WATCH THIS VIDEO

Are you in the game?

DISCIPLES.AWANAYM.ORG/OBEDIENCE

CORE VERSE

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

1 John 2:3

Many scholars believe that part of John's goal in writing this epistle was to confront the Gnostics. Gnostics believed that they could gain special knowledge (or gnosis) through religious experiences that would enable them to transcend the material world. They often considered the created world to be evil and usually were not concerned about their moral choices or actions in this life. In this verse, John seems to be challenging so called "Christian" Gnostics to recognize that Jesus' followers obey His teachings here and now. If they refuse to obey Him, then they must not really know Him (v. 4). The same could be said for Christians who claim to follow Jesus but deny Him with their actions.

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO HELP YOU REMEMBER THIS VERSE. FEEL FREE TO WRITE, DRAW OR DESIGN IN WAYS THAT MAKE SENSE TO YOU.

READ 1 JOHN 2:1-6.

Sometimes we get turned around in the way we think about sin. We know that sin is bad and even that it is the reason we were headed for hell (Romans 6:23). We also know that Jesus died for our sin and that God forgave us forever when we trusted in Christ (Galatians 2:16).

So now sin's not that big of a deal, right? If God can forgive it, He must not really care about it all that much, right? If I can disobey Him today and still go to heaven because I'm saved, why does it matter that I try not to sin? (Romans 6:1)

John wants to shake us loose of that foolish idea. He says he is writing this book to help us stop sinning (v. 1). Disobeying God is not just something we shouldn't do, it's the opposite of who we really are as Christians.

Disobedience is the path we started out on, the one that led away from God and toward our own destruction (Titus 3:3). Sin is still a huge deal to God, so huge that He sacrificed His own Son to pay the price for it (Romans 3:23-26). He forgives not because the sin didn't matter but because His grace is even bigger than our sin (Romans 5:20-21). So don't be fooled: God's plan for your life in Christ is that you would sin less and less (Ephesians 4:22-24).

Still, we will fail. Our want to sin isn't dead yet (Romans 7:14-20). But here's the great part: John tells us that when we sin, Jesus stands next to God as our advocate (or lawyer or representative), constantly making our case: "I died for that sin. It is paid for. It is forgiven" (vv. 1-2).

How can we possibly respond to that constant and continuing gift of grace? One word: Obey.

John paints it all in black and white: Christians who really know Jesus obey His commandments (v. 3). People who really live in Christ—true Christians—make it the point of their lives to be more and more like Him by doing what God tells them to do (Ephesians 5:1-2).

We have to understand both of these things: God absolutely loves us. He proved it by sending Jesus to rescue us, a gift we didn't deserve and could never have earned (John 3:16-17). God continues to prove His love for us by continuing to forgive us (1John 1:9).

But also, those of us who have truly received this gift of God's love will begin to obey Him, to follow after Jesus, to say "no" to ourselves and "yes" to Him (Titus 2:12). John says that God's love *is ... perfected* in us as we keep His Word (v. 5). God's powerful love overcomes evil and destroys the selfish resistance in us as He makes us to be more and more like Jesus. That's the true goal of obedience—not to simply be good people who follow the rules, but to become like Jesus Himself (v. 6)!

We're not there yet. We are going to make mistakes. Jesus' own disciples made lots of them. But Jesus continued to forgive them and set them back on the path of obedience to God's Word. He will do the same for us as we seek to follow Him with our whole hearts.

CORE CONCEPTS

God desires for us to be obedient.

OBEDIENCE:
Compliance with an order, request, or law or submission to another's authority

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS

- WHICH TEACHINGS OF JESUS DO YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO OBEY?
- DOES FOCUSING ON GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU MAKE YOU MORE MOTIVATED TO OBEY HIM? WHY OR WHY NOT?
- HOW CAN YOU TELL THAT YOU ARE BECOMING MORE LIKE JESUS?
- WRITE YOUR OWN QUESTION: