



## “The Relationship between Love and Obedience”

*2 John 4-6*

**Theme:** Living in the truth of the Gospel each day results in increased love for God and obedience to His Word.

### I. The Characteristic of Obedience – *1:4*

#### A. OBEDIENCE IS CONCENTRATED ON TRUTH

1. As we noted in our previous look at v. 4, John is expressing gratitude for the evidence of the power of the truth in the lives of this “chosen lady” and her children.
2. He stated that he was *“very glad to find some of your children walking in truth ...”*
3. When referring to that was *“very glad to find”* [εὔρηκα] – refers to discovery after a purposeful search – that is, he was gratified after an investigation.
4. What thrilled John is that these children were *“walking in truth”* – that is, their lifestyle was being characterized by a consistent focus on the truth that was informing their decisions, priorities, and actions.
5. In this way, these children were displaying the practical impact of the truth and a focus on the truth.
6. When we interact with the truth, we are able to be illumined by God’s Spirit as to what it means, and we thereby are enabled to “walk in the Light” – cp. *1 John 1:7*
7. In this sense, we are *“walking”* according to commandments of God – cp. v. 6 .

#### B. OBEDIENCE IS COMMANDED BY GOD

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- 1.This is the very expectation of God – “... *just as we have received commandment to do from the Father.*”
- 2.Obedience to the truth is not rare among believers, it is the norm – the expected result of believing the truth.
- 3.The expectation of God is that believers will follow Jesus Christ and do everything that He has commanded – cp. *Matthew 28:20*
- 4.One does not truly believe what he does not practice – a profession of faith turns into a confession of faith when obedience to what is believed follows one’s faith

## II. The Core of Obedience – *1:5*

### A. OBEDIENCE IS EPITOMIZED

- 1.As John continues to exhort this “chosen lady,” he appeals to her to note that this focus on the truth and its impact on our lives is not something new – its been the staple from the beginning.
- 2.He says: “*Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning ...*”
- 3.He desired to merely reiterate how truth manifests itself in our lives as had been characteristic of God’s expectation from the beginning.
- 4.This is universal among believers – our lives are very similar when we begin to focus on the truth – we turn into loving people.
- 5.This is the most important evidence that a person truly knows the truth – when they love one another – cp. *1 John 4:7-12.*

### B. OBEDIENCE IS EXHORTED

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- 1.Hence, John exhorts us ... *“now I ask you ... that we love one another.”*
- 2.Love and obedience are inextricably tied together – you cannot love God without obeying His commands; and one cannot obey God’s commands and not love one another – *Deuteronomy 11:1; 1 John 5:3*
- 3.Hence, John affirms that love is the key component in true obedience to God – the truth inevitably impacts us and orients us to God and His expectations which results in the action of loving!

### **III. The Connection of Obedience – 1:6**

#### **A. THE STIMULUS FOR OBEDIENCE**

- 1.John explains that essentially, love is seen in the way that we interact and apply the truth – *“And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments ...”*
- 2.God recognizes that it is possible to Dkeep His commandments and not love Him, but you cannot love Him and fail to keep His commandments.
- 3.Without love, any acts of obedience that we do are wasted before the eyes of the Lord – cp. *Isaiah 1:10-15; Luke 6:46.*

#### **B. THE SPHERE OF OBEDIENCE - TRUTH**

- 1.John takes us back to the issue that believers are to *“walk in”* the truth – *“This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.”*
- 2.Again, all of our commitment to God, love for Him and obedience to His commands stems from the effect of truth on our lives.
- 3.Those who walk in the truth will truly love God and others, and

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those who truly love God and others will be walking in the truth.

4. In contradiction to the ecumenist, truth does not obstruct love, it instigates it and becomes the sphere in which love is practiced – through obedience to the commands of God.