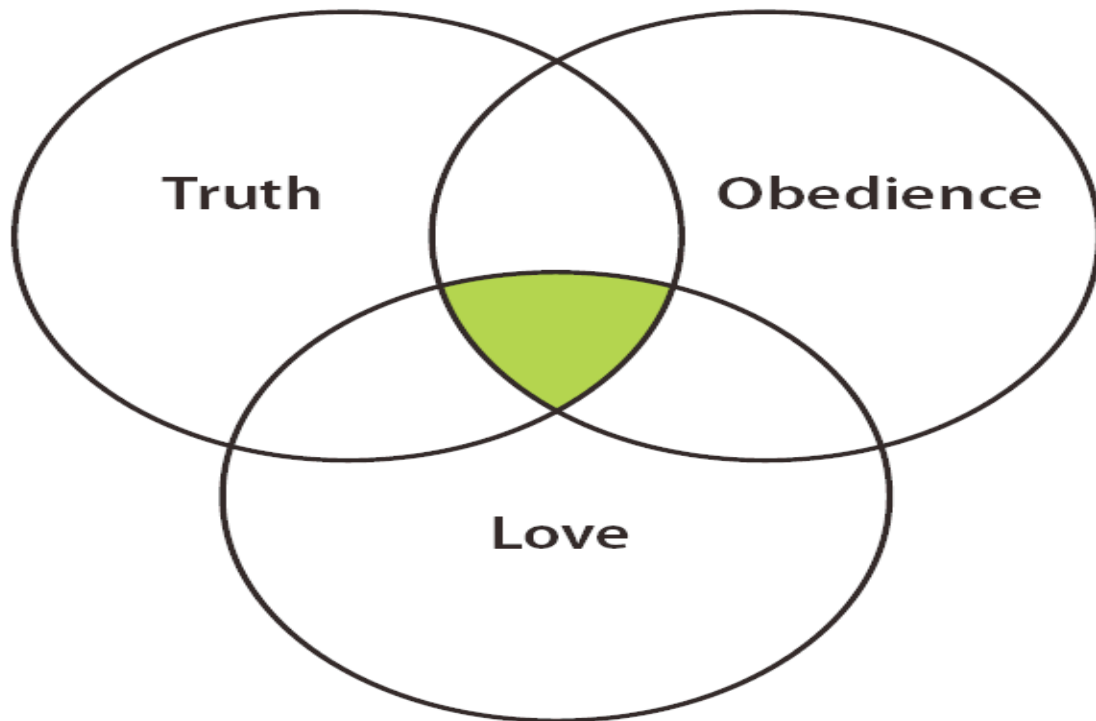


TRUE CONVERSION
Session 02: “The Test of Obedience”
11.04.07

1 John 5:1-5

“By ‘Christian assurance,’ I refer to a Christian believer’s confidence that he or she is already in a right standing with God, and that this will issue in ultimate salvation.” D.A. Carson¹

How do the three tests work together?



“The danger lies in thinking that these “tests” somehow make independent contributions, as if a person might hope to pass two out of three. But toward the end of this epistle, not least in 1 John 5:1-5, these three tests come together in such a way that they are not independent at all. They all hang together.” D.A. Carson²

“The glorious reality is that, in the Christian way, truth and ethics are tied together. Creedal confession and transformed living go hand in hand. Any alternative is either superstition or humbug.” D.A. Carson³

¹ in Schreiner & Ware, eds., *Still Sovereign*, 248.

² D.A. Carson, *For the Love of God*, Volume 2, Crossway Books, Wheaton, Illinois, 1999, “May 26”

³ *Ibid.*

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How Can I Be Sure?

“Assurance includes a sense of freedom from the guilt of sin, relief from the fear of judgment, and joy in your relationship with God as your Father.”⁴

“You are not abnormal if you have occasional doubts about whether you are a Christian.”⁵

What Are Some Ways Our Confidence Can Be Eroded?

1. Refusing to deal with known sin (Ro. 6:23)
2. Believing the lies of the devil (John 8:44)
3. Neglecting our faith (Heb. 2:1)
4. Struggling through difficult trials, illnesses or circumstances (James 1:25)

What Are Some Ways Our Confidence Can Be Increased?

“The mark of a child of God is not perfection, but hunger for Christ.” John Piper⁶

1. Ask God to help you (James 1:5).
2. Make sure you clearly understand the gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Make sure you clearly understand the proper response to the gospel: repentance and faith.
4. Confess to God and others (1 John 1:7)
5. Repent of all known sins (2 Cor. 7:10-11)
6. Put on the full armor of God (Eph. 6:10-20)
7. Make your calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:3-11)

“This life, therefore, is not righteousness but growth in righteousness, not health but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it; the process is not yet finished but it is going on. This is not the end but it is the road; all does not yet gleam in glory but all is being purified.” Martin Luther

⁴ Donald Whitney, *How Can I Be Sure I'm a Christian?*, NAVPRESS, Colorado Springs, CO, 1994, p. 12

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 20

⁶ John Piper, *Pierced by the Word*, Multnomah, Sisters, OR, 2003, p. 58