

#6: Miracle Grow: Love and Obedience

One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” Jesus replied, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The LORD our God is the one and only LORD. And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’ The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.” Mark 12:28–31, NLT

“So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” John 13:34–35, NLT

“If you love me, obey my commandments.” John 14:15, NLT

We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19, NIV

The Love of God

- His heart (father, groom)
- His deeds (the gospel)



Love God



Love People

**“We love because
He first loved us.”**
1 John 4:19, NIV

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. Titus 2:11–14, NIV

What does “eager” mean?

A Tale of Two Hearts: Two Ways to Live

—an adaptation of a story written by Charles Spurgeon

Once upon a time, there was a gardener who grew an enormous carrot. So he took it to his king and said, “My Lord, this is the greatest carrot I have ever grown and ever will grow. And I want to give it to you as a token of my esteem and affection.” The king discerned the man’s heart and saw that this was a simple free act of love. The gardener didn’t expect anything back in return. He just loved his king. As the man turned to leave, the king, said to him, “you are a fine man and a fine gardener. I just so happen to own a huge tract of land next to your garden and I want to give it to you so you can go out there and be twice the gardener that you were before.” And the gardener said, “Oh thank you so much!” and he went home rejoicing. But there was a nobleman in the court that day observing the conversation and said to himself, “Omgosh, if this bloke can get a bunch of acres for a carrot, what might I get if I get the king a really big gift?” So the next day the nobleman came to the king leading a horse. He said, “This is a horse. I raise horses. This is the finest horse I’ve ever raised and ever will raise. And I want to give it to you as a token of my esteem and affection.” And the king discerned the man’s heart and said, “Thank you very much.” The king took the horse and started to walk away. Nothing else was said. And the nobleman said half out loud, “What?! What’s going on? Why don’t I get something—like the gardener?” The king turned around and said, “Listen, the gardener was giving me the carrot, but you were actually giving yourself the horse.”

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat. When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this,



he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!" Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." "Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied. Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt." "That's right," Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I first came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume. "I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love." Luke 7:27–47, NLT

Your response this week:

1. Do you seek to obey the commands of Jesus? Yes / No / Sometimes / I don't know
2. What will inspire you to obey?
3. What can you do to help you be more inspired?
4. Who can you share this lesson with?