

Big Idea:

Because we are in Jesus, filled with the Spirit, and loved by the Father, obedience is not dry religious duty. Obedience becomes love responding to love.

Opening Questions

When you hear the word obedience, what is your first emotional reaction: pressure, guilt, resistance, joy, love, or something else?

Have you ever experienced Christianity as “trying harder, failing, feeling guilty, and trying harder again”? What did that do to your view of God?

Leader Note: *Set the tone for honesty early. Normalize struggle and mixed emotions, this helps guys open up and moves the conversation from surface-level to real.*

1. The Tupperware Reality

Read: John 14:10–11, 17, 20, 23

Jesus says the Father is in Him, He is in the Father, we are in Him, He is in us, the Spirit will be in us, and the Father and Son will make their home with us.

In the sermon, the Tupperware illustration showed two ways Christians often see themselves:

“I am in sin, but Jesus is in my heart,” or “I am in Jesus, Jesus is in me, the Spirit is in me, and my life is hidden in God.”

Which picture do you honestly live from more often?

What changes in your faith when you believe you are not mainly defined by sin, failure, or shame, but by being in Jesus?

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Colossians 3:3

Paul says we are a new creation and that our life is hidden with Christ in God.

Where do you still tend to see yourself as “just a sinner” more than a person made new in Jesus?

How does this change of identity and perspective impact your faith, your actions, and experience?

Leader Note: *Help the group slow down here, this is identity work. Listen for how they describe themselves and gently shift the focus from sin-centered identity to being in Christ.*

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2. Obedience from Love, Not Legalism

Read: John 14:15, 21, 23–24

Jesus says, “If you love me, keep my commands.” Be honest, do you hear that as an invitation into relationship or as an accusation that you are not doing enough? Why?

Read: Ephesians 2:8–10

Legalism is trying to make yourself right with God by keeping rules instead of trusting what Jesus has already done. Where are you most tempted to obey God so He will love you, approve of you, bless you, protect you, or not be disappointed in you?

What is the difference between obeying because you are trying to get God's love and obeying because you have already received God's love?

Leader Note: *This is where performance thinking surfaces. Affirm honesty, then redirect, obedience is a response to love, not a way to earn it.*

3. Breathing the Love of God

Read: 1 John 4:9–10, 16, 19

Pastor Daniel said, "Love is the oxygen of heaven." What helps you actually receive the love of Jesus, not just know about it intellectually?

If love grows where attention goes, where has your attention been going lately?

Is it increasing your love for Jesus or draining it?

How could you increase your focus on the reality of God's promises and truth this week?

(Leader Examples after they answer: Follow the Daily Orchard devotional on the app, Bible reading, prayer, worship in your commute, phone free walk and pray, whatever would focus your mind and heart on Jesus)

Read: John 15:9–10

Jesus says, "Remain in my love." What would it look like this week to remain in His love before trying to fix your behavior?

Leader Note: *Don't rush this section. Create space for reflection and model it if needed, help guys move from knowing about love to actually receiving and living in it.*

4. Delayed Obedience

Read: James 1:22 and Philippians 2:12–13

Where has your love for Jesus stopped short of action? Where has God already made something clear, but you have been saying, "No... later"?

Why do you think you are delaying obedience in that area? Is it fear, shame, comfort, pride, bitterness, control, unbelief, or something else?

Pastor Daniel said the Spirit empowers what Jesus asks from us. What would obedience look like this week if you did not have to manufacture it from your own strength?

Leader Note: *Gently challenge toward action without creating pressure. Help each person identify one clear, doable step, obedience should feel like a response of love, not obligation.*

Closing

Finish this sentence honestly:

"Jesus, because I am loved by You, I want to obey You by _____."

What is one concrete next step you need to take this week: a conversation, confession, apology, act of generosity, boundary, surrender, or new rhythm?