

## Obeying the Word

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FOR READING & MEDITATION &ndash; 1 JOHN 2:1-17

&lsquo;We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.&rsquo; (v.3)

At present we are looking at verse 6 of John 17, and we focus now on the words, &lsquo;They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.&rsquo; Yesterday we said that one of the marks of a Christian is that he or she is someone who is not of this world. Another characteristic of a Christian is that he or she is someone who receives God&rsquo;s Word and keeps it.

Our Lord is drawing a contrast here between those who had accepted God&rsquo;s Word and those who had rejected it. There were those in His day who argued with everything He said &ndash; the Pharisees, for example. They tried time and time again to trap Him, yet without success. But listen once more to what our Lord says about His own disciples: &lsquo;they have obeyed your word.&rsquo; What an amazing statement. Is Christ being over-generous here with His praise? Hadn&rsquo;t the disciples been a bit obtuse over some of the things He had said? Did they not complain on one occasion, &lsquo;This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?&rsquo; (John 6:60)? Yes, they did, but there was a strong sense of commitment among them nevertheless. Peter summed up their position when he made the great statement, &lsquo;Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life&rsquo; (John 6:68). The disciples could not always understand the Master, but they did stay with Him for three and a half years.

To &lsquo;obey the Word&rsquo; does not mean we will never have times of doubt and struggle, but that we hold on to it nevertheless. Jesus&rsquo; true disciples realize that nothing matters in this world more than the truth of God, and even in the midst of their struggles they allow themselves to be controlled by that truth. He keeps us and we keep His Word.

Lord Jesus Christ, how generous You are with Your praise. You could have criticized Your disciples for many things, but instead You looked for the things that could be commended. Give me that same generous attitude I pray. Amen.