

## 1 John 2:5-6 Abide in Love by Walking in Obedience

**5 but whoever follows His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:**

### **Whoever follows His Word**

We know that we are saved because we obey God's commandments. And we are obedient to God out of love for Him. We obey God because we understand that God is love, and that following all His commandments and instructions will produce the very best life you can have. Jesus explained our relationship with God through Him saying, in John 14:21 **21 The one who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him.**" The one who keeps Jesus' commandments is the one who truly loves Him, and our love for Jesus allows Him to reveal more of Himself to us through the Word of God and through the Holy Spirit's work in our hearts. In 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:5, John says that Whoever keeps, or follows the Word of Jesus allows God to bring His love to full expression in their lives.

### **in him the love of God has truly been perfected.**

Just as the person who only claimed to have a relationship with Jesus, claimed to walk with Him, but practiced disobedience was a liar, the one who lives in obedience, keeping His Word, Truly has a relationship with God. We have a relationship with God, and knowing how much God loves us, and what He has done for us, in sending Jesus to the Cross, and in Jesus dying for us, so that we can have relationship with God, then we love God. And since we know that He wants what's best for us, we obey Him. If our obedience to His Word and Commands is incomplete, then our love for Him is also incomplete. But as we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us, our love is made complete, even as we are conformed to the image of Christ. Our obedience also allows God to express His love for us more fully in our lives, since His blessings won't be as likely to result in pride, or greed, or other harmful sins. Fellowship with God is not made complete when we are saved, it is a relationship, and so must be maintained, if its benefits are to be realized. Jesus Himself tells us that His experience of the Father's love was contingent on His obedience. He says in John 15:10) **10 If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love.** If Jesus can say this about His own relationship with God, as a man who lived a perfect life, and who never sinned, then we can be sure that our obedience also affects our relationship with God.

### **By this we know that we are in Him**

It is by means of the love that we have for Him, resulting in obedience in our lives that we know that we are abiding in Him. We know we are in Him because we see that God's love is working in us to bring us to completion, and the evidence of the process is obedience.

"In Him" means remaining in an abiding relationship with God through Jesus. We read in John 14:20 that Jesus explains that they will understand full unity with Jesus and God the father when they get to heaven. **20 On that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I in you. 21 The one who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him.**" So following God in obedience to Jesus results in a greater revelation of God, the lover of our souls. We understand God, and His love for us by obedience. We see in verse 22 **22 Judas (not Iscariot) \*said to Him, "Lord, what has happened that You are going to reveal Yourself to us and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him. 24 The one who does not love Me does not follow My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.** So, being in abiding relationship with God the Father through Jesus causes God to abide in the believer, fellowship with us closely, by making him or her their "abode", their dwelling place. Jesus follows this up in the with the parable of the vine and the branches in John 15:1-7. Jesus lets us know that this abiding relationship with God through Jesus also makes our lives bear the fruit of the Spirit saying in John 15:4-5

**4 Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself but must remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who remains in Me, and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.**

John knows what he's talking about. Living in relationship with Jesus for all of those years had caused this fruit in his own life. John's great understanding through experience of God's love through Jesus, made possible by the work of the Holy Spirit in his life is probably why John writes so often about this love that God has for us, and it's result of producing the same kind of love in us. John is often called the Apostle of Love for how often He writes of this in his gospel and epistles. John probably didn't start out that way. If we look at the picture we get of John in his early years, we can see the change that Jesus made in him. In Luke 9 beginning in verse 51, when this young Apostle of Love wants to call fire down from heaven on a village for not showing Jesus the proper respect. But when he is old, he writes so much about love in this epistle especially, that it gives us evidence of the Power of God to change a heart. The apostles continually remind us that love for our brothers and sisters in Christ is evidence of our love for God (see Romans 12:9, Romans 12:10-12, Gal 5:13-14, Eph 5:1-9, 1 Pet 1:22-2:1). John continually emphasized that we must demonstrate our love for other believers by servicing them.

**6 the one who says that he remains in Him ought, himself also, walk just as He walked.**

Abiding in the love of Christ involves habitual obedience to God and His commandments. It is a life lived like Christ lived. Though habitual obedience is not automatic in the life of the believer. We have an obligation through what Christ has done for us to habitually imitate Christ. Ephesians 5:1-2 says **5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.** The one who says that he abides in Him, to have a relationship with God should imitate the character and the lifestyle of Jesus, who always and only did the Will of the Father, continually serving God and meeting the needs of others.

Our walk is our manner of living, our ongoing conduct of our life. A true understanding of how much God loves us, and what Jesus has done for us will result in an obedience out of love, and a desire to imitate the lifestyle of Jesus. This produces a "What Would Jesus Do" mindset, a longing for continued Unity with our Father in Heaven, a love for Him, and a desire to always and only do His Will. Unlimited devotion to God should be what drives our every action, attitude, word that comes out of our mouth, and thought that we have.