

7. 5 Last Days Commands-Part 7

Stand Fast In The Faith

a message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
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Find this week's sermon audio and video message [HERE](#).

This morning, 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 the second command in this series to—“**Stand fast in the faith**”—

II. Stand Fast in the Faith

The term “**the faith**” of which Paul speaks here is referring to **N.T. truth in general** but also the **gospel truth 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.

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, and the *motivation* to get people moving in the direction of *salvation*.

Too many Christians today present 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 a ‘*self-improvement program*’ that will make their lives better and more comfortable here on earth.

Jesus talked about hell more than anyone else—because He didn’t want anyone to go there!

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 direction or action.

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

One of the essential doctrines that a person must believe if they're going to be forgiven of their sins and allowed entrance into heaven is that Jesus is—Almighty God in human form, the Great I AM!

Exodus 3:13-14 (NLT2)

¹³ But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" ¹⁴ God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you."

John 1:1-3, 14 (NKJV)

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made...¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

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 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.

You can't separate His divinity from His sovereignty because they are inextricably linked together to His divine nature—you can't embrace one without the other!

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...

Believing in Jesus is essential if a person is going to be saved—but receiving Him as your Lord is where you make the *commitment* to Him that actually saves you!

This is where *faith* as mere 'head-knowledge'—becomes *saving faith* - a heart commitment!

It's important for the people we are witnessing to, that they understand, that to be saved they have to believe in Jesus Christ as Almighty God—that's vital.

But what we must also make sure they understand is that—not all faith is saving faith!

I was raised in the Roman Catholic Church, and I believed everything back then that I believe about Jesus now—and yet, back then I wasn't saved—WHY?

Why wasn't I saved back then, if simply believing the facts about Jesus Christ was all that was necessary to be saved and get into heaven as some teach?

In his epistle, James tells us that even the devil and his demons *believe* that Jesus Christ is God Almighty, the Great I AM in human form—but that's not going to keep them from hell.

Saving faith is not just believing the facts about Jesus Christ (Who He is and what He did)—to be saved a person must believe to the point of commitment.

Let me illustrate.

When you were dating your future spouse and decided to get married, you didn't enter into the marriage covenant until you made vows to each other on your wedding day—those vows were the commitment you were making to one another.

It was the commitment expressed in your wedding vows to each other—that put you into the marriage covenant and allowed you to become one with each other in the eyes of God.

The same was true in your relationship with Jesus *before* you were saved.

Many of you (like me) grew up believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God—and maybe you even *loved* Him in your own way as I did.

There are many Catholics, Lutherans and others who grew up in a mainline denominational church who have always ‘loved Jesus’ and thought that meant they were saved.

But loving Jesus is not enough to make you one with Him so as to save your soul.

You see, just like our marriage analogy where you loved the person you were engaged to, but it wasn’t until you stood before God and made a commitment to him or her, vowing to be loyal and ‘exclusive’ in your relationship with them—that you actually entered into the marriage covenant and became one with them.

The same is true with regard to your relationship with Jesus. Loving Jesus when you were growing up and going to church—didn’t mean you had a saving relationship with Him. That came about when you eventually made a commitment to Him by receiving Him into your heart as your Savior (and Bridegroom), vowing to love Him above all others.

You see, that was the moment you actually became one with Him and entered into the ‘New Covenant’ with Him (which is really a marriage covenant). It was the *commitment* that brought you into the *covenant* with Jesus and made you one with Him—that saved you.

Let me come at this from a slightly different perspective—Only perfect people get into heaven and the only way you can be perfect in God’s eyes is to be ‘in Christ.’

The only way to be in Christ is to believe in Him and make a commitment to Him—religious works, no matter how zealous and sincere a person might be will never make them perfect in God’s eyes.

Religion tells people that if they work hard you can be ‘good enough’ to make it into heaven—but that is the number one lie of the devil, that heaven is a reward for deserving people.

Heaven is only for perfect people and there are only 2 ways a person can be perfect—1. Live a perfect, sinless life; or 2. Receive Jesus as your Savior who lived a sinless, perfect life.

When it comes to Jesus being **‘Lord of all’**—it means that, not only is He Almighty God, Creator of all things. He is therefore, Lord over all the people of this world that He has created—whether they realize it or not! As such, every person who has ever lived will at some point bow the knee to Jesus confessing Him as Lord—

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV)

⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and *that every tongue* should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

However, only those who bow the knee to Jesus as Lord over their life here on earth are saved.

The rest *will* bow the knee and confess that He is Lord on the Day of Judgment—but then it will be too late to save them!

In the Old Testament, when you see the word “**LORD**” (all capitals) it is the name of God (‘Yahweh’) the Great “I AM.”

But when you see the word “**Lord**” it is the translation of the Hebrew word ‘adoni’—which means ‘**master**’ or ‘*the one who controls your life.*’

We see these words side-by-side in Psalm 8:1—“*O LORD [Yahweh], our Lord [Adoni], how excellent is Your name in all the earth...*”

The problem with so many professing Christians today is that they *separate* those 2 words (truths) from each other in their daily lives. In fact, they often use the word ‘**Lord**’ as a *name* for Jesus when it is really a *title* for the One who controls their life.

His name is Jesus—His title is Lord—the Master of your life.

Those who *call* Jesus Lord but don’t *submit* to Him and obey Him as their Master are deceiving themselves—

Luke 6:46 (NLT)

⁴⁶ “So why do you keep calling me ‘Lord, Lord!’ when you don’t do what I say?

Matthew 7:21–23 (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. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Listen, no one is saved who doesn’t call Jesus Lord—and no one can truly call Jesus ‘*Lord*’ who has not relinquished control of their life to Him as their Master.

Even as Jesus said, “*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life...*” (John 10:27-28)

The true gospel is all about telling people that they must believe in and bow the knee in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ—without which no man or woman can be saved!

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](#).

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