

Finding *Renewal* in the Love of God

Unit 4: Discovering Renewal by Committing to Obedience

Prayer Prompts, Week 1

Florence Littauer's book *Personality Plus* became the rage in many women's ministry groups in the 80s. This small volume outlined the strengths and weaknesses of four personality types which dated back to the Greek philosopher Hippocrates. Florence directed seminars to train Christian leaders and speakers, and I was blessed to study with her twice during those years. I have never forgotten one tenet of her practical lessons: honesty. "If you are going to be a believable speaker or teacher," Florence would say, "you are going to have to teach from the strength of your own personality." If you attempt to teach like someone else, you will come across as fake, and no one will care a thing about what you have to say.

John's call to authenticity in 1 John is not so different. Don't *claim* to be something you are not; don't *say* that you possess a relationship with God, then fail to live up to that testimony. *Whoever claims to remain in him must act as he acted.*

Today we want to center our prayers in John's call to obedience. We desire to *live lives* that *confess* Jesus as Lord—not with words, merely making *claims* to a fellowship with Christ, but truly *living* as He did on this earth, in action and deed. Only in such honest obedience will we truly live up to the calling we have received as children of God. Only then will we face eternity without fear.

Your prayer leader may lead, using the prompts below, or she may ask another in the group to lead.

Prayer leader: Father, we come to you this morning, recognizing your holiness.

*Others may praise God at this time for his holiness. Pray as you are prompted. Not everyone needs to pray aloud; in fact, times of silence should be honored. You need not pray in order. Seek to pray an **honest** prayer before Him; do not force words, but offer only the true outpouring of your heart. Keep your insertions to one or two sentences. Leave room for the others in your group to join in.*

Prayer leader: Father—the very word "**father**"—how privileged we are to be your children. Thank you, Father, for such a lavish gift.

*Others will thank God for the gift of not only being **called** children of God, but of the truth that we actually **are** children of God!*

Prayer leader: Father, we confess to you that we do not always represent the family well.

The group will confess sin that is among us. These need not be confessions of personal sin; we are all guilty of so many similar sins. There is no reason that we cannot confess

among us the sins of faithlessness—not believing in God’s saving grace, His rescuing arm, His goodness and love for us, His continual forgiveness. We can confess our loose tongues, our negative attitudes, our failure to live as He did in this world, the fact that we continually underestimate Him, overestimate ourselves, and attempt to estimate one another. Etc.

Prayer leader: Father, we confess to you the private sin of our lives, and we thank you for your forgiveness.

Leave 2-3 minutes of silent prayer during this time.

Prayer leader: Father, we confess to you that we desire to be your children in every sense of the word. We confess that though we do not yet love you as we should, though we are not as obedient as we desire to be, our hearts are set upon you, and we thank you for loving us. Teach us to be more like you and transform us into the image of your Son.