.

- 1. Abraham, the father of Judaism died about 1900 BC, but the Jews never claimed he rose from the dead.*
- 2. The original accounts of Buddha's life and death never claimed any resurrection from the dead for him.*
- 3. Mohammed died on June 8, 632 AD at the age of 61 in Medina where his tomb is visited each year by thousands of devout Muslims—but neither the Koran nor the Hadith ever claimed that Mohammed rose from the dead.*

Their bodies (bones) are still in their graves—only the tomb of Jesus is empty because only Jesus is risen!"

That's why Christians celebrate the resurrection as the greatest day in the history of the world.

On July 20th, 1969, Neil Armstrong walked on the moon. President Richard Nixon went on T.V. and said, *"This is the greatest day in the history of the world, man has conquered space..."*

The next day Billy Graham came out publicly and refuted that statement of President Nixon by saying, *"Yesterday was not the greatest day in the history of the world, there have been at least 3 others that have been greater—the birth, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ."*

6. The Invitation

- After you've given the gospel *presentation*—it's time for the invitation.
- Ask the person you're witnessing to if they would like to receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior.
- *"I like to let them go home and think about it."*

Well, that's what D.L. Moody used to like to do also—and that's what he did after preaching the gospel to a large crowd one night in Chicago.

The date was October 8, 1871—the night of the great Chicago fire. ([Listen for complete story](#)).

When the Bible says, *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (2 Cor. 6:2)—that's as much for the person giving the gospel as it is for the one hearing the gospel. (Explain)

Author and commentator, William Barclay relates the following story to illustrate the danger of spiritual procrastination:

"There is a fable which tells of three apprentice demons who were coming to this earth to finish their apprenticeship. They were talking to Satan, the chief of the demons, about their plans to tempt and to ruin men. The first said, "I will tell them that there is no God." Satan said, "That will not delude many, for they know that there is a God."

The second said, "I will tell men that there is no hell." Satan answered, "You will deceive no one that way; men know even now that there is a hell for sin."

The third said, "I will tell men that there is no hurry—they have time." "Go," said Satan, "You will ruin men by the thousands."

The most dangerous of all delusions is that there is plenty of time for a person to get serious about God and make a commitment to receive Jesus into their heart as their Savior and Lord of their life so—there's no need to hurry, they've got time!

However, the Bible teaches that—*"Tomorrow isn't promised to anyone."*

God's Word admonishes unbelievers not to put off receiving Jesus when the gospel is presented to them—*"Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts..." (Hebrews 3:7-8); "...behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2)*

May God give us a burden for the lost, and a great sense of urgency to reach them with the gospel—but that we would give them the true gospel!

Now let me say this in closing—the devil wants to attack your presentation of the gospel to people. When you share the gospel with someone and they don't want to pray to receive Jesus as their Savior—Satan will try to sow condemnation in your heart that it's your fault!

You didn't present the gospel *properly* to them and therefore it's your fault they didn't receive Jesus and get saved. Satan will try to use this tactic to scare you into thinking that a person's salvation rests on your shoulders, it's your responsibility and if you don't *'do it right'* and they die—it's your fault they go to hell!

This is designed by the devil to intimidate you into silence—*"I don't want to be responsible for someone going to hell so I'm not going to share the gospel with anyone anymore!"*

John 6:37–39 (NIV)

³⁷ All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

Jesus is saying that everyone who would get saved during the Church Age (Pentecost to the Rapture) were foreknown and chosen by the Father Who will someday present all of them (the whole 'Body of Christ') as a love gift to the Son as His Bride.

Notice that Jesus makes it a point to say that all of those that the Father gives to the Son—will come to Him (Jesus) for salvation.

This means that no one's salvation depends on you or me—even if we mess up our presentation of the gospel, or chicken out altogether and not witness to someone.

Jesus is clear that their salvation depends solely upon the ability of the sovereign God of the universe to save, sustain (hold on to) and complete the work He began in each of their lives by bringing them from predestination to glorification (Romans 8:29-30).

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please, reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

Catch this weeks' audio, video, study and sermon notes [HERE](#).