

Grace to You :: esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time

How can I love Christ more?

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: QA170

In his book, *The True Christian's Love to the Unseen Christ*, the Puritan Thomas Vincent offers nine directions that will lead you to your desired destination.

Meditate on Christ - Direction 1: "Be much in contemplation of Christ."

Your first priority is to meditate on Christ. Make time each day to dwell on Him. Consider who He is, what He has done, and what He is doing for you. Vincent suggests,

Spend time in secret retirement, and there think and think again of the superlative excellencies and perfections which are in Christ's person; how wonderful and matchless His love is, what heights that cannot be reached, what depths in it that cannot be fathomed, what other dimensions which cannot be comprehended.

Study about Christ - Direction 2: "Be much in reading and studying the Scriptures."

The Bible is God's Word to you. It is where you'll find everything you need to know about your great Lord and Savior. Paul said to "let the word of Christ richly dwell within us" (Col. 3:16). It is your spiritual food (Matthew 4:4). To not feed on its truths every day is like going without food for a day. You wouldn't do that to your physical body, so be sure not to do that to your soul.

Pray for Love - Direction 3: "Be much in prayer to God for this love."

Jesus said, "How much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him" (Matt. 7:11). There isn't anything better than having supreme love for Christ, and God will certainly give that to you if you ask Him for it sincerely. Vincent says,

If you would have much love to Christ in your hearts, you must be often at the throne of grace upon your knees, and there humbly acknowledge if not the lack, yet the weakness, of your love to Christ. Bewail your sins which dampen your affections, and earnestly request that He would work your hearts unto a strong love. Be importunate in prayer for this.

Lean on Christ - Direction 4: "Get much faith."

This goes hand in hand with prayer. The writer of Hebrews said, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Peter said of Christ, "Though you have not seen Him, you love Him" (1 Pet. 1:8). You can know Christ *only* by faith, and *only* by faith can you

truly love Him. Vincent says, "According to the measure of your faith, so will the measure of your love be. Such as are without any faith are without any love; such as have but feeble faith have but weak love; and such as have the strongest faith have the strongest love."

Be Filled with the Spirit - *Direction 5: "Labor for much of the light of the Spirit."*

The only way to truly love Christ is to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). Jesus Himself gave the reason that the Holy Spirit has such a crucial role:

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you (John 14:16-17).

Make Your Salvation Sure - *Direction 6: "Labor for clear evidences of His love unto you. The full, well-grounded persuasions of Christ's love to you will, above all, heighten your love to Christ."*

If you are a true Christian, Christ loves you. But if you lack the assurance of your salvation, examine your life to make sure you are saved. Don't doubt the Lord's love, for Paul said, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

Live in Obedience - *Direction 7: "Get much hatred of sin and, accordingly, watch, pray, strive, and fight against sin as the worst of evils, as that which so much displeases your Lord."*

When you do sin, go to the Lord and confess it so you can experience the joy of restoration. Vincent encourages further:

Disturb sin as much as you can; wage war every day with your remaining lusts. Let no day pass over your heads without giving some blows, some thrusts and wounds to sin. The more you straiten the room of sin in your hearts, the less room Christ will have there. Particularly, take heed of inordinate love to the world and the things in the world, the prevalence of which love will dampen your love to Christ. By how much more the world gets of your love, by so much the less Christ will have it.

Follow Those Who Love Christ - *Direction 8: "Associate yourselves most with those that have most love unto Christ."*

Simply stated, follow godly examples. Paul said, "Join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us" (Phil. 3:17).

Pursue Love - *Direction 9: "Be much in exercise of this love; hereby it is increased and heightened."*

This last principle takes you back to the beginning. If you want more love for Christ, pursue Him by practicing each of these every day. In every activity, in every contact, and in every thought, make Christ your focus. When you make Him your priority and love Christ with all your heart, soul, and strength, God is glorified.

Adapted from John MacArthur's book, *First Love*, pp. 148-51.

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