

The Life of Fellowship

Studies on 1 John

3. Obedience (2)



Leader's notes with answers

Introduction

We have seen that three themes occur all the way through the letter of 1st John. These are obedience, love and faith. In our last study we looked at obedience, and this study is a continuation of that theme.

1. FREE FROM CONDEMNATION 1 John 3:19-24

In the previous verses John has been speaking about those who continually disobey God's Word and contrasts it with those who are obedient. Although we want to please the Lord and be obedient to him, we may face times when we feel condemned and feel God's commands are a burden.



Discuss

Have you ever felt condemned? Share your experience if you are able. What do you think John means in 1 John 3:20 when he writes, 'for God is greater than our hearts'? Also see Romans 8:1, 34
(Often our hearts condemn us and we 'feel' we have failed. If we know Jesus and are walking in the Spirit, then we are not condemned by God. This condemnation comes from the enemy, who is seeking to discourage us. God is greater than our feelings, and greater than the enemy, so we need to stand on God's Word, rebuke the enemy and believe God's promise of forgiveness.)



Discuss

Perhaps there are times when we feel God's commands have become a burden. Have you ever felt like that? Why have you felt like that? What does John say about this in 1 John 5:2-3?
(God's Word says that his commandments are not burdensome. Sometimes we feel like that because we have lost our first love for Jesus, and got caught up with the world. If so, we need to repent.)

God does not want us to condemn ourselves, nor does he want us to listen to the condemnation of the evil one.

- * What difference does it make in our lives when we learn not to listen to those condemning voices? V21-22
(We will have confidence to come to God and bring our prayer requests to him. There will be freedom and joy in our lives and we will see our prayers answered.)
- * God's desire is for us to be confident before him. What is important if we are going to experience this confidence? V22-24
(It is important to keep his commandments, particularly that we love one another.)

2. BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE

* What blessings does John tell us are reserved for those who are obedient to the Lord? See the following verses. 1 John 2:5, 3:22, John 14:23, 15:10, 14.

(The blessings are as follows:

- i. The love of God will be perfected in him*
- ii. He will receive from God whatever he asks*
- iii. The Father will love him and make his home with him*
- iv. He will abide in God's love*
- v. He will be a friend of Jesus*

Conclusion

When you love a person, you want to make them happy! That is also true in our relationship with Jesus. If we love Him, we will want to obey him. However there is great blessing for us when we do. As it says in John 14:23, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." There is nothing more wonderful than that!