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SOUL FOOD

DECEMBER 6, 2016

**I JOHN 5:1-21 KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS**

The very last sentence in John's first letter is the counsel and command to keep ourselves from idols. While we read much about idols in the Old Testament, here we find idolatry still an issue with human beings. Followers of Jesus can be tempted to find life, security, and satisfaction in things or people other than God. John Calvin famously said that our hearts are idol factories. This is something which we always need to guard against.

What does a sincere pursuit of Christ look like compared against trusting in counterfeit glories? We must believe Jesus is the Messiah of God and we must obey His commandments. Idolatry is a matter of false worship within our hearts and here John tells us that the evidence for love of God is doing His commandments. Since doing God's commandments is an expression of love for God, they are not burdensome. Doing God's commands is a natural response for followers of Jesus. The very Spirit of Christ is alive in us and Jesus said that His meat and drink was to do the will of the Father.

The Apostle Paul teaches in his letter to the Colossians that believers in Jesus are being restored to the image of God that was greatly marred by the sin of our first parents. To obey God and delight in His commandments is that for which we were created in the first place. It is affirming for us to do what God says and abstain from that which God forbids. Living like this is an expression of being the very best we can be. To follow after God is not a burden for believers. For non-believers not only is it an immense burden but it is impossible.

Another encouragement John gives us to follow after Christ is the very testimony of God. God has testified to the reality that Jesus is indeed God the Son. He is very God of very God, begotten not made. As John wrote in His gospel, "in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God." Jesus is eternal and co-existent with the Father. John says that to not believe in Jesus as the Son of God is to treat God like a liar. God testifies to the fact that He gave us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

To have Jesus is to have THE life. John wants us to be assured that through believing in the Son of God we possess eternal life. To obey God's commands is to live the New Life that we have been given in Jesus. God, who cannot lie, testifies to the eternal validity of our eternal life in Jesus. Let this be the anchor of your soul.