

You Must Be Born Again • Repent • Come to Me • Believe in Me • Love Me • Listen to Me • Abide in Me • Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me • Love God with All Your Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength • Rejoice and Leap for Joy • Fear Him Who Can Destroy Both Soul and Body in Hell • Worship God in Spirit and Truth • Always Pray and Do Not Lose Heart • Do Not Be Anxious about the Necessities of Daily Life • Do Not Be Anxious about the Threats of Man • Humble Yourself by Making War on Pride • Humble Yourself in Childlikeness, Servanthood, and Brokenhearted Boldness • Do Not Be Angry—Trust God's Providence • Do Not Be Angry—Embrace Mercy and Forgiveness • Do the Will of My Father Who Is in Heaven—Be Justified by Trusting Jesus • Do the Will of My Father Who Is in Heaven—Be Transformed by the Holy Spirit

ALL THAT JESUS COMMANDED

*The Christian Life
according to the Gospels*

JOHN PIPER

All That Jesus Commanded

Books by John Piper

Battling Unbelief

Bloodlines

Brothers, We Are Not Professionals

Come, Lord Jesus

The Dangerous Duty of Delight

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Why I Love the Apostle Paul

All That Jesus Commanded

The Christian Life according to the Gospels

John Piper

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*All authority in heaven and on earth
has been given to me.*

JESUS

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the eyes that only a gifted wife can bring. Everything I do hangs on her support.

When someone asks, “How long did it take you to write this book?” I often answer, “Sixty years.” I know it’s not a satisfactory answer. But it does tell the truth that the streams of generosity that have come together to create this book have been flowing into my life from the start. I do not doubt that experiences I had from Summit Drive Grade School in Greenville, South Carolina, in the 1950s to the University of Munich in the early 1970s and the ministry of the Word for twenty-five years at Bethlehem shaped what is in this book. There is no separating life and the labor of writing.

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Suggestions for How to Read This Book

LONG BOOKS SEEM DAUNTING because we think we should start at the front and read to the back and not skip anything. I don't expect most people to read this book that way. I hope some will. I did structure the book so that matters at the front may help the reader understand matters further on. And there is a kind of foundation, progression, and climax. But the chapters have enough independence that most of them can be read without the others. It will be obvious when one chapter depends on another.

Therefore, I invite you to step in anywhere. You don't have to read the Introduction first. I hope that the way Jesus's commands are interwoven will draw you further in, from one issue to another.

I have tried to keep the chapters relatively short so that in general they can be read at one sitting for those who only have limited time from day to day. This is why some of the chapters deal with the same command from different angles. I thought it better to handle the matter in several chapters rather than in one long one.

Since the focus is on the commands of Jesus in this book, much about his life and death is not here. If you want to see how I have tried to portray these more fully, you can look at two other (shorter!) books where I deal with Jesus and his death: *Seeing and Savoring Jesus Christ*

(Crossway, 2004) and *Fifty Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die* (Crossway, 2006). And, of course, there are important books by others that I will be referring to along the way.

Most of all I hope you will pray as you read. Even if you are not accustomed to praying, ask God to protect you from any mistakes I may have made and to confirm to you what is true. In the end, what matters is the effect that God produces in our lives through his written word by his Spirit. That's what makes prayer so crucial. In prayer we ask God to transform us in that way.

Finally, may the living Jesus fulfill the purpose of his word as you read: "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11).

INTRODUCTION

The Aim of the Book

THIS BOOK WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED in 2006 under the title *What Jesus Demands from the World*. This new edition with a new title is substantially the same with minor revisions and rearrangements. The new title, *All That Jesus Commanded: The Christian Life according to the Gospels*, is intended to make more clear the relevance of this book for every Christian. It deals with every command Jesus gave and how it relates to Christian living today. It draws out the meaning of these commands from the four Gospels themselves not the rest of the New Testament.

The aim of this book is God-glorifying obedience to Jesus. To that end I am seeking to obey Jesus's last command: "Make disciples of all nations . . . *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*" (Matt. 28:19–20). Jesus's final command was to teach all nations to keep his commandments.

The Impossible Final Command

Actually, the final command was more precise than that. He did *not* say, "Teach them all my commandments." He said, "Teach them *to observe* all my commandments." You can teach a parrot all of Jesus's commandments. But you cannot teach a parrot to *observe* them. Parrots

will not repent, and worship Jesus, and lay up treasures in heaven, and love their enemies, and go out like sheep in the midst of wolves to herald the kingdom of God.

Teaching people to parrot all that Jesus commanded is easy. Teaching them to *observe* all that Jesus commanded is *impossible*. Jesus used that word. When a rich man could not bring himself to let go of his riches and follow him, Jesus said, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. . . . With man it is *impossible*, but not with God. For all things are possible with God” (Mark 10:25–27).

Therefore, the person who sets himself to obey Jesus’s final commission—for example, to teach a rich man to *observe* the command to “renounce all that he has” (Luke 14:33)—attempts the impossible. But Jesus said it was *not* impossible. “All things are possible with God.” So the greatest challenge in writing this book has been to discern God’s way of making impossible obedience possible.

Jesus said that this impossible goal happens through *teaching*. “Make disciples . . . *teaching* them to observe all that I have commanded you.” There is, of course, more to it than that—like the atoning death of Jesus (Mark 10:45) and the work of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26) and prayer (Matt. 6:13). But in the end Jesus focused on teaching. I take this to mean that God has chosen to do the impossible through the teaching of all that Jesus commanded. That’s what I pray this book will prove to be—a kind of teaching that God will use to bring about impossible obedience to Jesus. And all of that for the glory of God.

Teaching and Obedience That Glorify God

The reason I emphasize the glory of God is because Jesus did. He said, “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and *give glory to your Father who is in heaven*” (Matt. 5:16). The ultimate goal of Jesus’s commandments is not that we observe them by doing good works. The *ultimate* goal is that God be glorified. The

obedience of good works is penultimate. But what is ultimate is that in our obedient lives God be displayed as the most beautiful reality in the world. That is Jesus's ultimate goal¹ and mine.

This helps me answer the question: What kind of teaching of Jesus's commandments might God be willing to use to bring about such impossible obedience? If the aim of obedience is ultimately the glory of God, then it is probable that the teaching God will use is the kind that keeps his glory at the center. Therefore, my aim has been to keep the supremely valuable beauty of God in proper focus throughout the book.

Keeping the Commandments Connected to Jesus and His Work

How then do we keep the beauty of God in proper focus in relation to Jesus's commandments? By treating the meaning and motivation of the commands in connection with the person and work of Jesus. The person and work of Jesus are the primary means by which God has glorified himself in the world. No revelation of God's glory is greater. Jesus said, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). Therefore, his *person* is the manifestation of the glory of God. To see him as he really is means seeing the infinitely valuable beauty of God. Jesus also said, as he was praying, "I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do" (John 17:4). Therefore, his *work* is a manifestation of the glory of God. When we see what he achieved and how he did it, we see the majesty and greatness of God.

Therefore, my aim has been *to probe the meaning and the motivation of Jesus's commands in connection with his person and work*. What emerges again and again is that what he is commanding is a life that displays the worth of his person and the effect of his work. His intention is that we not disconnect what he commands from who he is and what he has done.

¹ See especially *Command #47*.

We should not be surprised, then, that Jesus's final, climactic command is that we teach all nations to observe all that he commanded. This leads to his ultimate purpose. When obedience to his commands happens, what the world sees is the fruit of Jesus's glorious work and the worth of his glorious person. In other words, they see the glory of God. This is why Jesus came and why his mission remains until he comes.

A Sketch of the Person and Work of Jesus

Anticipating what we will see later in the book, the briefest sketch of Jesus's person and work should be given here, so that from the start the commands rest on their proper foundation. Jesus came into the world, sent by God, as the long-awaited Jewish Messiah. When Jesus asked his disciples who they thought he was, Peter answered, "You are the Christ [that is, Messiah], the Son of the living God." To this Jesus responded, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 16:16–17).

When Jesus was on trial for his life, the charge was blasphemy, and eventually treason against Caesar, because of his apparent claims to be the Messiah, the King of Israel, the Son of God. The Jewish high priest asked him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:61–62).

Why Jesus Favored the Title "Son of Man"

Even though Jesus acknowledged that he was the Messiah, the Son of God, his favorite designation for himself was "Son of Man." At one level this title carries the obvious meaning that Jesus was truly human. But because of its use by the prophet Daniel, it probably is a very exalted claim of universal authority.

Behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. (Dan. 7:13–14)

The reason Jesus favored the title “Son of Man” for himself was that the terms *Messiah* and *Son of God* were loaded with popular political pretensions. They would give the wrong impression about the nature of his messiahship. They could easily imply that he fit in with the conceptions of the day that the Messiah would conquer Rome and liberate Israel and set up his earthly kingdom. But Jesus had to navigate these political waters by presenting himself as truly the Messiah, even the divine Son of God with universal authority, but also reject the popular notion that the Messiah would not suffer but immediately rule.

The term *Son of Man* proved most useful in this regard because though it did carry exalted claims for those who had ears to hear, on the face of it he was not making explicit claims to political power. Under this favorite title (while not rejecting the others), Jesus was able to make his claims that the long-awaited messianic kingdom of God had come in his ministry.²

The Kingdom of God Had Come into History

The Jewish people longed for the day when the Messiah would come and bring the kingdom of God. The kingdom would mean that the enemies of Israel are defeated, sins are wiped away, diseases are healed, the dead are raised, and righteousness, joy, and peace hold sway on the earth with the Messiah on the throne. Jesus arrived and said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand;

² For a helpful overview of the titles of Jesus in the Gospels in the space of eight pages see Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2009), 470–478.

repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). What he meant was that in his own ministry the liberating, saving reign of God had arrived. “If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then *the kingdom of God has come upon you*. . . . The kingdom of God is *in the midst of you*” (Luke 11:20; 17:21).

But there was a mystery. Jesus called it “the secret of the kingdom of God” (Mark 4:11). The mystery was that the kingdom of God had come in history *before* its final, triumphant manifestation. Fulfillment was here, but consummation was not here.³ The kingdom would arrive in two stages. In the first stage the Messiah would come and suffer, and in the second stage the Messiah would come in glory (Luke 24:46; Mark 14:62).

He Came to Serve and Die for Sins and Rise Again

Therefore, the primary work of Jesus on the earth during his first coming was to suffer and die for the forgiveness of sins. He said, “Even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). And at the Last Supper with his disciples, he took the cup and said, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt. 26:28).

Dying was not his only mission. But it was central. In shedding his blood he purchased the new-covenant promises. The new covenant was God’s promise that all who enter the coming kingdom will have their sins forgiven, will have the law written on their hearts, and will know God personally (Jer. 31:31–34). The blessings of this covenant are crucial in enabling us to obey Jesus’s commandments. Which makes Jesus’s death of supreme importance in bringing about the impossible obedience that he commands.

But there was more to his mission. When John the Baptist was perplexed about whether Jesus was really the Messiah, he sent word to

3 For an excellent book-length treatment of the kingdom of God in the ministry of Jesus see George Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974).

him from prison: “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” Jesus answered, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me” (Matt. 11:3–6). In other words, “All my healing and preaching are a demonstration of my messiahship, but don’t take offense that I am not fulfilling the political expectation of earthly rule. I *am* the one who is to come, but my central mission (in this first coming) is suffering—to give my life as a ransom for many.”

When his mission was accomplished, after three days in the grave, Jesus rose from the dead. This was God’s plan. It was an act of supreme authority over death. “No one takes [my life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father” (John 10:18). When he was raised, he appeared to his disciples on many occasions and gave them proof that he was physically alive (Luke 24:39–43). He opened the Scriptures to them so they could see more fully how he fulfilled God’s promises (Luke 24:32, 45). Then he commissioned them to be his witnesses, instructed them to wait for the promised Holy Spirit, and ascended into heaven (Luke 24:46–51).

Obedience Is the Fruit of His Work and the Display of His Glory

On the basis of who he was and what he accomplished, Jesus gave his commands. The commands cannot be separated from his person and work. The obedience he commands is the fruit of his *redeeming work* and the display of his *personal glory*. That is why he came—to create a people who glorify his gracious reign by bearing the fruit of his kingdom (Matt. 21:43).

When he said, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10), he was speaking about Zacchaeus who had just been

so transformed that he gave half his possessions to the poor (Luke 19:8). In other words, the Son of Man came to save people from their suicidal love affair with possessions and to lead them into a kind of impossible obedience that displays the infinite worth of Jesus. Therefore, my effort in this book has been to hold together the meaning and motivation of Jesus's commands, the greatness of his work, and the glory of his person.

A Word about Method

I will give more detail about my method in the Appendix, "A Word to Biblical Scholars" (which I invite everyone to read!), but it seems good to include at this point some crucial guiding choices that I have made. My method is to reflect on the meaning and motivation of Jesus's demands *as they appear in the New Testament Gospels* in the context of his person and work. I do not cite the rest of the New Testament for my understanding of Jesus in the Gospels. Citing the whole New Testament is a perfectly legitimate thing to do, and in my preaching I do not hesitate to bring Scriptures from anywhere to help make any text plain, provided I don't change the meaning of either text. But in this book I have given my rendering of Jesus almost entirely through the lens of his own words as recorded in the Gospels. One of my subordinate aims in this approach is to encourage confidence in the unity of the New Testament, because the upshot of this portrayal is so compatible with what the other New Testament writers taught.

A Word about "Commanding"

Jesus's last word to his disciples in Matthew 28:20 was that they should teach the nations "to observe all that I have *commanded* you." "Command" is a tough word. We should be sobered and humbled by it. But Jesus is not only tough. He is also tender.

These two ways of relating to us come together in what Jesus says on either side of his final command to make disciples. On one side he

says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt. 28:18). And on the other side he says, “Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20). The one says, “I give commands because I have the right. All authority in the universe is mine.” The other says, “I give commands because I will help you. I will be with you forever.”

I have tried to structure the chapters of the book to draw the reader from shorter chapters and gentler commands toward the more difficult, but no less precious, commands of Jesus.⁴ This is not merely stylistic or tactical. It is theologically fitting. Most of the first nineteen chapters do not command any external action. They are essentially about what happens in the mind and heart. These come first because the kind of obedience Jesus commands moves from the inside (where the value of Jesus is savored) to the outside (where the value of Jesus is shown).

Of these chapters, the first seven are “You Must Be Born Again,” “Repent,” “Come to Me,” “Believe in Me,” “Love Me,” “Listen to Me,” and “Abide in Me.” When these commands are seen for what they really are, they turn the absolute authority of Jesus into a treasure chest of holy joy. When the most glorious person in the universe pays all my debts (Matt. 20:28), and then commands that I come to live with him and enter into his joy (Matt. 25:21), there can be no more desirable command imaginable. To such a one I say, with Augustine, “Command what you wish, but give what you command.”⁵

Dare Jesus Claim to Command the Whole World?

Jesus’s final instruction to his disciples not only tells them to teach all he “commanded,” but that they should do this to all the nations—to the whole world. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19–20).

⁴ For how I chose which commands to include in the book see page 417.

⁵ Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin (New York: Penguin Books, 1961), 40 (X, xxix).

Two objections arise. One is: *Did* he give his commands to the whole world? The other is: *Dare* he give commands to the whole world?

One may ask: Did Jesus give all these commands to the world, or did he give them to his disciples? Is this an ethic for the world or for the followers of Jesus? The answer is: The commands he gave only to his disciples are also meant for the world because he demands all people everywhere to become his disciples. That is the point of his final command: “Go therefore and make disciples of *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19–20). Jesus dares to lay claim to “all nations”—all ethnic groups on the planet.⁶ No exceptions. Jesus is not a tribal deity. All authority in the universe is his, and all creation owes its allegiance to him.

Advancing with All Authority but No Sword

He does not send his people to make disciples with a sword. His kingdom does not come by force, but by truth and love and sacrifice and the power of God. “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting” (John 18:36). Jesus’s followers do not kill to extend his kingdom. They die. “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Mark 8:34). “Some of you they will put to death” (Luke 21:16). Not only will they put the followers of Jesus to death, but they will do it in the name of their religion. “The hour is coming,” Jesus says, “when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God” (John 16:2).

Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth, but for now he restrains his power. He does not always use it to prevent his people’s pain, even though he could and sometimes does. He is with us to the end of the age but not always to rescue us from harm. He calls us to walk the same

⁶ In the final two chapters of this book, I draw out the implications of this verse for the world and explain the meaning of “all nations” more fully.

road he walked. “If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20). “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household” (Matt. 10:25).

The universal authority of Jesus produces a mission of *teaching*, not a mission of terror. His aim is God-glorifying obedience to all that he commanded. The kind of obedience that glorifies God is free and joyful, not constrained and cowering. Even when the cost is supreme, the joy is triumphant because the cause of Jesus cannot fail. “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven” (Matt. 5:11–12). It is a costly mission, but a joyful one.

My prayer for this book is that it will serve that global mission—to “make disciples of all nations . . . *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*” I pray I am a faithful echo of Jesus when he said, “He who sent me is true, and I declare *to the world* what I have heard from him” (John 8:26).

*Jesus answered . . . “Do not marvel that I said
to you, ‘You must be born again.’”*

JOHN 3:5, 7

*Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one
is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

JOHN 3:3

You Must Be Born Again

IN THE THIRD CHAPTER OF JOHN'S GOSPEL, Jesus is speaking to "a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews" (John 3:1). Pharisees were the experts in the Jewish Scriptures. This is why Jesus was astonished that Nicodemus was baffled about what Jesus meant by "You must be born again." Nicodemus asks, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" (John 3:4). Jesus responds, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?" (John 3:10).

A New Spirit I Will Put within You

In other words, an expert in the Jewish Scriptures should not be baffled by Jesus's command, "You must be born again." Why not? Because there are so many clues in the Jewish Scriptures that Jesus and Nicodemus had in common. God had promised a day when he would cause his people to be born again. One of God's clearest promises is in the book of Ezekiel. Jesus echoed Ezekiel's words when he said, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Being "born again" is described as a birth from water and Spirit. Those two terms, "water" and "Spirit," are linked in Ezekiel 36:25–27. God says:

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

God promises cleansing from sin and the gift of a new human spirit by the presence of his own divine Spirit. Jesus thinks Nicodemus should make the connection between his command to be born again and Ezekiel's promise of a new spirit and the gift of God's Spirit. But he doesn't. So Jesus explains further by describing the role of God's Spirit in bringing about this new spirit: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

The Dead Cannot See

Flesh is what we are by nature. It refers to ordinary humanity. By our first birth we are only flesh. This natural human condition, as we experience it, is spiritually lifeless. We are not born spiritually alive with a heart that loves God. We are born spiritually dead.

That's what Jesus implied when he said to a would-be disciple who wanted to go home to a funeral, "Leave the *dead* to bury their own dead" (Luke 9:60). In other words, some are physically dead and need burying. Some are spiritually dead and can bury them. He implied it again when, in his parable of the prodigal son, the father says, "This my son was *dead*, and is alive again" (Luke 15:24). That's why "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). The dead can't see. That is, they can't see God's kingdom as supremely desirable. It looks foolish or mythical or boring. So they "cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). They cannot because it is foolishness to them.

Jesus sees all of humanity divided into two parts: those who are merely born once—"born of the flesh," "the (spiritually) dead"—and

those who are “born again” by the Spirit of God—those who are alive to God and see his kingdom as true and supremely desirable.

The Wind Blows Where It Will

Nicodemus is not entirely wrong to be baffled. There is a mystery. Jesus says so in John 3:8, “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” In other words, “Nicodemus, you need new spiritual life—a second birth.”

And what Jesus requires from Nicodemus, he requires from all. He is speaking to everyone in the world. No one is excluded. No ethnic group has a greater bent toward life. Dead is dead—whatever our color, ethnicity, culture, or class. We need spiritual eyes. Our first birth will not get us into the kingdom of God. But we do not cause ourselves to be born again. The Spirit does that. And the Spirit is free and blows in ways we do not comprehend. We must be born again. But this is a gift of God.

Look away from yourself. Seek from God what he alone can do for you. Moral improvement of the old you is not what you need. New life is what the whole world needs. It is radical and supernatural. It is outside our control. The dead do not give themselves new life. We must be born again—“not . . . of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:13). That is what Jesus commands of us and from all the nations of the world.

*From that time Jesus began to preach, saying,
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

MATTHEW 4:17

*I have not come to call the righteous
but sinners to repentance.*

LUKE 5:32

*The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this
generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching
of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.*

MATTHEW 12:41

*Unless you repent, you
will all likewise perish.*

LUKE 13:3, 5

Repent

THE FIRST COMMAND OF JESUS'S public ministry was, "Repent." He spoke this command indiscriminately to all who would listen. It was a call for radical inward change toward God and man.

What Is Repentance?

Two things show us that repentance is an internal change of mind and heart rather than mere sorrow for sin or mere improvement of behavior. First, the meaning of the Greek word behind the English "repent" (μετανοέω, *metanoēō*) points in this direction. It has two parts: *meta* and *noeō*. The second part (*noeō*) refers to the mind and its thoughts and perceptions and dispositions and purposes. The first part (*meta*) is a prefix that regularly means movement or change. In view of the way this prefix regularly functions,¹ we may infer that the basic meaning of *repent* is to experience a change of the mind's perceptions and dispositions and purposes.

¹ For example, *meta* is used as a prefix in the words *metabainō* (transfer or change from one place to another), *metaballō* (change one's way of thinking), *metagō* (lead or move from one place to another), *metatithēmi* (convey from one place to another, put in another place, transfer), *metamorphōō* (change in a manner visible to others, be transfigured), *metastrephōō* (cause a change in state or condition, change, alter), and *metaschematizōō* (change the form of something, transform, change), etc.

The other factor that points to this meaning of “repent” is the way Luke 3:8 describes the relationship between repentance and new behavior. It says, “Bear fruits *in keeping with* repentance.” Then it gives examples of the fruits: “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise” (Luke 3:11). This means that repenting is what happens inside of us. Then this change leads to the fruits of new behavior. Repentance is not the new deeds but the inward change that bears the fruit of new deeds. Jesus is commanding that we experience this inward change.

Sin: An Assault on God

Why? His answer is that we are sinners. “I have not come to call the righteous but *sinner*s to repentance” (Luke 5:32). What was Jesus’s view of sin? In the parable of the prodigal son, Jesus describes the son’s sin like this: “He squandered his property in reckless living . . . [and] devoured [it] with prostitutes” (Luke 15:13, 30). But when the prodigal repents he says, “Father, I have sinned *against heaven* and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son” (Luke 15:21). Therefore, throwing your life away on reckless living and prostitutes is not just humanly hurtful; it is an offense against heaven—that is, against God. That’s the essential nature of sin. It’s an assault on God.

We see this again in the way Jesus taught his disciples to pray. He said that they should pray, “Forgive us our *sins*, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is *indebted* to us” (Luke 11:4). In other words, sins that God forgives are compared to the ones people commit against us, and those are called *debts*. Therefore, Jesus’s view of sin is that it dishonors God and puts us in *debt* to restore the divine honor we had defamed by our God-belittling behavior or attitudes. Later we will see how that debt gets paid by Jesus himself (Mark 10:45). But for us to enjoy that gift he says we must repent.

Repenting means experiencing a change of mind so that we can see God as true and beautiful and worthy of all our praise and all our

obedience. This change of mind also embraces Jesus in the same way. We know this because Jesus said, “If God were your Father, you would love *me*, for I came from God” (John 8:42). Seeing God with a new mind includes seeing Jesus with a new mind.

The Universal Need for Repentance

No one is excluded from Jesus’s command to repent. He made this clear when a group of people came to him with news of two calamities. Innocent people had been killed by Pilate’s massacre and by the fall of the tower of Siloam (Luke 13:1–4). Jesus took the occasion to warn even the bearers of the news: “Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5). In other words, don’t think calamities mean that some people are sinners in need of repentance and others aren’t. *All* need repentance. Just as all need to be born again (John 3:7), so all must repent because all are sinners.

When Jesus said, “I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32), he did not mean that some persons are good enough not to need repentance. He meant some *think* they are (Luke 18:9), and others have already repented and have been set right with God. For example, the rich young ruler desired “to justify himself” (Luke 10:29), while “the tax collector . . . beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ [and he] went down to his house justified [by God!]” (Luke 18:13–14). (For more on Luke 18:9–15, see *Command #20*.)

There Is an Urgency to This Command Because Judgment Is Coming

Therefore, none is excluded. All need repentance. And the need is urgent. Jesus said, “Unless you repent, you will all likewise *perish*.” What did he mean by *perish*? He meant that the final judgment of God will fall on those who don’t repent. “The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented

at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here” (Matt. 12:41). Jesus, the Son of God, is warning people of the judgment to come and is offering escape if we will repent. If we will not repent, Jesus has one message for us: “Woe to you” (Matt. 11:21).

This is why his command for repentance is part of his central message concerning the kingdom of God. He preached that the long-awaited kingdom of God is present in his ministry. “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). The gospel—the good news—is that the rule of God has arrived in Jesus to save sinners before the kingdom arrives at his second coming in judgment. So the command to repent is based on the gracious *offer* that is present to forgive and on the gracious *warning* that someday those who refuse the offer will perish in God’s judgment.

To All Nations Beginning from Jerusalem

After he had risen from the dead, Jesus made sure that his apostles would continue the call for repentance throughout the world. He said, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that *repentance* and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke 24:46–47). So the command of Jesus to repent goes to all the nations. It comes to us, whoever we are and wherever we are, and lays claim on us. This is the command of Jesus to every soul: Repent. Be changed deep within. Replace all God-dishonoring, Christ-belittling perceptions and dispositions and purposes with God-treasuring, Christ-exalting ones.

*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy
laden, and I will give you rest.*

MATTHEW 11:28

*Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts,
let him come to me and drink."*

JOHN 7:37

*Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life;
whoever comes to me shall not hunger."*

JOHN 6:35

You refuse to come to me that you may have life.

JOHN 5:40

*When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice,
"Lazarus, come out." The man who had died came out.*

JOHN 11:43-44

Come to Me

WHEN A PERSON IS BORN ANEW and experiences repentance, his attitude about Jesus changes. Jesus himself becomes the central focus and supreme value of life. Before the new birth happens and repentance occurs, a hundred other things seem more important and more attractive: health, family, job, friends, sports, music, food, sex, hobbies, retirement. But when God gives the radical change of new birth and repentance, Jesus himself becomes our supreme treasure.

His Yoke Is Easy, and His Burden Is Light

Therefore, his command that we come to him is not burdensome. It means coming to the one who has become everything to us. Jesus did not come into the world mainly to bring a new religion or a new law. He came to offer himself for our eternal enjoyment and to do whatever he had to do—including death—to remove every obstacle to this everlasting joy in him. “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full” (John 15:11). When Jesus commands that we do things—like “Come to me”—the essence of these commands is that we experience the life that most fully savors and spreads his supreme worth.

As Jesus looks out over the religions of the world—including the Judaism of his day—he sees people who are laboring under heavy loads to earn the favor of whatever deity they believe in. He did not come to replace that God-appeasing load with another one. He came to carry that load and call us to himself for rest. “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28–30). Make no mistake, there *is* a yoke and a burden when we come to Jesus (there would be no commands if this were not true), but the yoke is easy, and the burden is light.

There Is a Burden, but It’s Not Jesus

But perhaps it’s not easy and light the way we think it is. Jesus also said, “The gate is narrow and the way is *hard* that leads to life” (Matt. 7:14). The reason it is hard is not because Jesus is a hard taskmaster. It’s hard because the world is a hard place to enjoy Jesus above all. Our own suicidal tendency to enjoy other things more must be crushed (Matt. 5:29–30). And besides our own sin, many people are angered that we do not love what they love. So Jesus warned, “Some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my name’s sake” (Luke 21:16–17).

But Jesus is not the burden. When we come to him, he is the burden-lifter, the soul-satisfier, and the life-giver. “Jesus stood up and cried out, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink’” (John 7:37). Coming to Jesus means coming to drink. And the water we drink in fellowship with Jesus gives everlasting life. “Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14). The command that we come to Jesus is the command to come to the fountain of life and drink.

Jesus is not satisfied to lure us into obedience with images of life-giving water. He will also draw us with promises of life-sustaining bread.

“I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger” (John 6:35). Jesus himself is the bread of heaven—the source and essence of everlasting life. He will draw us with promises of deliverance from perishing (John 3:16). The command that we come to him is therefore like the command of a father to his child in a burning window, “Jump to me!” Or like the command of a rich, strong, tender, handsome husband to an unfaithful wife, “Come home!” Or like the command of a rescue squad that finds you on the point of death, dehydrated after days in the desert, “Drink this!”

“You Refuse to Come to Me That You May Have Life”

But the personal tragedy of sin and spiritual blindness is that people do not come. Jesus grieved over his people. “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!” (Matt. 23:37). “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life” (John 5:39–40).

Why don’t people come to Jesus? At one level the answer is because they “*refuse* to come.” In other words, people do not want to come. Some call this the choice of free will. Jesus would probably say it is the choice of a will enslaved to sin. “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin” (John 8:34). Jesus would say that people do not come to him because they are enslaved to their supreme preference for other things. “The light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light . . . everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light” (John 3:19–20).

How then has anyone ever come, since we are all enslaved to sin and spiritually dead (see *Command #1*)? Jesus’s answer was that God, in his great mercy, overcomes our resistance and draws us: “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him” (John 6:44).

“No one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father” (John 6:65). God grants the gift of new birth and repentance, which opens the eyes of the spiritually blind to the truth and beauty of Jesus. When this happens, all suicidal objections fall. We are finally free. And, finally free from slavery, we come.

“Lazarus, Come Out!”

Jesus came into the world to gather his flock from all the world (John 11:52). He lays down his life for them and commands that they come to him. Though he weeps over those who do not come, he will not be frustrated in his design. He will succeed in gathering a people for himself. He speaks with absolute sovereignty when he says, “I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd” (John 10:16). He *must* bring them. They *will* heed his voice. They *will* come.

When you hear the voice of Jesus saying, “Come to me,” pray that God would give you eyes to see Jesus as irresistibly true and beautiful. Pray that you would hear this command the way Lazarus did when he was dead. “[Jesus] cried out with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out.’ The man who had died came [out of his grave]” (John 11:43–44). When you come to Jesus like this, you will never cease to praise and thank him for his sovereign grace.

*Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe
in God; believe also in me.*

JOHN 14:1

*Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in
me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.*

JOHN 14:11

*While you have the light, believe in the light,
that you may become sons of light.*

JOHN 12:36

*[Jesus] said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and
see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it
in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."*

JOHN 20:27

Believe in Me

WHY DOES JESUS COMMAND that we believe in him? And what does believing in him really mean? The reason Jesus commands that we believe in him is that all human beings are in a desperate situation, and only Jesus can rescue us. He commands belief in himself because we cannot rescue ourselves but must look entirely to him for help. Jesus is the only one who can save us from this danger. For our own sake he commands that we trust him. It is as though a fireman finds you almost unconscious in a burning building that is about to collapse, throws his insulated tarp over you, picks you up, and says, “Hold still as I carry you. Don’t move. Don’t try to help me. I will get you out. You must let me do it. Trust me.”

The Desperate Situation We Are In

Of course, most people don’t feel the need for a divine fireman to rescue them. So what is this desperate situation that only Jesus can rescue us from? Jesus put it like this. Notice the words “perish,” “condemned,” and “wrath of God.”

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did

not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned; but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. . . . Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:16–18, 36)

The desperate situation we are in, Jesus says, is that we are under the wrath of God. This is owing to our sin (see *Command #2*). God is just, and his anger is rightly kindled against human attitudes and behaviors that belittle his worth and treat him as insignificant. All of us have done this. In fact, we do it every day.

God Sent Jesus to Die in Our Place

But the amazing truth is that God has sent his Son Jesus into the world not to add to this condemnation, but to rescue us from it. And the way Jesus rescues us is by taking the condemnation on himself, dying in our place, and then commanding not heroic acts of penance but that we trust him. Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). In other words, Jesus’s death was purposeful. He intentionally laid it down in our place.

Jesus saw himself as the fulfillment of the astonishing prophecy of Isaiah 53 (cf. Luke 22:37; Isa. 53:12). Seven hundred years before Jesus came, Isaiah prophesied that a Servant of the Lord would come to die for his people.

We esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have

turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (Isa. 53:4–6)

The reason Jesus commands that we believe on him is that there is nothing we can add to this rescue from the wrath of God. Jesus became our substitute. The sins that should have brought condemnation on us, God laid on Jesus. God's love planned an amazing exchange: Jesus endured what we deserved so that we might enjoy what he deserved—eternal life. And the way we come to enjoy this life is by believing in Jesus. That's what he said: "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever *believes* has eternal life" (John 6:47; cf. Luke 8:12).

What Does Believing in Jesus Mean?

Therefore, not many questions are more important than this: What does believing in him really mean? First, it means believing certain historical facts to be true. When Jesus's disciple Thomas doubted that Jesus was raised physically from the dead, Jesus came to him and said, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe" (John 20:27). Belief is not a leap in the dark. It has foundations and content. It is based on what really happened in history.

But believing in Jesus means more than knowing true things about Jesus. It means trusting him as a living person for who he really is. This is why Jesus spoke of simply believing *in him*. "Believe in God; believe also *in me*" (John 14:1; cf. Matt. 18:6). Believing *in* Jesus is more than believing *about* Jesus. We trust *him*.

Being Satisfied with All That God Is for Us in Jesus

Notice that Jesus offers himself to us not merely as a rescuer to be trusted but as living water to be drunk—not to mention offering himself to us as Shepherd (Matt. 26:31), Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15), Treasure (Matt. 13:44), King (John 18:36), etc. What does it mean to "believe in" Jesus as life-giving water?

Jesus said, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink” (John 7:37). “Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14). In another place, Jesus connected this drinking with believing in him and coming to him: “I am the bread of life; whoever *comes* to me shall not hunger, and whoever *believes* in me shall never thirst” (John 6:35). In other words, believing in Jesus and drinking the water that wells up to eternal life are the same.

Believing in Jesus when he offers himself to us as life-giving water does not mean merely believing *that* this water gives life. Water gives life when we drink it. Jesus gives life by being trusted. Trusting Jesus as water, therefore, means drinking the water. That is, it means “receiving” Jesus and all the life-giving grace of God that comes to us in him. “Whoever *receives* me receives him who sent me” (Matt. 10:40; cf. John 13:20). Believing in Jesus includes drinking Jesus as the soul-thirst-quenching water of life. That is, it means savoring and being satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus.

The Fireman Illustration Was Inadequate

So the illustration I used above of trusting the fireman is insufficient. It’s true as far as it goes. Jesus is a rescuer. We must hold still, not move, and let him carry us to safety out of the burning wrath of God. But it is possible to trust a fireman that you do not admire. He may be an adulterer and drunk in his time off. He doesn’t ask you to believe in him for all that he is, or to receive him, or to savor his life. But Jesus does. He is so much more than a rescuer. Therefore, believing in him is more than trusting in his rescue skills.

Jesus came not only to rescue us from condemnation but also that we might enjoy everlasting life, which means that we might experience all that God is for us in him. “This is eternal life,” he said, “that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent”

(John 17:3). He knows what we need far better than we do. We need rescue from the wrath of God, and we need a soul-satisfying relationship with God. This is what Jesus came to give. It comes to us in one way alone—by believing in him. Therefore, he gives his command to the world: “Believe in me.”

*Whoever loves father or mother more than me
is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or
daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

MATTHEW 10:37

*Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would
love me, for I proceeded and came forth from God."*

JOHN 8:42, RSV

Love Me

Jesus Commands the Emotions

I recall reading a book in college that argued: love cannot be a feeling because it is commanded, and you can't command the feelings. In other words, love must simply be an act of the will or a deed of the body without involving the emotions or affections. But the problem with this argument is that the premise is false: Jesus *does* command the feelings. He commands that our emotions be one way and not another.¹

He commands, for example, that we *rejoice* in certain circumstances (Matt. 5:12), and that we *fear* the right person (Luke 12:5), and that

¹ The most thorough study on emotions in the New Testament is now Matthew Elliott's *Faithful Feelings: Emotion in the New Testament* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2005). He writes, "Part of the essence of the Christian is how he or she feels. We must recover some of the insight of Jonathan Edwards, Calvin, Augustine and others as they rightly emphasize the role of emotion in the believer's life. With a little work we can come up with a clear idea of the emotional characteristics of the members of the kingdom of God. They love God and each other, they take joy in what Jesus has done in the past and what he will do in the future. They have secure hope that God will triumph. They become angry at sin and injustice and are jealous for God. They embrace the sorrow of the suffering as their own and grieve over sin. But this emotional life is rarely glimpsed in our theologies where emotion is not emphasized as a sign of true faith. Not only do Christians live the ethics of the kingdom, they also feel the attitudes and emotions of the kingdom. This is part of the picture that is very clear in the New Testament. These feelings are a result of good theology and are a necessary component of faith" (263–64).

we not *feel shame* over him (Luke 9:26), and that we forgive *from the heart* (Matt. 18:35), and so on. If a feeling is proper to have, Jesus can command it. The fact that I may be too corrupt to experience the emotions that I ought to have does not change my duty to have them. If Jesus commands it, I should have it. My moral inability to produce it does not remove my guilt; it reveals my corruption. It makes me desperate for a new heart—which Jesus came to give (see *Command #1*).

Love for Jesus Is Not Less Than Deep Affection

Jesus's command that we love him may involve *more* than deep feelings of admiration for his attributes and enjoyment of his fellowship and attraction to his presence and affection for his kinship, but it does not involve *less*. At least two things that he said show this. He said, for example, that our love for him must exceed the love we have for mother and father and son and daughter. "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:37). The love that binds us to these relationships is not mere willpower. It is deep with affection. Jesus says that the love we must have for him is not less than that, but more.

The other evidence that Jesus requires our love to be more than good deeds is in John 14:15. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." Sometimes people use these words to say: loving Jesus *is* keeping his commandments. That's not what it says. It says that keeping Jesus's commandments comes *from* our love for him. It does not *separate* deeds from love, but it does *distinguish* them. First we love him. Then because of this—overflowing from this—we do what he says. Love is not synonymous with commandment-keeping; it is the root of it. So the love that Jesus commands is something very deep and strong—like the closest family bonds of affection that we have but greater than that and more than that.

Love for Jesus Springs from a New Nature

Jesus's command to be loved like this implies that we must have a new nature—a new heart. How else can we love someone we have never seen more affectionately than we love our dear children? Loving like this is not in our fallen human nature. Jesus made this plain when he said to those who did not love him, “If God were your Father, you would love me” (John 8:42). In other words, “The reason you do not love me is that you are not in the family of God. You don't have the family nature—the family spirit, the family heart, preferences, tendencies, inclinations. God is not your Father.”

Jesus came as God's unique, divine Son (Matt. 11:27) so that fallen sinners like us could become non-divine sons of God with hearts and ways like his. “To all who did receive him, who believed in his name, [Jesus] gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12). That's why Jesus could say, “Love your enemies . . . and you will be sons of the Most High” (Luke 6:35). Through the new birth (*Command #1*) and faith (*Command #4*), Jesus gives us the rights and the inclinations of the children of God. At the center of those inclinations is love for Jesus, God's Son.

He Who Is Forgiven Little, Loves Little

How God enables us to love Jesus more than we love our closest friends and relatives is not a total mystery. The gift of the new birth and repentance—the new nature of a child of God—is brought about through seeing the glory of Jesus's love *for us*. Jesus taught this provocatively at a dinner party. A strict Pharisee, who had little love for Jesus, invited Jesus to dinner. While they were reclining at the low Middle-Eastern table, a prostitute entered and poured ointment—mingled with her tears—on Jesus's bare feet and wiped his feet with her hair. The Pharisee was indignant that Jesus would allow this.

So Jesus asked a question of the Pharisee: If a moneylender forgave two debtors, one who owed him five thousand dollars and the other fifty, which would love him more? He answered, “The one, I suppose,

for whom he cancelled the larger debt.” Jesus agreed, then said, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.” Then Jesus concluded: “She loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little” (Luke 7:36–48).

This is a story about the way great love for Jesus comes into being. It comes into being when we are given eyes to see the beauty of Jesus in the way he loved us first. We did not love him first. He loved us first (John 15:16). Our love for Jesus is awakened when our hearts are broken because of our sin (unlike the judgmental Pharisee) and when we taste the sweetness of Jesus’s forgiving love preceding and awakening our love for him.

The Command That We Love Him Is an Act of Love

There is no doubt that this love will produce the fruit of obedience to Jesus’s other commandments (John 14:15), and that it will incline us to fulfill the ministry he gives us to do (John 21:15–22), and that it will produce a longing that Jesus be honored and blessed (John 14:28; 5:23). But beneath all this fruit is the fundamental reality of heartfelt love for Jesus—strong feelings of admiration for his attributes, abiding enjoyment of his fellowship, undying attraction to his presence, warm affection for his kinship, and strong gratitude for loving us before we loved him.

These emotions and this fruit are what Jesus meant when he referred to our being “worthy” of him: “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not *worthy* of me” (Matt. 10:37). Loving Jesus with these affections and with this fruit makes us “worthy” of Jesus. This does not mean that we deserve Jesus, as in the phrase “the laborer is *worthy* of his wages” (Luke 10:7, NASB). It means that Jesus deserves this kind of love. Our worthiness means that he has produced in us affections

and behaviors that are suitable and fit for his worth. They correspond properly to his value. (Compare the use of the word “worthy” in the phrase, “Bear fruits worthy of [that is, suitable to] repentance,” Luke 3:8, NKJV.)

Jesus commands that he be loved by the world because he is infinitely worthy to be loved. And since our love for him is the enjoyment of his glory and presence and care, therefore Jesus’s command that we love him is one more way that his love overflows on us.