

July 20/21 2019 – Part 14 – 1 John: Loving Surrender

Pastor Kent Priebe
SERMON SUMMARY

1 John 5:1-5

The Apostle John affirms that God is light and love; forgiving and inviting us into relationship with him. We are God's children - loved, righteous, forgiven - when we place our belief and trust in Jesus as God's son. A follower of Christ gives evidence of this trust. What they believe shows in how they act, speak, and love. Instead of our life getting in the way of our identity and purpose, John's letter builds clarity on who God is, and who we are as individuals in a community of believers and how God wants us to live in this world (**1 John 5:1-5**). As our Father, he grows us in our relationship with him; in understanding who we are in Jesus Christ; and in becoming more faithful in obedience to him.

First, John reminds us: *Our obedience does not bring about our salvation.* We are not saved by loving God or other people, or by obeying his commands. It is by believing in Jesus that a person is born into a new life with God (**1 John 5:1**). Just like Nicodemus, a teacher and an expert in law, we can easily think obeying makes us right with God. Jesus asked him, 'how can you not understand what I'm saying to you?' (**John 3:10**). Jesus' teaching leads to one of most well-known verses in Scripture, (**John 3:16**).

God's commands are the hundreds of laws given to Israel in Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, the Ten Commandments, and the New Testament. It is our sin and disobedience which separates us from God. We know it is impossible to obey each law perfectly. Our obedience, righteousness or efforts do not save us, (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). John makes sure we understand this truth before he talks about why we need to obey God's commands.

Second, John reminds us that *Our obedience to God is the evidence of our love for God.* John makes connects loving God and obeying God to keep us from thinking of love as only feelings. When someone tells us they love us, yet never shows their love in any visible way, we know it's not really love. Genuine love requires loving action (**1 John 5:2-3**).

God's commands are in his Word, forming the design to describe our relationship with Him and others. God does not force us to obey when He speaks. His commands invite us to trust him. Our obedience is an act of submission; the evidence that we love and trust God, (**Luke 22:42**). We believe we have a good Father who is good to His children.

So why do we do what we know we should not? Timothy Keller says we have a rebellious self-assertion and proud self-centeredness: No one tells me how to live my life. We have a tendency to break stuff: promises, relationships, even our wellbeing. Our hearts harden and our understanding of God and the desire to obey diminishes. A day may come when you do not believe that God speaks or that you no longer love God.

The antidote is confession. It frees us from our sin and disobedience and restores us to God in our identity as his children (**1 John 1:9**). Confession takes full responsibility: no excuses. We humbly admit our sin to God or someone we wronged, and ask, will you please forgive me? God forgives because the just punishment for our sin was carried out against Jesus when He died for us. We need never ask – are we forgiven, or not?

July 20/21 2019 – Part 14 – Discussion Questions

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IN

1. Name one thing in your life that you think you should have figured out by now?
2. When you meet someone, what clues tell you what this person is like? How do your expectations colour your perceptions of them? If you are distressed about your reaction, is it about you or about them?

UP

3. Disobedience to God separates us from God, yet obedience to God does not bring salvation. Discuss this in terms of law & grace, referring to Ephesians 2:8-9 & John 3:6 for help.

4. What important role does obedience play in our relationship with God, 1 John 5:2-3? What does our obedience to God reveal about ourselves?

OUT

5. How is rebellious self-assertion manifested in the world today? How does it get in the way of our obedience to God? What is the difference between the gift of God's grace and our own misplaced self-defence.

6. What is the antidote to disobedience, 1 John 1:9? How does confession shift our relationship with God?

Personal Reflection

Ponder the difference between true confession that acknowledges and take full responsibility of our wrongs, and a futile self-defence of excuses for our sins. How does confession invite God's grace into your relationship with him?

1 John 5:1-5 – Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ²This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

John 3:10 - "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things?"

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast.

1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.