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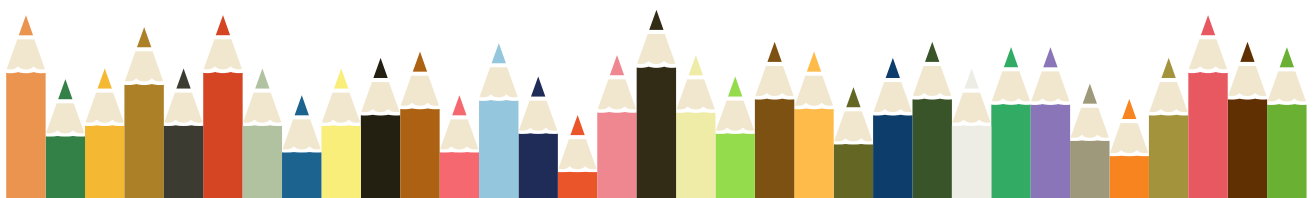
# SOLA FIDE

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## The Evidence of Love

On April 21, 2018 my sister-in-law gave birth to a healthy baby boy, Miles. I remember when I saw him I was blown away by his size. His face, body, nose, and fingers, were all so tiny; it was as if everything were miniaturized. He was so small and helpless, but he was precious and a blessing. Equally a blessing was to see how much his new parents loved him. I saw it in the way they cradled him and looked on him, their actions showed how much they loved him. And in time they would further display that love. Soon they'd be feeding and burping him, changing his diapers, and providing a home for him. And if anyone dared question the validity of their love, they'd need only to look at their actions. The same is true in our love for God. Just as Miles' parents showed visible proof of their love, a Christian's love also has visible proof.

Obedience is the visible proof of love in Christian life. And one of the ways to know if someone loves God is to see what they do with His commands, e.g., evangelism (Matt. 28:19-20), being holy (1 Pet. 1:15), meditating on God's Word (Josh. 1:8), congregational worship (Heb. 10:24-25) and more. Do you casually excuse yourself or is there a strong desire to



be obey them? According to John, this is an indication of whether or not a person truly loves God, and to go even further, it indicates the existence of faith. He writes, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3). Now this verse is part of a larger section that explains how certain characteristics naturally accompany genuine faith, that if you say you have faith, then there is also love for God. And as a result, everyone will know your love for God in and through your willingness to obey His commands. It follows that it’s the willingness to obey which is the visible evidence of your love for God.

Now you might be thinking that this sounds awfully like legalism and the need to prove one’s faith and love. Well, that would be true if you were trying to earn salvation, but this isn’t about earning anything, it’s about the Christian’s expression of love after being redeemed by grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ. That means one of the main ways our love for God is expressed is through obedience. Yet, sadly, many Christians today wrongly reduce love to feelings and expression of love to heartless deeds, so that any emphasis on obeying commandments is quickly marked as legalism. But there could be nothing further from the truth! Throughout John’s Gospel and his letters, he repeatedly stresses the fact that obedience always accompanies love (John 14:15, 21; 1 Jn. 2:3-6; 2:28–3:10; 5:2-3).

Yet there are still some who would object and say, “It’s too hard to keep God’s commandments.” But the issue is love; a love for God will enable the Christian to obey, even when difficult. Think about when you are in a relationship. Do you not find yourself doing anything and everything because you love the person? Of course you do! Is it hard work and do you complain that it is difficult? No! Even though it might require effort, it was something you want to do, and also, it is your love that stirs up the willingness. The same is true in obeying God. Obedience isn’t always easy; as long as we’re in the process of being sanctified, it’s a going to be a continual struggle. But as children of God who love Him there is the willingness and the joy in obeying Him.

Obedience will require much, but we must remember that love will cause us to serve and please the other. What commands have you been neglecting and will you obey them today because you love God?

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