

The image features three dark wooden crosses standing on a grassy hill. The background is a dark, textured pattern of wavy, concentric lines in shades of grey and black, creating a sense of depth and movement. The crosses are arranged in a slight arc, with the tallest one in the center. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

*commands of*

# CHRIST

*words to live by*

## **Commands of Christ words to live by**

Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commands. (John. 14:15)  
Keeping the commands of Jesus begins with recognizing what they are.  
Most scholars have pointed out a collection of 49 of Jesus' commands.  
Below is a small assortment of commands that we will focus on at  
camp. As you read through them, ask God to help you observe, apply,  
teach and faithfully follow them.

We will use the command in small groups to discuss them in a more  
personal and practical way. I am not as concerned that the kids hear  
these truths the same way as much as I am concerned that they hear  
these commands of Christ and learn to apply them in order to be a  
Faithful Follower of Christ.

Help the students think through the impact and implications of each  
command that I have chosen. As you work through begin to point back  
to the previous commands to tie them together.

## FOUNDATION OF A FAITHFUL FOLLOWER

### 1. GREATEST COMMAND

<sup>37</sup> He said to him, “**Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.**” <sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and most important command. Mt. 22:37-38

It really begins and ends here. At any point you can insert this command into the subject. Students must understand the overarching theme of Scripture, all things are for the Glory of God.

Talk through how you have struggled with this in life and what changes you have made in order to faithfully live out what Christ points out as the Greatest Commandment.

This and John 14:15 will be our springboard for the week. Continually point back to John 14:15 and 22:37-38 as you go through the teachings of Jesus.

## 2. LOVE OTHERS

<sup>34</sup> “I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” Jn. 13:34-35

One of the biggest critiques of Christianity is the way "Christians" live. People should be able to identify followers of Jesus in a positive way. Unfortunately the flesh tends to seek retribution instead of offering forgiveness. Selfishness seeks exclusivity in relationships instead of hospitality. Often followers of Christ allow others to be alone because of self-preservation. They don't want others to think of them as uncool, they don't want to deal with the problems they may encounter. Loving others is hard work.

Give an example of loving others even when it was hard.

### 3. SELF-DENIAL

<sup>23</sup> Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will save it. <sup>25</sup> For what does it benefit someone if he gains the whole world, and yet loses or forfeits himself? Lk. 9:23-25

To me sin begins here. Think for a moment about a sin that doesn't involve selfishness in some way. If you find one please let me know. I've searched for years.

In order for us to be Faithful Followers we must deny ourselves and live for the Glory of God. This is fundamental to the life of a believer.

What does it mean to take up your cross daily?

What does all this mean for us today? Self-denial. Quit looking for miracles and healing. Quit centering your attention on things that enhance and please you. Focus on Christ. Let him create a daily relationship with you. Find out what he wants you to do every day. Do it! Do not expect to win popularity contests, fame, fortune, or success. Be ready to suffer the rejection, pain, and death he suffered. His lifestyle leads to that. Only as you lead this lifestyle can you learn who the Messiah really is. Only this lifestyle leads to eternal life in heaven. Take up your cross and follow him to the death. Then you will find he is the life.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Trent C. Butler, [Luke](#), vol. 3, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 146.

## FAITHFUL LIVING

### 4. PURITY

<sup>28</sup> But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. Mt. 5:28-30

This follows SELF-DENIAL perfectly. Teens and Young Adults are in the fight of their lives concerning sexuality. We now live in a society who denies the existence of God due to science, but have decided you can't discover gender through Science.

For years the church has struggled with sexual immorality. It is linked directly to self-gratification and betrays the call of Christ to self-denial. Jesus says that sexual immorality is not just a sexual act, but a condition of the heart. It is important to follow God's Word at all points.

It is important that students understand that truth is no subject to personal feelings or situational ethics. What is true today is true tomorrow. The truth of God never changes. There is no doubt that each of us have struggled in one way or another with purity.

I am not asking you to share intimate details of your life with the students, but rather general struggles and how God helped you to overcome sinful desires.

## 5. HONESTY

<sup>37</sup> But let your 'yes' mean 'yes,' and your 'no' mean 'no.' Anything more than this is from the evil one. Mt. 5:37

## 6. INTEGRITY

<sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don't even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Mt. 5:46-48

These two fit together well. #5 is fairly obvious. Mean what you say and say what you mean. Don't let your words betray your faith. Speak the truth, always.

#6 integrity is often defined as doing what is right when no one is looking. It is not just love for believers, but for all people. It is not only that we treat those well who treat us well, but we treat everyone well. Our goal should be a perfect union with God. A life of pleasing God daily.

The Greatest Commandment and Self-Denial can be referenced here.

Think of an example when you had to make a choice to do what was right even when no one else knew.

## 7. SELF-REFLECTION

“Do not judge, so that you won’t be judged. <sup>2</sup> For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use. <sup>3</sup> Why do you look at the splinter in your brother’s eye but don’t notice the beam of wood in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the splinter out of your eye,’ and look, there’s a beam of wood in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother’s eye. Mt. 7:1-5

It is easy to see the sins of others. It is easy to condemn others for doing the same things you do. We know it is true. We somehow rationalize it when we do it and act as though it is different than when others do the same.

Be clear that this passage is not telling us not to judge. Jesus continues telling you that confronting another's sin begins with self-confrontation. We must recognize our own sin before attempting to correct a brother.

Share examples of how this has been revealed in your life.

## FOCUS OF FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS

### 8. PRIORITIES

<sup>19</sup> "Don't store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Mt. 6:19-21

<sup>33</sup> But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. Mt. 6:33

Your heart is where your treasure is. This is one of the most condemning verses in all of the Bible. What are we living for? Students are often looking for a boyfriend or girlfriend. Hyper focused on sports or some other activity. It is important that our focus is on the things of God.

The Kingdom is what we should seek. Our desire should be to please God and build the kingdom.

Discuss how you accomplish this difficult task.

## **PRAYING IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS**

### **9. PRAY**

<sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.” Mt. 9:37-38

This is fairly clear. Jesus calls on believers to pray. He call us to call out to God asking for the workers needed to bring in the harvest. Considering the state of the world now, it is as important as ever to ask God to send the workers needed to reach those who are lost.

Christians often lament that there are not many people around who share their ideas and desire to serve God. Often Christians talk about how no one wants to hear the Gospel. Jesus says the harvest is abundant, Christians being faithful to God's call seems to be more of the issue.

How can we be more focused and faithful in praying?

## **GOING IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS**

### 10. DISCIPLE OTHERS

<sup>19</sup>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, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Mt. 28:19-20

The focus here is not evangelism, but discipleship. Without evangelism there will be no one to disciple, so it is obviously implied that you can't do one without the other. Why would you lead someone to Jesus and not offer a way to grow in Christ.

How has discipleship changed your life?

Who has taken the time to disciple you?

## 11. FOLLOW

<sup>19</sup> “Follow me,” he told them, “and I will make you fish for people.” Mt. 4:19

The life of a believer is spent living for the glory of God and pointing others to Him. We are to exchange our own desires for the desires of Christ. As these fishermen were called to completely change what they were doing. Jesus said you are professionals at catching fish, but there is something more important to catch. Jesus will fundamentally change who we are.

Where have you struggled in following Jesus and how did it change?  
Share strategies for the students to be faithful in living out God's call to be fishers of men.