

Summary

In this message from 1 John 5, Pastor Chris explores what it truly means to love, honor, and obey God. Drawing from John's repeated phrase "by this we know," he walks through the evidence of genuine faith: a love for God's Word, a desire to keep His commandments, and a love that naturally overflows onto others. He emphasizes that obedience to God is not meant to be reluctant or burdensome, but joyful and cheerful, much like the way we serve those we deeply love. The sermon also highlights the three testimonies that confirm who Jesus is: the water of His baptism, the blood of His sacrifice, and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Pastor Chris reminds the congregation that eternal life is a free gift, not something earned, and that true saving faith goes beyond mere mental agreement. He challenges believers to examine the fruit of their lives as evidence of genuine relationship with Christ, and calls the church to a place of brokenness and hunger for God rather than simply seeking His blessings.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with open hearts and open hands. As we gather together, we ask that You would quiet our minds and prepare our hearts to receive what You have for us. Just as Your Word calls us to love, honor, and obey You, we ask that You would stir something fresh in each of us today. Holy Spirit, be our teacher and our guide. Let this time together not simply be a discussion, but a genuine encounter with You. Show us where we need to grow, where we need to surrender, and where we need to trust You more. We are here for You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one small but meaningful thing someone has done for you recently that made you feel genuinely loved or cared for?

Key Verses

- 1 John 5:1-2
- 1 John 5:3-4
- 1 John 5:11-12
- 1 John 5:13

- 2 Corinthians 9:7
- Romans 3:23

Questions

- John writes 'by this we know' eight times in 1 John. What does it mean to you personally that God wants you to have assurance and confidence in your faith rather than constant doubt?
- Pastor Chris described his grandfather as someone whose love for Jesus naturally poured out onto strangers in a mall. Who in your life has modeled that kind of overflowing love, and what made it so noticeable?
- The sermon draws a parallel between cheerfully serving a spouse and cheerfully obeying God. How does thinking of obedience as an act of love rather than a rule to follow change the way you approach it?
- Pastor Chris pointed out that in the story of Jonah, everything in creation obeyed God except the prophet. Where in your own life do you find it hardest to obey God cheerfully rather than reluctantly or not at all?
- The 40 Roman soldiers who died on the frozen lake did not look like they were winning by the world's standards, yet their faithfulness led one soldier to give his life to Christ. How does this story challenge the way you define victory in your own walk with God?
- The sermon identifies three testimonies to who Jesus is: the water, the blood, and the Spirit. How has the Holy Spirit personally testified to you about the truth of who Jesus is?
- Pastor Chris made a strong distinction between mental agreement and genuine saving faith. How would you explain that difference to someone who believes they are saved simply because they have always believed Jesus existed?
- Leonard Ravenhill is quoted as saying, 'Most Christians pray to be blessed, few pray to be broken.' What does brokenness before God look like in a practical, everyday sense, and why do you think it is so rare?

Life Application

This week, identify one specific area of your life where your obedience to God has been reluctant, half-hearted, or conditional. Commit to bringing that area before God in prayer each day, asking Him to replace reluctance with genuine, cheerful surrender. Additionally, look for one practical way to serve someone around you this week in the way they would most receive it, not the way that is most convenient for you. Let your love be observable.

Key Takeaways

- Genuine faith in Jesus produces observable fruit: a love for God's Word, a desire to obey His commandments, and a love that naturally spills out onto others.
- Obedience to God is not meant to be a burden. It is meant to be joyful and cheerful, flowing from a heart that truly loves Him.
- Jesus is confirmed as both fully God and fully man through three witnesses: the water of His baptism, the blood of His sacrifice, and the ongoing testimony of the Holy Spirit.
- Eternal life is a free gift from God, not something earned through good intentions or religious effort. True saving faith requires more than mental agreement; it requires genuine surrender and acknowledgment of our need for a Savior.
- Our victories as believers do not always look like what the world calls winning. Faithfulness in difficulty can be the most powerful testimony we ever give.

Ending Prayer

Lord, we thank You for the time we have had together today to dig into Your Word and encourage one another. We confess that obedience does not always come easily, and that we sometimes settle for reluctant compliance rather than joyful surrender. Forgive us for the times we have sought Your blessings more than Your presence. We ask that You would create in each of us a genuine hunger for You, not just for what You can give us, but for who You are. May the love, honor, and obedience we offer You this week be a living testimony to those around us. And where the road ahead is hard, remind us that You are with us and that it is worth it. We love You, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen.