

Satan's Religion and the Modern Versions - Part 3

"To Keep" vs "to Obey"

King James Bible - "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we KEEP his commandments. He that 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." 1 John 2:3-5

NIV 1984 edition - "We know that we have come to know him if we OBEY his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does NOT DO what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone OBEYS his word, God's love is truly made complete in him."

1 John 5:2 "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and KEEP his commandments." (Tyndale, Geneva Bible, KJB, RV, ASV, NKJV, NASB)

1 John 5:2 "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and OBEY his commandments." (ESV, Catholic St. Joseph NAB, NET (Dan Wallace), Holman Standard, RSV, NRSV. "...and CARRYING OUT his commandments." (NIV 1984, 2011)

What do the phrases "keep my commandments" and "keepeth His word" mean? I am convinced that many Christians misunderstand the meaning, and some modern versions, like the NIV, ESV, RSV, NRSV, NET and the Catholic St. Joseph NAB and the New Jerusalem bible perpetuate the error.

This may come as a shock to many but the word TO KEEP in both Hebrew and Greek does NOT mean "to obey" or "to do"!!!. The Hebrew word Shamar # 8104 is translated in the KJB, Tyndale, Geneva Bible, Revised Version, ASV, NKJV, NASB as "to keep, to observe, to take heed to, to preserve, to be a watchman, and to regard." The Greek word teereo # 5083 likewise in these versions is translated as "to keep, to guard, to watch, to preserve, to reserve, and to hold fast." If you are playing basketball in the park and take out your wallet and keys and ask a friend to keep them for you, obviously you want him to hang on to them and not lose them.

Many modern versions give these words new meanings. It started with the liberal RSV and continued with the equally liberal NRSV, and has continued to some extent among the more recent NIVs, ESVs, Holman and NET versions. The NIV 1984 edition translates the O.T. word Shamar as "to obey" 29 times and as "to do" 5 times. It also translates the N.T. word tereeo as "to obey" 21 times and "to do" 3 times. I believe this is due, not only to Satan's hand at work to promote a works oriented religion, but also to much careless preaching. Legalism is natural to the human heart. Few Bible students take the time to actually look up a word in the Bible itself, not a commentary, to see exactly how the Holy Ghost uses this particular word.

Here are a few examples of how the word Shamar is used. Try to fit "to do" or "to obey" into the text and see if they fit. "Am I my brother's KEEPER?" (Gen.2:15). "The Lord bless thee and KEEP thee" (Num. 6:24). "KEEP me as the apple of the eye" (Ps. 17:8). "O KEEP my soul and deliver me" (Ps. 25:20). "PRESERVE me, O God." (Ps. 16:1). "I have set WATCHMEN upon thy walls, O Jerusalem." (Isa. 62:6)

Try to fit "to do" or "to obey" into these New Testament examples. "thou hast KEPT the good wine until now" (John 2:10). "Holy Father, KEEP through thine own name those whom thou hast given me...I have KEPT them in thy name...KEEP them from evil" (John 17:11-12,15) "Peter therefore was KEPT in prison." (Acts 12:5)

A good way to get the sense of a word is to compare it with the contrasting or opposite words used with it. "a time TO KEEP and a time TO CAST AWAY" (Ecc. 3:6). "They that FORSAKE the law praise the wicked, but such as KEEP the law contend with them" (Pro. 28:4). Speaking of wisdom God says: "FORSAKE her not and she will PRESERVE thee" (Pro. 4:6 - same word as "to keep"). "My son, ATTEND TO my words, INCLINE THINE EAR unto my sayings; Let them NOT DEPART from thine eyes; KEEP them in the midst of thine heart" (Pro. 4:20-21). "Only TAKE HEED TO (same word) thyself, and KEEP thy soul diligently, lest thou FORGET the things which thine eyes have seen and lest they DEPART from thy heart all the days of thy life..." (Deut. 4:9)

Notice too the distinction drawn between TO DO and TO KEEP in Deuteronomy 4:6. This passage contains four separate things the Israelites were to do. "And Moses called all Israel and said unto them, HEAR, of Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day that ye may LEARN them, and KEEP, and DO them." They were to hear, to learn, to keep, and to do. The same concept is seen in many passages but one more may help to illustrate. "Ye shall therefore KEEP my statutes and my judgments which I speak in your ears this day that ye may LEARN them, and KEEP, and DO them."

When the Bible speaks of us KEEPING the commandments of the word of the Lord, God is telling us not to forsake, let go of, forget or turn away from them, but rather to guard, preserve, hold on to and cling to them. By God's grace we hopefully will not only keep them but also do and obey them; but, to KEEP and to OBEY are two distinct and separate concepts.

This difference between to keep and to obey is often illustrated for us in God's true words. Let's look for a moment at the life of king David. In 1 Kings 11 we are told: "And it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods...for Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammorites...Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and THOU HAST NOT KEPT My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend thy kingdom from thee and will give it to thy servant" (1 Kings 11:4,5,11) Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand; but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, BECAUSE HE KEPT my commandments and my statutes." (1 Kings 11:34)

In 1 Kings 14:8 God, through His prophet Ahijah, rebukes king Jeroboam. "...and thou hast not been as my servant David, WHO KEPT MY COMMANDMENTS, and who followed me with all his heart, to do right in mine eyes; but hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast

me behind thy back."

The principal sin of Solomon and Jeroboam was turning to other gods - apostasy and idolatry. God says David KEPT His commandments, yet David certainly disobeyed the commandments of God by committing adultery and murder. But king David never turned away from Jehovah as being the only true God of his life. He held onto God's revelation of Himself in His word and never forsook Him to follow another religion or other gods.

Now, let's look again at 1 John 2:3-5. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we KEEP his commandments. He that 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." Among the Catholic bible versions, most of them still translate the word as "keep" and not as "obey". The Catholic Jerusalem bible of 1968 has only one of the three times the word is used in 1 John 2:3-5 translated as "obey" - verse 5 reads: "when anyone does obey what he has said" instead of "whoso keepeth his word", but the New Jerusalem bible of 1985 has gone back to correctly translated all three as "keep His commandments" and "keep His word". Even the new NIV of 2011 has gone back to the word "keep" his commands in verse 3, but still has "does not do" and "obeys" in verses 4 and 5 and has changed several other English words from the previous NIV in these three verses.

A Verse Comparison Chart of 1 John

1 John 2:3- if we KEEP his commandments - Tyndale, Geneva, KJB, RV 1881, ASV 1901, RSV, NKJV, NASB, ESV

1 John 2:3- if we OBEY his commandments - NRSV, NIV 1984, 2011

1 John 2:4- KEEPETH NOT his commandments - Tyndale, Geneva, KJB, RV, ASV, NKJV, NASB, ESV

1John 2:4 - DISOBEYS his commandments RSV, NRSV, DOES NOT DO his commandments NIV 1984, 2011

1 John 2:5 - whoso KEEPETH his word - Tyndale, Geneva, KJB, RV, ASV, RSV, NKJV, NASB, ESV, NIV 2011

1 John 2:5 - who OBEYS his word - NIV 1984, NRSV, NET version

1 John 3:22 - we KEEP his commandments - Tyndale, Geneva, KJB, RV, ASV, RSV, NKJV, NASB, ESV, NIV 2011

1 John 3:22 - we OBEY his commandments - NIV 1984, NRSV 1989

1 John 3:24 - he that KEEPETH his commandments - Tyndale, Geneva, KJB, RV, ASV, RSV, NKJV, NASB, NIV 2011, ESV

1 John 3:24 - he THAT OBEYS his commandments - NIV 1984, NRSV,

I John 5:2 - and KEEP his commandments - Tyndale, Geneva, KJB, RV, ASV, NKJV, NASB,

1 John 5:2 - and OBEY his commandments - Holman Standard, RSV, ESV, St. Joseph NAB, NET (Dan Wallace), NRSV; CARRYING OUT his commandments NIV 1984, 2011

1 John 5:3 - that we KEEP his commandments - Tyndale, Geneva, KJB, RV, ASV, RSV, NKJV,

NASB, ESV, NIV 2011

1 John 5:3 - that we OBEY his commandments - NIV 1984, NRSV

The NIV 1984 and many other modern versions have changed the sense and meaning of these verses entirely. 1 John 5:3-5 - "We know that we have come to know him if we OBEY his commands. The man who says, 'I know him' but DOES NOT DO what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if any man OBEYS his word, God's love is truly made complete in him."

If the NIV, along with other modern versions, is the correct interpretation, then I do not know of anyone that is a true Christian. Please don't give me that old, tired out line about "a pattern" or the "habit" of obedience". Do you sin in thought, word, attitude or deed at least once a day? Or how about once an hour? Is this not then a pattern of sinning?

The commandments, or the Biblical teachings, are the words of God. In 1 John 3:23 we are told: "And this is the commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment." This same chapter tells us "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists...they went out from us, but they were not of us...who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son...Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning..." (the original teaching concerning the Person and the work of Christ; don't leave that truth for a new or false religion) "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you."

The epistle of First John speaks of two different kinds of sin. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it." 1 John 5:16.

Here is a BROTHER who is sinning a sin not unto death. He is a brother in Christ who continues in some kind of sin, (it is a present continuous tense), a garden variety sin to which we are all prone. But 5:16 also mentions a sin that is unto death, for which he is not to pray. I believe this sin is that of forsaking the doctrine that Jesus is the Christ, denying it, and following the false religion of antichrist. The prophet Jeremiah was likewise told not to pray for those who, having been warned repeatedly, turned to other gods. See Jeremiah 7:16 and 11:14.

New Age teaching and Eastern Religions such as Hinduism are very similar to each other. They teach that Christ is a divine spirit or consciousness within us all. They teach that soon we will all become this Christ Consciousness. No! This is not true at all. The Bible tells us that JESUS IS THE CHRIST; there is no other. He died and shed His blood for the sins of His people. There is no other Saviour. If anyone denies this truth, the apostle John does not say that they should pray for this sin unto death.

The true Christian can never sin in this way of continuing to deny that Jesus is the Christ. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" 1 John 3:9. The seed mentioned here is most likely the word of

God - "the seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11); "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God..." 1 Peter 1:23.

Notice too how the word TO KEEP is used in 1 John 5:18: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God KEEPETH himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." When it says that he that is born of God sinneth not, it cannot be consistent with the rest of Scripture and our own experience to say that this refers to ANY SIN AT ALL. This would contradict 1 John 1:8 where it says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This verse then, in the context of the whole epistle, refers to the sin unto death - that is, to deny that Jesus is the Christ.

To sum up the argument: He that KEEPETH His commandments, and KEEPETH His word is the Christian who holds onto, guards, preserves and retains the doctrine of Christ and does not forsake it to follow the antichrist religion. "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." 1 John 2:24.

In light of what the phrase "keepeth my commandments" really means, it adds a new dimension to the Bible version controversy. Most of the modern versions like the NASB, NIV, ESV, NET and Holman Standard are based on a very different, ever-changing Greek text that omits some 5000 words, including many entire verses, from the New Testament and they often depart from the Hebrew texts in the Old Testament. With this in mind, consider the words of our Lord Jesus Christ when He says: "He that hath my COMMANDMENTS and KEEPETH them, he it is that loveth me...He that loveth me not KEEPETH NOT MY SAYINGS: and THE WORD which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's that sent me." John 14:21,24. Commandments = my sayings = the Father's word. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; AND THEY HAVE KEPT THY WORD...For I have given unto them THE WORDS which thou gavest me; and they have received them" John 17:6-8 - Keep them, preserve them, hold them fast, and do not let them go, depart or disappear. If we love our Lord and Saviour, we will have a high regard for His words and not treat them lightly.

Will Kinney