

### **Why we focus on commands:**

Jesus said in the Great Commission to His disciples that the way we disciple the nations is to baptize them and to teach them to observe all that He commanded. In support of this final commandment, Jesus repeatedly states that His disciples keep, observe, do His commandments. See the following passages:

Matthew 7:24,26

Matthew 28:20

Luke 6:46,47

John 8:31

John 14:15,21,23,24,

John 15:7,10,14

1 John 2:3-6

1 John 3:22,24

2 John 6,9

### **How we chose the commands we included:**

We read through the four Gospels, Acts, and Revelations, looking at every Greek imperative form, using Biblehub.com. In addition to the specific imperative form, there are two other forms that function as imperatives: negative aorist and future indicative. In addition to the second person imperative, which we have in English, Greek has a third person imperative that does not translate easily into English. We made a list of every verse that had an imperative form.

From that master list, we looked at context and audience to determine if the command was given to disciples, crowds, individuals, Pharisees, or a mixed group. We eliminated all the commands that were spoken to individuals (e.g. Jairus or the rich young ruler) and Pharisees. We eliminated all the commands that were spoken to crowds that did not include the disciples. Then we looked at the context to determine if the situation was unique to the disciples at that time or if the command applied to all disciples for all time. Following are some specific commands that may be questioned for not being included:

**Matthew 10: 1 – 16** – the commands in this section of the passage are unique to that particular mission trip, and do not apply to all disciples for all time. For example, Jesus says to go only to

the lost sheep of Israel, not to the Gentiles or Samaria. Later, He specifically tells the disciples to go throughout Samaria and the ends of the world. Starting in verse 17, He is talking about things in the future, after He returns to heaven. We included those commands from verse 17 to the end of the discourse.

**Matthew 11:28-30** See verse 7 – Jesus speaks to the crowd, but the disciples are not in the crowd because they are out on the mission going to various cities. This is a call to unbelievers to come to Jesus for salvation and take His yoke of disciple upon themselves– to believe in Him and to follow Him. We believers and disciples are commanded to abide in Him and to take up our cross and follow Him.

**Matthew 22:21, Mark 12:17, Luke 20:25** – Give to Caesar – Jesus spoke this to the Pharisees who were trying to trick Him into saying something so they could hand Him over to the governor.

**Luke 13:24** – Jesus replied to a villager who asked about being saved. This context is about becoming a believer in order to enter the Kingdom of God. It does not apply to believers because we have already entered that narrow door. In contrast, Matthew 7: 13–14 is spoken to his disciples (see Matthew 5:1-2) and seems to be referring to choices we make that lead to destruction or to life.

**John 6:27** – Jesus is talking to the crowd who followed Him to the other side of the lake looking for food. In verse 29, He tells them that they need to believe in Him to receive the “food” that endures.