

DO YOU LOVE THE LORD?

John W. West

Appearing in the *Church Gospel Songs and Hymns* song book is a song written by Tom Holland titled "Do You Love The Lord." This song is very powerful in its meaning because it is founded upon a great principle in the Bible. Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-38: *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."* This principle did not originate during Jesus' earthly ministry, it was first taught by Moses in the Law. The Israelites were commanded in Deuteronomy 6:5-6, *"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart."* These words were not to be merely repeated, but to be written in their hearts. The Psalmists said, *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart; that I might not sin against thee"* (Psa. 119:11). David knew the importance of "storing up" God's word in his heart. Then, as now, there was (is) a seriousness of knowing and obeying God's word.

Jesus tells us that to love God and keep His commandments is the first and the greatest commandment. It is not enough to say that we love God, we must show it by our actions toward Him. Jesus stated in John 14:15 *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* Our love to God is shown when we keep His commandments. Our lack of love is shown when we rebel against His commands.

A lack of love toward God is shown today by those who forsake the assembly. It is recorded in Hebrews 10:25, *"Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."* It shows a lack of faith in God and a lack of love for Him and His commandments when people forsake the assembly. It is an honor and privilege to come together to worship. It is an opportunity to show love and devotion to God. When you willfully fail to assemble, it shows that you care little about God and His word which commands you to worship.

A lack of love toward God is shown by those who fail in their service to God. Many "Christians" come to worship on Sunday, but Monday they forget God and live like everyone else in the world. Many forget that they are set apart for God's service as Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:5-9:

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

This person is a hypocrite in that they pretend to be something they are not. They act one way on Sunday and another way the rest of the week. This is not TRUE Christianity. Jesus, during His ministry, condemned those who were hypocrites. That same principle applies today.

True love is shown toward God by faithfulness to Him. Love and faithfulness cannot be separated. It is impossible to say that you love God and fail to keep His commandments. The general theme of the entire Bible is faithfulness to God. In the Old

Testament, the Israelites were punished when they were not faithful. In the New Testament, punishment is pronounced on all who are not faithful. Paul wrote the Thessalonians saying, *"Inflaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ" (2 The. 1:8)*. Those who are not obedient to the gospel of Christ, one day will reap God's vengeance. If you are not faithful to God, then you need to repent before you lose your soul in hell. True love toward God will motivate you to be faithful to Him. **DO YOU LOVE THE LORD?~**