

Title: Living as Children of Obedience: Our Identity in the Trinity

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the believer's identity as "children of obedience" based on 1 Peter 1:14. Pastor Tom challenges the congregation to move beyond spiritual adolescence—where Christians become entitled, rebellious, and focused on what God can do for them—and return to a childlike faith characterized by obedience flowing from love. The message emphasizes that our identity as obedient children is not something we earn through performance, but rather who we are because of Christ's saving work. Through Christ, believers are brought into three dimensions of relationship with the Trinity: unity with God (being "in" the Father, Son, and Spirit), mutuality (sharing in what the Father gives to the Son), and equality (standing as children of God alongside Christ as the Son of God). The sermon calls believers to live out of this objective reality, allowing their lives to reflect the genuine transformation that comes from being unified with God, rather than using God merely to obtain blessings or maintain comfortable lives.

Key Points:

- Spiritual adolescence occurs when believers move from childlike devotion to entitlement, seeking what God can give rather than God Himself
- Peter identifies believers as "children of obedience"—this is our identity, not merely a command to obey
- Three dimensions of being obedient children: Unity (John 17:21), Mutuality (John 15:15), and Equality (John 1:11-13)
- Unity means believers participate in the divine relationship of the Trinity, leading to integrity in how we live
- Mutuality means Christ shares everything He receives from the Father with us, leading to openness and participation with others
- Equality means believers stand as children of God alongside Christ the Son of God, creating familial equity among believers
- Obedience flows from love and gratitude for salvation, not as a means to earn God's favor
- The objective reality of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection establishes the objective reality of our new identity

- What flows into us from God must flow out to others, or it becomes stagnant and leads to judgmentalism
- The proof of genuine salvation is the desire for and pursuit of obedience, not perfect performance
- David's example in Psalm 23 shows someone who wanted God Himself, not just what God could provide

Scripture Reference:

- 1 Peter 1:13-16 (primary focus on verse 14: "as obedient children")
- John 17:21 (unity with the Trinity)
- John 15:15 (Christ sharing what He receives from the Father)
- John 1:11-13 (becoming children of God)
- John 14:20-21 (abiding in Christ and keeping His commandments)
- John 16:13-15 (the Spirit revealing what belongs to Christ)
- 2 Peter 1 (partaking in the divine nature)
- Ephesians 4:17-24 (putting off the old self, putting on the new self)
- 1 John 1:9 (confession and forgiveness)
- Psalm 23 (David's desire for God Himself)

Stories:

- Personal story of wanting to dress like his father as a young boy—wearing matching khaki pants, white shirt, red tie, and blue sport coat with brass buttons, and receiving his own hat to complete the look
- The transformation from childhood (wanting to be exactly like Dad) to adolescence (wanting to be exactly opposite of Dad), illustrating spiritual development stages
- Memory of wanting to mow the lawn like his father at age 11-12, then regretting that desire years later when responsible for mowing the entire two-acre yard

- Visiting Tom and Connie's house and seeing Tom with his sons Aaron and Drew all dressed identically, with the father looking confident and the boys looking ready for mischief
- Recollection of his father always wearing a businessman's hat outdoors from childhood until his passing in 2014, demonstrating consistent identity
- Anecdote about John MacArthur being asked what the best proof of genuine salvation is, answering "obedience"—not perfect obedience, but the desire for and striving toward obedience