**How to Obey God’s Word (1 John 2:3-8)**

**Discussion Questions:**

(Introduction) – 1 John 2:3-4 seems to suggest that those who know God keep His Word and those who don’t, fail because they don’t really know Him.

* *How well do you “keep His commandments?” Do you feel confident about your ability to keep them, insecure or something else in between? Why?*
* *Does your shortcomings in keeping God’s commandments ever cause you to feel insecure in your relationship with God? Yes or no? Why?*

(Introduction) – 1 John 2:3 seems to suggest that we can have assurance of our relationship with God (we can “know that we know Him’”).

* *Do you have assurance of your relationship with God? Why or why not?*

(Points 1 & 2) – A misconception that people can adopt regarding God’s Word is that God’s Word is a book. This reduces the substance of God’s Word to cold dry facts on a page and causes people to approach it like a divinely inspired “how to manual.” Manuals are a chore to read (not enjoyable). They are consulted for the purpose of learning how to perform tasks correctly and they are expected to remove all ambiguity from what we are trying to accomplish. In our text John was clarifying that God’s Word is more than a book. God’s Word is a living Person. Embracing this truth prompts us to approach the scriptures (even the Law and Prophets) as a biography of Jesus. Biographies are not consulted for the purpose of doing something. They are consulted for the purpose of knowing someone. Biographies are far more enjoyable to read and they accomplish their goal even when they are, at times, ambiguous and perplexing.

* *How do you approach the scriptures? As a manual on how to obey God or a biography to help you know God?*
* *Are the scriptures enjoyable to read or are they a chore? What are the most enjoyable portions of scripture to read? What are the most laborious? What effect would it have if you read Exodus – Deuteronomy with the intent of understanding the author rather than learning the rules?*
* *Have you ever sat under teaching that treated the Bible like a divinely inspired how to manual? What effect did it have on your life? Did it liberate you or burden you?*
* Whether we care to admit it or not…there are (seeming) differences in the way the Bible communicates ideas and events which are hard to explain. For example: there are (seeming) differences in the account of how Judas Iscariot died (Matthew 27:5, Acts 1:18-19) and there are (seeming) differences on whether our salvation is eternally secure (John 10:28, Hebrews 6:4). *How do you respond to these (seeming) differences? (See continuing questions below:)*
* *Do they undermine your assurance in God? Do they cause you to lose confidence in the scriptures? Do you go to great lengths to attempt to reconcile them in order to maintain your confidence in the scriptures (ex: Judas hung himself, then the rope broke, then he fell headlong and burst open, etc.)?*
* *(Or) do you accept them all as God’s truth, candidly acknowledge that there are things you don’t understand, but at the same time trusting in God to bring illumination in His time?*
* *What is your basis for confidence in the scriptures? Are you confident in them because you believe the scriptures are neat, seamless and able to be 100% proven and explained? Or is your basis for confidence in Jesus’ own personal affirmation of them (Matthew 5:17)? –* “I may not understand some of the ambiguities and seeming differences in them, but Jesus says that they are 100% reliable and that’s good enough for me.”
* *What are some other ways that well-meaning believers attempt to generate a false sense of scriptural assurance built on something other than the Person of Jesus Christ? (Ex: the only reliable Bible is the KJV…because it was translated from most reliable manuscripts, etc.)*