



## **04 Obeying God's Commands - 1 John 2:1-6**

### **1 John 2:1-2**

'My dear children... ' What a wonderful way for John to write to these Christians who are being led away from the Truth that Jesus really lived and who were thinking that maybe He was just a spirit. John here speaks in such loving and caring tones as the Patriarch of the early Church.

John has just written that if we confess our sins God will forgive us and purify us (**1 John 1:9**). John really wants to reinforce this message and also to point out how simple it is to stay in close fellowship with the Father. But some people reading this might think that sinning was not such a big deal. Some might say, 'Now we can sin without worrying about it, because God has made a way for us to be forgiven'. This is abuse of amazing grace. Paul reinforces this point in **Romans 6:15-17** 'What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness'. John wants to help his readers to keep from sinning; he has the same heart as Paul for the sheep. 'My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you', **Galatians 4:19**.

It is important as Christians that we have someone to whom we are answerable for our behaviour and spiritual growth. If we go to school, University, a company, or job we have regular assessments on how we are progressing and are told the truth both positive and negative and given guidance on how to deal with weaknesses and strengths. We are students in the Kingdom school and we need the same input but often we are just left to flounder along doing what we see others doing with guess work. For example we know we should pray or read the Bible but we are not sure how; and we know people say they hear from God but what does that sound like? It is so important we find someone who will help us and guide us in this area so that we are accountable. Also so that they will 'watch our backs' to warn of subtle enemy attack.

This does not have to be the minister of the Church it can be a person whose life in Christ we admire and we want to emulate their lifestyle with Jesus. It is so important that we trust them and they are able to tell us the Truth and we won't storm off as a result. Take all they say to the Lord and check that it really is what God is saying and how we can put the ideas into practice. Ask God for the fullness of His Spirit to enable us to be obedient. I highly recommend having this person in our lives as this country is full of people 'like sheep without a shepherd.' (**Matthew 9:36**) We all know what happens to sheep with no shepherd!!

Who better to speak up for us than Jesus Himself. He is our perfect defence lawyer or advocate as He understands our weaknesses and all the temptations we have and yet when He was 'walking this journey' He was without sin, **Hebrews 4:15**. Because Jesus Himself is righteous He is able to stand before God and speak on our behalf. He does not stand before God and say we have not sinned. He stands before God and agrees with God that we are guilty of the sins so should be cast out of His Presence and sentenced to death. This amazing defender then says He has paid the price for the believer to go free. 'I will offer the sacrifice and take the punishment, sentence me to death instead; I will offer myself as the atoning sacrifice, or atonement, for their sins', **Romans 3:23-25**. So Jesus on the Cross when He said 'it is finished' was declaring every sin, sickness, and all the work of the enemy had been paid for in full.

So this atoning sacrifice not only for all believers' sin but also included the sin of the whole world. This is not a blanket salvation for all people, believers and unbelievers. So as all sins have been dealt with by Jesus, people cannot just do what they feel like. But we have to

**recognise** who Jesus is and **receive** the cleansing of His Blood after having **repented** this is the same for anyone in the world who wants to know God, **John 14:6**. No gift benefits us unless we take hold of it and use it for ourselves, don't let it just stay wrapped up. Atonement is making us 'at-one' with God our Father and appropriating the shed blood of the Lamb of God, who died to take away the sins of the whole world, **John 1:36**. This should urge us to reach out to everyone we know as this is fantastic life-changing, good news.

When you make a mistake, when you miss the mark remember you have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous. Run to Him. He knows what you are going through. You don't need to be afraid. He didn't tear you apart for the sins you committed before you made Him Lord of your life, did He? Then how merciful and loving will He be now you are His own? Now that you are reaching out for Him and have a heart for Him, you can hear Him and respond to Him so much quicker.

There is no need to be condemned by guilt as Jesus has paid for us to be acquitted so there is no need to go on feeling bad and allowing our mistake to steal anymore time or joy from our lives, we are forgiven, **Hebrews 7:25**. We rejoice as Christians because in His mercy and grace God has provided a way whereby all sinful people can be justly forgiven and welcomed into His presence, sure that we are accepted by Him, that the God of the Universe no longer has anything against us. AMAZING GRACE!

If a believer should at any time sin, he has a spokesman, a defender who speaks to God on his behalf, Jesus Christ

### **1 John 2:3-4.**

We now focus on our walk as children of the Light, Jesus Christ. We can test our growth as Christians on a daily basis as to how much we are getting to know Him and how better acquainted we are with Him when we bear in mind and observe how we are reacting to His commands and daily leadings of His Holy Spirit. 'Whoever says I know Him (I perceive, recognise, understand, and am acquainted with Him) but fail to keep and obey His commandments (teachings) is a liar, and the Truth (of the Gospel) is not in him'. **1 John 2:4AMP**. There are three tests of Christians in this chapter, after being people who, **one**, know who Christ is, and **two**, trust what Christ did on the Cross and **third** they are people who do what the Word says. Obedience and Love are directly related and interdependent. John states we should be people who treasure the Word and are bending over backwards to obey every point in the Word. This comes not out of a sense of legalism but purely from a heart totally overwhelmed by the love of God seen in His forgiveness. This behaviour obedience also assures us that we are indeed children of the Living God so we have full assurance of our place in Christ today and place in Heaven in future. This is not because of any good things we have done but totally because of Jesus' amazing sinless sacrifice paid for on the Cross.

Although it is good to know where we are in our walk with God and are we really being honest, it is important not to do a lot of 'navel gazing'. This can make us very self-focused and also full of condemnation, which is just what the devil would love. This makes us totally paralysed in our function in the Body of Christ. It is healthy to ask the Father if there is any sin in our life and then listen for His reply. WAIT for a short time and immediately confess and say sorry for anything He shows us, taking full responsibility for what He says. If possible we need to make restitution if there is any way we can sort the consequences of this sin. We need to pray and ask God for wisdom in this, as we do not want to make the situation worse. If we sense a real eye opening moment then we can accept this is God showing us our sin, but if we feel totally condemned and one sin ends up being several with no sense of relief after confession this may mean it is Satan's demons who are the accuser of the sisters, **Revelation 12:10**. Then turn this round on him and thank God that at this moment our conscience is clean and we can be filled with the Holy Spirit, (**Ephesians 5:18**) and step out in His power and authority and go and do the works that He has prepared for us to walk in, **Ephesians 2:10**.

'Whoever has My commands and obeys them, *she* is the one who loves Me. *She* who loves Me will be loved by the Father, and I too will love *her* and show Myself to *her*' **John 14:21**. Just **stop** long enough in this reading to take this in. If we really believed this Truth we would not need to stress again!! So if there is any area of your life where you are not being obedient,

(the only condition of this promise) we know what to do now, just confess and remember the reward of being loved by the Father and His Son - AWESOME

### **1 John 2:5 AMP**

'But he who keeps (treasures) His Word (who bears in mind His precepts, who observes His message in its entirety), truly in him has the Love of and for God been perfected (completed, reached maturity). By this we may perceive (know, recognise and be sure) that we are in Him.' John's point here is that as we obey, His love is being worked out in and through us, and this is a sign to us that we are indeed His children and we are growing up into Christ. We are to 'Love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul and with our entire mind and with all our strength' **Mark 12:30**.

According **1 Corinthians 13:4-8 MSG** there is a practical picture of what this love-walk looks like and so what our behaviour should look like. 'Love never gives up and cares more for others, but doesn't want what they have, or have a swelled head, or force itself on others. Love doesn't fly off the handle or keep scores of others' sins and doesn't revel when others grovel and doesn't take pleasure in the flowering of the truth. Love puts up with anything, trusts God always; always looking for the best and never looking back, but keeps going to the end.' As we walk this love walk through our lives obeying His direction we can see that we have full assurance of our salvation that Jesus paid for, we really do belong to Him. Our love walk is directly related to our obedience to God's will. Love is such a strong spiritual force that other areas of our life's journey depend on it.

For example

- ✠ Faith works through love, **1 Corinthians 13:2; Galatians 5:6**.
- ✠ Answered prayer comes from love, **James 5:16**
- ✠ Giving has to be accompanied by love, **Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 13:3**
- ✠ Preaching and tongues needs love to be fruitful **1 Corinthians 13:1**
- ✠ Prophecy and knowledge without love means I am nothing **1 Corinthians 13:2**.

Is God's love complete in you?

### **1 John 2:6AMP**

'Whoever says that he abides in Him ought (as a personal debt) to walk and conduct himself in the same way in which He walked and conducted Himself.' John is saying that if we are not sure how to walk as a Christian we just do what Jesus did. It is not only a life without sin but also more and more of God's love shines through us. The more we obey God's Word the more we open ourselves up to receive and give out His amazing love seen in His life and especially His death. 'Believe in the Name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another. That is a description of the life God has called us to lead, **1 John 3:23**.

'Your life is a journey you must travel with a deep consciousness of God. It cost God plenty to get you out of that dead-end, empty-headed life you grew up in. He paid with Christ's sacred blood, you know. He died like an unblemished, sacrificial lamb. And this was no afterthought. Even though it has only lately—at the end of the ages—become public knowledge, God always knew He was going to do this for you. It's because of this sacrificed Messiah, whom God then raised from the dead and glorified, that you trust God, that you know you have a future in God.' **1 Peter 1:18-20 Msg**

These verses are a wonderful description of God's vision of our life but what the world sees of us is so different from Jesus. Why? Is a doctor the best when he qualifies? No he needs to build on his start and he will continue to do so for the whole of his life. We can take an honest look at our lives, assess with the Holy Spirit's help where we are and make the necessary changes but also praise God that we are not what we ought to be but we are further along the road than we used to be.

## **04 Obeying God's Commands - Challenge Questions**

1. In your study of **1 John** so far what have you learned and what have you applied to your life?

### **Read the notes on 1 John 2:1-2**

2. What do you think is the most important point made in this paragraph?

### **Read the notes on 1 John 2:3-4**

3. Write a sentence describing your walk with God.

4. What in the notes spoke to you?

### **Read the notes on 1 John 2:5**

5. Can you see through the verse and these notes why love is so important? Look up the verses attached to the examples of love as a spiritual force. Which do you find most relevant to your situation at present?

### **Read the notes on 1 John 2:6**

6. What part of living the life that Jesus lived do you find encouraging and what part do you find difficult? Why?

7. What does Jesus say is the answer?

### **Read 1 John 2:7-11**

8. What term of endearment does John use in these verses?

9. How does he say it is not a new command in **1 John 2:7** and then 'I am writing you a new command' in **1 John 2:8**?

10. Describe as many ways as you can of expressing love in any Church situation.

11. Describe ways Jesus expressed love when on this earth.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. What was the test John told us to apply to see if we know Jesus in **1 John 2:3**? What is the new test he suggests we apply in **1 John 2:9**?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. Review the notes in the first lesson on Phileo love. What is it saying in these verses about this love?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. What acts of love are taking place in our Church? List them.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
15. What other acts of service would help us to show Jesus to our area?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
16. If a friend in Church asks you to babysit on a regular basis and is always late back, doesn't give you anything in return and it happens more and more with no thanks and just expecting you to do it every time, you feel really used. **What should be your attitude according to these verses?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
17. If we don't have a Godly response what are the consequences for us?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
18. Remember the prayer at the end of Lesson 1. Can you feel yourself being more aware of walking in love with people who you may have criticised before?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
19. **Memory verse Hebrew 7:25** 'Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them.'