The Greatest Commandment

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The Great Commandment

And in the garden of Eden gave I unto man his agency; and unto thy brethren have I said, and also gave commandment, that they should love one another; and that they should choose me their Father.

Genesis 7:40

Inevitably, everyone comes to a situation in their life when they are faced with an important decision but are unsure of what to do. Perhaps even to the point where they feel almost paralyzed by the very thought of making a choice, and they say to themselves, "If only I had more knowledge or a better understanding." These decisions can be as simple as what flavor of ice cream do we want to buy, or as deep as how do we grow closer to God and build His Kingdom on earth, or in other words, how do we establish the cause of Zion. Although there is not much that we can do to answer the former question, we can through Scripture and prayer gain a greater understanding of how to accomplish the latter.

Since the time that the Church of Jesus Christ was reestablished on the earth in 1830, the phrase "latter days" has been utilized extensively to describe our present day, and the purpose for Christ's Church in the "latter days" is to establish the cause of Zion, the city where Jesus Christ will reign on earth in righteousness. However, Jesus has said, "Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom.[1]" Therefore, it is imperative to understand the principles and commandments of the law of Christ.

For many people, when we contemplate the return of both Jesus Christ and Zion, we undoubtedly ask ourselves, "What do I need to do, or what can I do, to help build up the Kingdom of God." Interestingly, God has answered this question by saying simply, "Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, Keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion.[2]" In other words, if we desire to be a part of Zion and the Kingdom of God, we must first keep all of God's commandments. Please read the everlasting covenant from Genesis 9:17-24:

> **9:17** And I will establish my covenant with you [Noah], which I made unto Enoch, concerning the remnants of your posterity. **9:18** And God made a covenant with Noah, and said, This shall be the token of the covenant I make between me and you, and for ***every living creature*** with you, ***for perpetual generations***; **9:19** I will set my bow in the cloud; and it shall be ***for a token*** of a covenant between me and the earth.
>
> **9:20** And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember my covenant, which I have made between me and you, for every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. **9:21** And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting

[1] DC 102:2c
[2] DC 6:3a-b

covenant, which I made unto thy father Enoch; that, when men should ***keep all my commandments***, Zion should again come on the earth, the city of Enoch which I have caught up unto myself.

9:22 And this is mine everlasting covenant, that when thy posterity shall ***embrace the truth***, and ***look upward***, then shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness, and the earth shall tremble with joy; **9:23** And the general assembly of the church of the firstborn shall come down out of heaven, and possess the earth, and shall have place until the end come. **And this is mine everlasting covenant**, which I made with thy father Enoch. **9:24** And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will establish my covenant unto thee, which I have made between me and thee, for ***every living creature of all flesh*** that shall be upon the earth.

It is incredibly important to understand that God works in plain and precious ways. Unfortunately, it appears to be in human nature to overcomplicate the truth. Nevertheless, Nephi wrote, "For my soul delighteth in plainness: for *after this manner* doth the Lord God work among the children of men. For the Lord God giveth light unto the understanding: for he speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding.[3]" The Kingdom of God was not founded on a secret combination, a complex equation, or on a mystery, but on faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Kingdom is not built by an intricate formula but by keeping God's commandments. [Read more on the Kingdom of God in **Chapter Eight**]

As we read and study the Scriptures, we learn that the commandments of God are not difficult to understand, but instead that they have been written in plainness. For example, the doctrines of repentance, faith, and baptism are all easy to understand, the only problem that arises is whether we will apply them righteously. The reader might ask, "How many commandments are there in the Scriptures?" Interestingly, the response might vary depending on who is answering the question. In fact, some people might very well say that there are only two commandments, which we find in the twenty-second chapter of Matthew.

22:35 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? **22:36** Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. **22:37** This is the first and great commandment. **22:38** And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. **22:39** On these two commandments ***hang all the law and the prophets***.

Although these two great commandments are easy to understand, the real difficulty occurs when we try to apply them in our life, and because of this difficulty, we tend to look beyond the mark, or complicate Christ's commandments. However, it is important to remember that the word of God is plain. Moreover, as we grow in the spirit of prophecy or in other words in the testimony of Jesus, as explained in the nineteenth chapter of Revelation, the words of God become even plainer. "Wherefore hearken, O my people, which are of the house of Israel, and give ear unto my words: for because the words of

[3] 2 Nephi 13:4-5

Isaiah *are not plain unto you*, nevertheless, they are plain unto all those that are *filled* with the *spirit of prophecy* [meaning the testimony of Jesus Christ].[4]" Please read the following testimony:

> *I think like most people, I used to get really captivated by the phrase "mysteries of God." I would think and wonder what they could be, and would imagine them as some form of supernatural information that would suddenly allow me to truly know Jesus Christ, if that makes any sense. However, as I started to really study the Scriptures and attend study classes, my knowledge and understanding of God's word increased. I know that this is not because I myself am intelligent, but because God, through the power of the Holy Ghost, has opened my understanding.*
>
> *Interestingly, it seemed that every time that I learned more about Jesus Christ and the Kingdom, I would say to myself "Wow, how did I not notice that before?" Finally, I concluded that the principles of the doctrine of Christ are not a complex mystery but they are plain, and the more we focus on God, the easier they are to see. They are so plain that I was looking beyond them. I was searching for a mystery. It seems that as we get older, we try to overcomplicate things. Sometimes when we are faced with a simply question, we try to outsmart it and try to analyze it to death instead of keeping the answer simple and to the point.*

In second Nephi, chapter fourteen, we read, "Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.[5]" Therefore, we are going to study the commandments of God through the Scriptures, and in particular, we will study why we have commandments and what their purposes are. Ultimately, we will learn of the greatest commandment that was also not a commandment, which is not a mystery or complicated, but plain and precious. The greatest commandment is simply to love God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind, not because God commanded it but because we truly love Him.

Why Do We Have Commandments

In order to truly know the commandments of God, we should not only ask what they are, but also ask why we have them. To answer this question, we need only examine one of the most joyful truths, which is found in the first epistle of John. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; *for God is love*.[6]" God has expressed His love to mankind in many different forms and blessings, one of them being our gift of agency, which was so precious to God that He fought to protect it.

It is important to understand that in order for us to have agency, or in other words to act for ourselves, we have to experience opposition. For an example, before Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan in the garden of Eden, there was no opposition. To them, all they knew was that God was their creator. Therefore, Adam and Eve could never choose against God because they knew nothing different from Him. Thus, in order for them to have agency, they had to experience an opposite to God, which is Satan. Please read the following from Doctrine and Covenants, Section 28:10-12:

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[4] 2 Nephi 11:5
[5] 2 Nephi 14:4
[6] 1 John 4:8

28:10a And it came to pass, that Adam being tempted of the Devil, for, behold, the Devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, **28:10b** Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me **because of their agency**; **28:10c** and they were thrust down, and thus became the Devil and his angels; and, behold, there is a place prepared for them from the beginning, which place is hell; **28:10d** and it ***must needs be*** that the Devil should tempt the children of men, or they ***could not*** be agents unto themselves, for if they never should have bitter, they ***could not know the sweet***.

28:11a Wherefore, it came to pass, that the Devil tempted Adam and he partook the forbidden fruit, and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the Devil, because he yielded unto temptation; **28:11b** wherefore, I the Lord God caused that he should be cast out from the garden of Eden, from my presence, **because of his transgression**: **28:11c** wherein he became spiritually dead, which is the first death, even that same death, which is the last death, which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say, Depart ye cursed.

28:12a But, behold, I say unto you, that I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and unto his seed, that they **should not die** as to the temporal death, ***until I***, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them **repentance and redemption** through faith on the name of mine only begotten Son; **28:12b** and thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation; **28:12c** that by his natural death, he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe, and they that believed not, unto eternal damnation; **28:12d** for they can not be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not, for they will love darkness rather than light, and their deeds are evil, and they receive their wages of whom they list to obey.

It is imperative when contemplating the commandments of God that love and hate are not complete opposites, but rather love and pride, for God is love, while Satan is pride. Love is the foundation of righteousness, while pride is the root of all sin. As we discussed previously in **Chapter Thirteen**, every man and woman is born both with the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the natural man. Thus, we come into this life to experience opposition and to make or to understand our choice. It is important to understand how precious our agency is to God. We would ask the reader if he or she would desire for someone to love them because they had been commanded too, because they were looking for a reward, because they were afraid, or because they truly love you. God is the same way. He wants us to choose Him not because He commanded it, but because we love Him. Please read the following from 2 Nephi 1:81-99:

1:81 For it must needs be, that there is an ***opposition in all things***. **1:82** If not so… righteousness could not be brought to pass; neither wickedness; neither holiness nor misery; neither good nor bad. **1:83** Wherefore, all things must needs be a compound in one; **1:84** Wherefore, if it should be one body, it must needs remain as dead, having no life, neither death nor corruption, nor incorruption, happiness nor misery, neither sense nor insensibility. **1:85** Wherefore, it must needs have been created for a thing of nought; **1:86** Wherefore, there would have been ***no***

purpose in the end of its creation. **1:87** Wherefore, this thing must needs destroy the wisdom of God, and his eternal purposes; and also, the power, and the mercy, and the justice of God.

1:88 And if ye shall say there is no law, ye shall also say ***there is no sin***. **1:89** And if ye shall say there is no sin, ye shall also say ***there is no righteousness***. **1:90** And if there be no righteousness, ***there be no happiness***. **1:91** And if there be no righteousness nor happiness, there be no punishment nor misery. **1:92** And if these things are not, there is no God. **1:93** And if there is no God, ***we are not***, neither the earth, for there could have been no creation of things, neither to act nor to be acted upon; wherefore, all things must have vanished away.

1:94 And now…I speak unto you these things, for your profit and learning: **1:95** ***For there is a God***, and he hath created all things, both the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them is; **1:96** Both things to act, and things to be acted upon; **1:97** And to bring about his eternal purposes in the end of man, after he had created our first parents, and the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and in fine, all things which are created, **it must needs be that there was an opposition**; **1:98** Even the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life; the one being sweet and the other bitter; **1:99** Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man**, *that he should act for himself***.

Again, there must be an opposition in all things otherwise everything would be compound in one, which would destroy the wisdom of God. Therefore, if there was no law there could not be any sin, and if there was no sin, there could be no righteousness or happiness. In order to have agency we must have opposition, and in order to have opposition we must have a just law to either choose or to choose against, as well as a fixed punishment dependent upon our choices.

Adam and Eve's transgression in the garden was a part of God's plan, as we read, "Adam fell, that men might be; and men are, that *they might have joy*.[7]" Nevertheless, because of Adam and Eve's transgression, mankind was both spiritually and temporally separated from the presence of God. However, because of God's love and mercy, and His desire to reclaim, or restore, every soul, He atoned for our sins Himself by sending His Son to die and to rise again in order for mankind to be redeemed on conditions of repentance.

In the Book of Mormon, Helaman wrote to his two sons, Nephi and Lehi, saying, "And remember also, the words which Amulek spake unto Zeezrom, in the city of Ammonihah; for he said unto him, that the Lord surely should come to redeem his people; but that he should not come to redeem them *in their sins*, but to redeem them *from their sins*. And he hath power given unto him from the Father, to redeem them from their sins, *because of repentance*; therefore he hath sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls.[8]" Please read the following from Alma 19:64-71:

[7] 2 Nephi 1:115
[8] Helaman 2:72-73

19:64 I say unto thee…that the ***plan of restoration is requisite*** with the justice of God; for it is requisite that all things should be restored to their proper order. **19:65** Behold it is requisite and just, according to the power and resurrection of Christ, that the soul of man should be restored to its body, and that every part of the body should be restored to itself. **19:66** And ***it is requisite*** with the justice of God, that men should be **judged according to their works**; and if their works were good in this life, **and the desires of their hearts** were good, that they should also, at the last day, ***be restored unto that which is good***; **19:67** And if their works are evil, they shall be ***restored unto him for evil***: therefore, all things shall be restored to their proper order; everything to its natural frame; mortality raised to immortality; corruption to incorruption; raised to endless happiness, to ***inherit the kingdom of God***, or to endless misery, ***to inherit the kingdom of the devil***; **19:68** The one on the one hand, the other on the other; the one raised to happiness, according to his desires of happiness; or good, according to his desires of good; and the other to evil, according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long, even so shall he have his reward of evil, when the night cometh.

19:69 And so it is on the other hand. **If he hath repented of his sins**, and desired righteousness until the **end of his days**, even so shall he be rewarded unto righteousness. **19:70** These are they that are redeemed of the Lord; yea, these are they that are taken out, that are delivered from that endless night of darkness; and thus they stand or fall; for behold, they are their own judges, whether to do good or do evil. **19:71** Now the decrees of God are unalterable; therefore the way is prepared, that whosoever will, may walk therein and be saved.

In other words, the plan of restoration is an absolute must in order to comply with the justice of God. Wherefore, it is required that man be restored both soul and body to their proper order so that the children of men might be judged according to their works and the desires of their hearts. God has promised that we will be restored according to the way that we have lived our life. If we have chosen to repent and to endure to the end, God has promised that we will inherit the Kingdom of God, while if we have chosen evil and have procrastinated the day of our repentance, God has promised that we will inherit the kingdom of the devil.

Brother and sisters, it is imperative that we live as King David did, who chose to live repentant every day of his life, so that we can inherit the Kingdom, which can only be accomplished on the condition of repentance. Therefore, in order for mankind to be restored on conditions of repentance, we read, "that there was a time granted unto man, to repent, yea, a probationary time, a time to repent and serve God.[9]"

19:85 For behold, if Adam had put forth his hand immediately, and partook of the tree of life, he would have lived for ever, according to the word of God, having **no space for repentance**; **19:86** Yea, and also the word of God would have been ***void***, and the great plan of salvation would have been ***frustrated***. **19:87** But behold it was appointed unto man to die; therefore as they were cut off from the tree of life, they should be cut off from the face of the earth; and man became lost

[9] Alma 19:84

for ever; yea, they became fallen man. **19:88** And now we see by this, that our first parents were cut off, **both temporally and spiritually**, from the presence of the Lord; and thus we see they became subjects to follow after their ***own will***.

19:89 Now behold, it was not expedient that man should be reclaimed from this temporal death, for that would **destroy the great plan of happiness**; **19:90** Therefore, as the ***soul could never die***, and the fall had brought upon all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal; that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord; therefore it was expedient that mankind should be ***reclaimed*** from this spiritual death; **19:91** Therefore as they had been carnal, sensual and devilish, by nature, this probationary state became ***a state for them to prepare***; it became a preparatory state.

As we read earlier, because of Adam and Eve's transgression, and because of our own disobedience, mankind was cut off from the presence of the Lord and entered into a fallen state. Nevertheless, God did not desire for us to remain in this state but to be raised from corruption to incorruption, so He granted unto mankind a time in which we could both repent and prepare to meet Him. However, because of God's justice we would have been eternally separated from Him unless atonement was made. "Therefore God himself atoneth for the sins of the world, to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also.[10]" Through Jesus Christ, all men might be reclaimed back into the presence of God on conditions of repentance. Please read from Alma 19:98-108:

19:98 Now repentance could not come unto men, ***except*** there were a punishment, which also was as eternal as the life of the soul should be, affixed opposite to the plan of happiness, which was as eternal also as the life of the soul. **19:99** Now, how could a man repent, **except he should sin**? How could he sin, **if there was no law?** How could there be a law, **save there was a punishment**?

19:100 Now there was a ***punishment affixed***, and ***a just law given***, which brought **remorse of conscience** unto man. **19:101** Now if there was no law given, if a man murdered he should die, would he be afraid he should die if he should murder? **19:102** And also, if there was no law given against sin, **men would not be afraid to sin**. **19:103** And if there was no law given if men sinned, what could justice do, or mercy either: for they would have no claim upon the creature.

19:104 But there is a law given and a punishment affixed, and repentance granted; which repentance, **mercy claimeth: otherwise, justice claimeth the creature**, and executeth the law, and the law inflicteth the punishment; if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God. **19:105** But God ceaseth not to be God, and mercy claimeth the penitent, and mercy cometh because of the atonement; and the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead: and the resurrection of the dead ***bringeth back men into the presence of God***; **19:106** And thus they are restored into his presence; to be judged according to their

[10] Alma 19:97

works; according to the law and justice; for behold, justice exerciseth all his demands, and also mercy claimeth all which is her own; and thus, none but the truly penitent are saved.

19:107 What, do ye suppose that mercy can rob justice? I say unto you, Nay; not one whit. If so, God would cease to be God. **19:108** And thus God bringeth about his great and eternal purposes, which were prepared from the foundation of the world.

In other words, to experience opposition we cannot have a preparatory state with a law that we cannot choose against, and we cannot have a preparatory state without a law to choose, otherwise all things would be compound in one, which would destroy the wisdom of God. Therefore, we have our agency to choose to do good or evil, along with a law and a punishment which were founded on the atonement of Jesus Christ and on the conditions of repentance, which appeases the demands of justice and satisfies the plan of mercy. If we did not have a law, or commandments, then we could not have agency and God's great plan of happiness would be destroyed. However, we know that God is love, and that He ceases not to be God.

The Purpose of Commandments: God Prepares a Way

The Scriptures have shown that part of having a just law means that we have both a just punishment and just commandments. Nonetheless, what is the purpose of having commandments? Is there more to the commandments than simply fulfilling our agency? Earlier, we read that the two greatest commandments are to love God with all that we are and to love our neighbor as ourselves. However, we have also mentioned that God's desire is for us to choose Him because we love Him and not because He commanded it. So how do we accomplish this task? How do we truly love God with all our heart, soul, and mind? The answer is simple; it is to keep His commandments. Please read the following Scripture verses from 1 Nephi 1:65, 1 Nephi 5:58-59, and 2 Thessalonians 3:4-5:

1:65 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father, I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, ***save he shall prepare a way*** for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.

5:58 And thus we see that the commandments of God **must be fulfilled**. **5:59** And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God, he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them;

3:4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. **3:5** And the Lord ***direct your hearts*** into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

The way in which we learn to grow to love God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son, is to keep all of the commandments. Paul wrote that if we will keep the commandments of God, then the Lord will direct our hearts into the love of God and patient waiting for Jesus. Alma the Younger also talked about this same change of heart, saying, "Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awaked them out

of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God…And according to his faith there was a mighty change wrought in his heart.[11]"

Jesus Christ not only atoned for the sins of the whole world that we might repent and believe in Him, but He also taught the commandments of God that we might learn to love and receive eternal life according to our works. Jesus told the disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments…If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.[12]"

Throughout the Scriptures we learn of the importance of love and of charity. Paul wrote, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.[13]" Further, we read, "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity *preventeth* a multitude of sins.[14]" However, charity, which is the pure love of Jesus Christ, is more than preventing sin, but it also answers the ends of the law. [Read more on charity in **Chapter Four**]. Please read the Scripture from 2 Nephi 1:66-72:

> **1:66** And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free. **1:67** And men are instructed sufficiently, that they know good from evil. [See Moroni 7:10-16] **1:68** And the law is given unto men. **1:69** And by the law, no flesh is justified, or, by the law, men are cut off. **1:70** Yea, by the temporal law, they were cut off; and also by the spiritual law they perish from that which is good, and become miserable for ever. **1:71** Wherefore, **redemption cometh in and through the holy Messiah**: for he is full of grace and truth. **1:72** Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, ***to answer the ends of the law***, unto all those who have a **broken heart and a contrite spirit**; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered.

Thus, we see that from the foundation of the world all mankind might be redeemed through Jesus Christ if we have a broken heart and contrite spirit, or in other words, if we are humble, full of love, and have a real intent of heart. In order for mankind to have a broken heart and contrite spirit, there must be a way prepared. Thomas, one of Jesus's apostles, asked the Lord, "How can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.[15]"

The way to grow our hearts into the love of God is to know Jesus Christ and to keep His commandments. "And hereby we do know that we know him [Jesus], if we keep his commandments. He saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God *perfected*; hereby know we that we are in him.[16]" If we keep the commandments, the sons and daughters of God have the promise that love within them will be perfected and the ends of the law will be answered. However, in first John, chapter three, we learn that

[11] Alma 3:11 and 23
[12] John 14:15 and John 15:10
[13] 1 Corinthians 13:3
[14] 1 Peter 4:8
[15] John 14:5-7
[16] 1 John 2:3-5

we are not to love in just word only, but also in deed and in truth,[17] and this is how we know that we are of truth. In addition, we read in the next chapter of first John that if we do not love then we do not know God because God is love. Please read 1 John 4:10-21:

> **4:10** Herein is love, not that we loved God, ***but that he loved us***, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. **4:11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. **4:12** No man hath seen God at any time, except them who believe. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and **his love is perfected in us**. **4:13** Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. **4:14** And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.
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> **4:15** Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. **4:16** And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. **4:17 Herein is our love made perfect**, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world. **4:18** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. **4:19** We love him, ***because he first loved us***. **4:20** If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, ***he is a liar***; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? **4:21** And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God ***love his brother also***.

In order to fulfill the two greatest commandments, we must learn how to love God because we simply love Him, and not because we have been commanded. All of these Scriptures and witnesses state very clearly, that no commandment has been given by God except He gave a way for us to accomplish it, including to be perfect, and the way to have the pure love of Jesus Christ is to keep the commandments. In so doing, the Lord promises to change and direct our heart into a perfect love that castes out all fear. Please read the following scriptures from Moroni 7:52-53 and the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 94:5c:

> **7:52** Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is ***the greatest of all***, for all things must fail; but charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth for ever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with them. **7:53** Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son Jesus Christ, that ye may become the sons of God, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, that we may have this hope, that we may be purified ***even as he is pure***. Amen.
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> **94:5c** therefore verily thus saith the Lord, Let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion, **THE PURE IN HEART**

Conclusion

How do we build the Kingdom of God and establish the cause of Zion? The answer is not a complicated formula, but God has plainly said, "Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, *Keep my*

[17] 1 John 3:18

commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion.[18]" From Genesis, chapter nine, we have read that the cause of Zion is the everlasting covenant, which is to keep all of the commandments of God, to embrace the truth of Jesus Christ, and to have our eye single to the glory of God. The purpose of this work is more than just simply shedding light on all of God's individual commandments, but rather to demonstrate to the reader God's great plan of happiness, and some of the marvelous works which He has done, such as atoning for our sins that we might be reclaimed on conditions of repentance. In return, all that God asks of us is to love Him. "And in the garden of Eden gave I unto man his agency; and unto thy brethren *have I said*, *and also* gave commandment, that they should love one another; and that they should choose me their Father.[19]"

It is our hope and desire that we all might recognize the beauty of God's commandments, and the purpose that they have in our salvation, and that even the commandments themselves were apart of God's plan from the foundation of the world. Without them, God could not be a God of justice, mercy, and love, and we would never be able to learn how to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind. Without the commandments we would never know the joy of our redemption through Jesus Christ. It is our prayer that by coming to this knowledge of God's commandments, we would all have a greater desire to have the Lord's law written in our hearts. Please read 1 John 3:18-24:

> **3:18** My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue only; but in deed and in truth. **3:19** And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. **3:20** For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. **3:21** Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. **3:23** And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. **3:24** And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

[18] DC 6:3a-b
[19] Genesis 7:40

The Commandments

The reader has learned about both why we have commandments and for what purpose the commandments were given. However, many readers will be asking, "What are the commandments?" Undoubtedly, many people have studied the subject and have formulated their own lists. The following table is a short list of commandments that God has given to mankind through His Holy Scriptures. Although the list below does not include every commandment, it does incorporate many of the fundamental principles of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, the commandments listed here are things we must do if we want to enter into the Kingdom of God, help to bring forth the cause of Zion, and to obtain eternal life. In other words, these are things we must do if we desire to experience that mighty change in our hearts and yearn to love God with all our heart, mind, and soul. We can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens us, and by small means God does bring about great things.

The table is comprised of three columns, commandments, references, and description. Each commandment is followed by Scriptural references about that commandment in order to provide a better understanding. In addition, the bolded reference is the Scripture being described. For an example, for the commandment on "Forsake all sin," there are three scriptures listed under references. However, only the Doctrine and Covenants section 66:5d is bolded, and the description of that scripture is "forsake all unrighteousness."

Commandments	References	Description
Repentance	Isa 1:16-17	Cease evil and learn to do well
Forsake all sin	Tit 2:11-14; 3 Ne 2:85; DC 58:9d; **DC 66:5d**	Forsake all unrighteousness
Faith	**Heb 11:1**; James 2:14, 20-21, and 25; Mat 17:19-20; Al 16:139-141, 143, and 152-155; Eth 5:5-8	The assurance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen
Believe in Jesus Christ	Acts 16:30-31; **1 Jhn 3:23**; 2 Ne 15:11	This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ
Hope in Jesus Christ	Moro 7:45-48	You shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto eternal life
Trust and obey	Isa 26:4; Tit 1:2; Heb 11:6; **Mos 2:10-11**: Al 17:3	Thereby salvation might come to him that puts his trust in the Lord, and is diligent in keeping his commandments

Baptisms	Gen 6:51-53; 60-63; Rom 6:3-7: **2 Ne 13:16-17**; 24-26	If you follow the Son with full purpose of heart and real intent, and are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism by following your Lord down into the water, according to his word, you will receive the Holy Ghost
Laying on of Hands		
Healing	**Jas 5:14-15**; DC 42:12c-d; DC 127:2d; Mor 4:87	Let the sick call for the elders and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil. The prayer of faith shall save the sick
Confirmation	Acts 8:14-17; **Moro 2:1-2**; DC 17:18	Jesus said that you shall call on the Father in my name in mighty prayer, and whom you lay your hands upon shall be given the Holy Ghost
Ordination	**Acts 13:2-3**; Moro 3:1-3	Barnabas and Paul, before they are sent out to do the work of the Lord, are ordained by the laying on of hands, after being separated out by the Holy Ghost
Blessing of children	**Luk 2:25-33**; Mat 19:13-15; Mos 1:114; 3 Ne 8:23; DC 17:19-20	Jesus Christ was blessed as a child, giving us the example to follow
The Sacraments	DC 83:3c	In the ordinances thereof the power of godliness is manifest; and without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh
Blessing of children	See Laying on of Hands DC 17:19-20	Every member of the church is to bring their children to the elders in front of the church, to be blessed in the name of Jesus by the laying on of hands
Baptisms	See Baptisms 2 Ne 13:24-27	This is the gate by which we should enter, and after this, I would ask if all is done
Confirmation	See Laying on of Hands DC 17:18	All members shall manifest before the church, and also before the elders, by a godly walk and conversation that they are worthy of partaking of the sacrament

Sacrament	Jhn 6:47-58; **Mat 26:22-26**; 1 Cor 11:23-29; 3 Ne 9:40-45; Moro 4 and 5; DC 26:1b-c	Jesus said take this bread, eat this in remembrance of my body which I give a ransom for you. And he took the cup, saying, Drink ye all of it in remembrance of my blood of the new testament, which is shed for as many as believe on my name for the remission of their sins
Marriage	**Gen 2:23-24**; 29-30: Eph 5:22-25; 28; 31; Eph 6:1-4; Jac 2:36-37: DC 111:4b; Col 3:18-21	God said to His Only Begotten that it was not good that man should be alone, so he made an help meet for him. A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh
Ordination	See Laying on of Hands Moro 3:1-3	After they prayed to God in Jesus Christ's name, they laid their hands upon them, and said, I ordain you to be a priest (or teacher if he be a teacher)…
Administering to the sick	See Laying on of Hands Mor 4:87	These signs follow them that believe…they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover
Patriarchal blessings	**DC 107:29b;** 38; 2 Ne 1; Mos 1	From henceforth he shall hold the keys of the patriarchal blessings upon the heads of all my people, that whoever he blesses shall be blessed
Faith, Hope, and Charity	Al 5:38-41, Moro 7; **Eth 5:28-29**; Moro 10:15-17	I will shew unto them that faith, hope, and charity, bringeth unto me the fountain of all righteousness
Charity	Moro 7:50-52	Without charity we are nothing, wherefore we must needs have charity which is the pure love of Jesus Christ
Love God with all our heart, soul, and mind	Deut 6:5; **Mat 22:35-39**	The greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind
Love our neighbors as ourselves	Lev 19:18; **1 Jhn 4:20-21**	This commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also
Forgive one another as Christ has forgiven us	Mat 6:16; **DC 64:2b-g**	I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men
Brotherly kindness	DC 4; **Mos 1:49**; Mos 2:20-36; Mos 9:39-40; DC 85:41	When you are in the service to your fellow beings your are in the service of God
Love our enemies	Mat 5:45-50; **Luke 6:27-33**; 2 Ths 3:14-15	Love your enemies, do good to them who hate you…if ye love them only who love you, what reward have you? For sinners also do even the same

Broken Heart and Contrite Spirit	Psa 34:18; Psa 51:17; **2 Ne 1:71-72**; 3 Ne 4:49-50	Jesus Christ offered himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all who have a broken heart and contrite spirit
Humble, meek, lowly in heart, etc.	**Mat 11:30**; Mos 1:119-120; Al 10:28-29; Al 17:67; Mor 7:50	Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart
Recognize our weakness and nothingness	Isa 55:6-11; Mos 1:57-61; **Mos 2:20**; Al 14:92: Al 18:14-16	Always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long suffering towards you unworthy creatures
Full purpose of heart	2 Ne 13:16; **Jac 4:8**; Mos 5:52	I beseech of you in words of soberness, that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you
Prayer	Psa 34:17; **Phs 4:6-7**; Jas 5:16; DC 28:1a; 2b-c: 2 Ne 14:4-6; 11-12; DC 18:4a-c; DC 24:3b-c: Al 5:40	Be afflicted in nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God, that passes all under-standing, will keep your hearts and mind through Christ Jesus
Pray without ceasing	DC 32:3e; **Al 16:218-222**; DC 61:6e; Al 10:28-29; Al 14:103	Let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you
Fasting	Isaiah 58:3-11; Mat 6:17-18; Al 12:5; **DC 59:3**	Verily this is fasting and prayer, or in other words, rejoicing and prayer
Hearken to the counsel of God	**Gen 7:42**; Isa 55:8-9; 1 Ne 5:232-235; 2 Ne 6:43-47; **2 Ne 6:56-61**: Mos 2:13-15; DC 131:1c: 1 Ne 5:144-150	Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; Man of Cousel is my name; and Endless and Eternal is my name also…To be learned is good, if they hearken unto the counsels of God
Know Jesus Christ	**1 Jhn 2:2-6**; 2 Ne 14:7-8	Hereby we do know that we know Jesus, if we keep his commandments…whoso keepeth his word, in him is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him
Know, search, and study the commandments	**2 Tim 2:15-16**; 2 Ne 14:6-8; DC 1:7	Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth

Seek for truth and righteousness	Mat 5:8; 2 Ths 2:9-10; **DC 90:6a**	The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth
Witness to God	Moro 4 and 5	To witness unto thee, O God the eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of your Son
Do good works	Tit 2:6-8; 11-14; Heb 6:10-12; Mos 3:21; Al 5:38-41; **DC 58:6c-f**	It is not meet that I should command in all things…Men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause
Be valiant in testimony	**Heb 11:32-34**; DC 76:6	The prophets, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight
Be a light to the world	Mat 5:15-18	Let your light so shine before this world, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven
Be prepared	2 Tim 2:21; **Al 16:228-234**; Al 19:91-92	This life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors
Lay up treasure in heaven	**Mat 6:19-21**; Mat 18:18; Hel 5:23-32	Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt. For where you treasure is, there will be your heart also
Meet Together Often	Mat 18:20; 3 Ne 8:53; **Moro 6:6-9**: DC 6:15	The church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls
Keep our Home in Order	1 Tim 3:4-5	If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?
Parents and children love one another	Eph 5:22-31; Eph 6:1-4; **Col 3:18-20**; Tit 1:6; Jac 2:57; 3 Ne 8:52	Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands...Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them…Children, obey your parents in all things
Teach the gospel	DC 68:4	If any parents teach not their children to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ, and baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost, the sin be upon the head of the parents
One husband, one wife	1 Tim 3:2; 12; **Jac 2:36**; 55; DC 49:3b; DC 111:4b	There shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none

Deny Yourselves and Take up the Cross	Mat 5:31; Mat 10:32-38; **Mat 16:25-31**; Mar 8:36-41; Luke 9:23-26; Jac 1:3; DC 66:5d	If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments
Forsake our life	**Luk 14:25-34**; Mat 19:16-30; Mar 10:26-30; Luke 18:27-30	If any man come to me and hate not his own life; or in other words, is afraid to lay down his life for my sake, he cannot be my disciple
Be in the world, not of it	Jhn 15:18-19; **DC 128:8b-c**	Be in the world but not of it, living and acting honestly and honorably before God…that the places where they occupy may shine as Zion
Seek to Build up the Kingdom and Establish the Cause of Zion	**Mat 6:38**; DC 6:3a-c, DC 11:3a-5b; DC 23:4a; DC 29:3c; DC 45:2	Seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness
Teach the Doctrine of the Kingdom	Tit 2:1-8; DC68:4a; **DC 85:21**	I give unto you a commandment, that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom
Remember the everlasting covenant	Gen 9:21-23; Isa 61:8-11; DC 1:4; **DC 45:2**	I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people and for the Gentiles to seek it, and to be a messenger before my face to prepare the way before me
Preach repentance through baptism	Acts 2:37-38; Mos 9:51-53; **Moro 8:29**; DC 6:4; DC 16:3c-4a; DC 32:2f-2g; DC 49:2	The first-fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith, unto the fulfilling of the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments brings a remission of sins
Our eye single to the glory of God	Mat 6:22-24; 1 Cor 10:31; DC 4:e; DC 85:18	If your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light…and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things
Be Perfect	Mat 5:50	Ye are therefore commanded to be perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect
Walk Uprightly	**Gen 17:1**; Psa 84:11; Mos 9:64	I, the Almighty God, give unto thee a commandment, that thou shalt walk uprightly before me, and be perfect

Endure to the End	1 Ne 7:69; **2 Ne 13:29-32**; 3 Ne 7:10	Ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men
Law of Consecration		
Pay tithing	Gen 14:20, 36-40; Heb 7:1-2; Al 10:8; DC 106:1a-2a; 3 Ne 11:11-13	Abraham paid tithes of one tenth part of all that he possessed
Be United as One Body, One Church	**Gen 7:23**; Eph 4:3-6; **DC 38:6a**	The Lord called his people Zion because they were of one heart and on mind, and dwelt in righteousness...Be one; and if ye are not one, ye are not mine
Impart of our substance	Mos 2; DC 102:2	