
OBEEDIENCE - DISOBEEDIENCE: YOU CHOOSE

June 2009 Year of Our Lord.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; (John 10:27 NASB)

"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." (John 14:21 NASB)

"He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. (John 14:24 NASB)

How about a short test to get us started today!

1- Through Adam's disobedience we were all made sinners.

True – Romans 5:19 - *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

(Romans 5:19 KJV)

2- Christians are to obey the Word of God.

True – Matthew 28:20 - *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:20 KJV)*

3- Peter said sometimes it is better to obey the laws of the land instead of God.

False – Acts 5:29 - *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29 KJV)*

Definitions



I guess a good place to start off today would be the definitions of obey and obedience, since that will be our subject for the day. We have to know what they mean in order to apply them to our spiritual life.

According to the dictionary to Obey is – “To carry out or fulfill the command, order, or instruction of.” Or “To comply with or be submissive to authority.”

Whereas the word Obedience is– The act of obeying. It's the action put into the definition of obey. To be obedient we must put into action the commands, statutes and precepts of God. We must do something, we must begin.

When we look at the definitions of disobey or disobedience it is the “Refusal to Obey.”

~**Without the Father!**~

I heard the story once about a professor who was leading a seminar on Christian counseling. In a room full of Christians in the pastoral care field, he wrote this on a flipchart: “I can’t do anything by myself. I can only do what my dad tells me to do.” He then asked the folks in the room to analyze the man who said this.

The professor got the expected responses: “This person obviously has no willpower.” “He needs to grow a spine and get a life.” “I bet he still lives at home.” “He needs to get out from under his dad’s shadow and become his own person.” Then the professor revealed the identity of the man: It was Jesus Christ who said this as recorded in John 5:19: *Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.* (John 5:19 NASB)



This short illustration is typical to where we are in society and the culture today. We don’t want anyone to tell us what to do. I see this type of rebellion, if you want to call it that, from the smallest child to even us older folks. It doesn’t matter the age. We like and want to be independent; we want to make our own choices without God’s guidance. We all want to be what we refer today as being a “Self-made Man or Woman.”

Making daily choices is what it is all about, but it’s up to us to make the correct choices, which are to obey God’s leadership and keep His Word in our heart.

There is nothing wrong with being independent; this country was founded on independence. But the difference is that this country’s founders

knew that there was an Almighty God guiding them in their decisions in birthing this great nation. There is not any other way that the USA could have been born without the purpose and provident of the guidance of the hand of God. There were too many miracles for it just to be happenstance.

Making our own choices is nothing new. It all started back in Genesis, when Adam and Eve made their choice and ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I guess their attitude to God was; “No one is going to tell me what to do.” It was a sign of rebellion toward our Creator and Savior. And that sinful nature carries over to us today, ever since that first sin.

~The Apostle Paul and his Struggle~

Even the apostle Paul had a problem with his carnal nature as he records in the book of Romans Chapter 7. Let us look at Romans 7:14-25.

Rom 7:14-25 NASB

(14) For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.

(15) For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.

(16) But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good.



(17) So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

(18) For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

(19) For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.

(20) But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

(21) I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.

(22) For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,

(23) but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

(24) Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

(25) Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

Folks, it's not easy to be a Christian. But Christ never said it would be. Look at Paul in this set of verses above, an apostle, a person that personally talked to the Lord, still he had a conflict of these two natures; spirit and flesh.

Paul had to fight the choice; does he obey the spirit or does he obey the flesh and be disobedient to his Lord. Even a believer has the seed of rebellion in their heart. But we all know that Paul choose obedience to God and not disobedience. I have a feeling that he's not the only one that fights daily this flesh, spirit conflict. How about you? How about me? I know I do!

Paul goes on to say in I Corinthians;
But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1 Corinthians 2:14 NASB)

~Freedom~



We often think that freedom means doing whatever we want, but true freedom comes from only one place: "Obeying the Lord." James says; *But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. (James 1:25 NASB)*

As one writer wrote: "We think we can be independent from God, and that this independence brings us freedom. Actually, it's obedience to God that brings freedom, because it frees us from trying to figure it all out

ourselves.” Just remember, God wrote the rule book. What is so good about God’s test is that it is an open book test. Any time you need to know the



answer to a question, just look in the Scriptures, the answer is always there. The closer you walk with the Lord the quicker and easier the answers will come.

All we have to do is follow the Good Book and life will be more spiritually satisfying. I didn’t say easy!

God was the architect and creator of this earth. He created you, me and everything in the universal, both seen and unseen by us. If we want eternal life we must read the scriptures, as it says in I John 2:17; *The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.* (1 John 2:17 NASB)

The sad fact is that we live in a world today that is less interested in obeying and learning God’s commands, statutes and precepts than it is satisfying the lusts of the flesh. They want to go their own way, knowing that it will end in destruction and death. If we are not obeying God, then we are to change our lifestyle and put God in control and in the perfect will for our life.

God has created us as He did Adam and Eve; as free moral agents to the Gospel. That means we can take it or leave it, as the saying goes. We have the choice to obey and follow God or to discard Him and go with the world. God doesn’t force His free-will on any of us. If He did, we would be like little robots, just following our programmed lifestyle if we didn’t have this free-will. Thank God we have a choice and hopefully that choice will be to follow our

Low Risk Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He is the proven way. Just
High Reward compare Jesus and the world and see who comes out ahead.
Check out the pros and cons. See for yourself, which is the better deal, as we would say today?

~Issue of Obedience~

You may not be surprised that probably the most relevant issue that faces Christians today is the issue of obedience, especially in these last days. (I believe). You can say anything you want to, but the issue between God and man is obedience or disobedience. When I look around at the world, I see very few Christians (used loosely) that have enough love for God to keep His commandments, statutes and precepts. I don't want to judge anyone, it's not my place. But you can see the "no fear" of God in people today, as it has been prophesized in the last days.

Are we being obedient to God, are we glorifying His Name with our action of obedience, are we doing what it tells us in Philippians 4:8? *Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.* (Philippians 4:8 NASB) Are we running our choices through God's filter?

Obedience seems to be a bad thing in today's society. I guess that's the reason that wedding vows no longer ask for the couple to love, honor and OBEY each other. We are born with this sinful nature. God has provided us with a plan of salvation, where we can come to the Lord and repent and become a new person and start all over again with the past behind us and God in front of us with that Good News Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Do you want the Spirit of God? Do you want to pay the price for the Spirit of God? Then obey the statutes and ordinances of God as it says in Ezekiel; *"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.* (Ez1 36:27 NASB)

~Two Parties~

If you think about it, it becomes obvious; obedience requires two parties; the one obeying and the obeyed. The Born Again Christian will always obey God. Only Christians can obey God rightly. You cannot obey God

completely unless you are filled with His Spirit and then you will walk in the spirit of obedience to God's commandments. "We must submit to God." Someone who is saved by grace through living faith in Jesus Christ will certainly obey God. In fact, disobedience points to the absence of true and saving faith. So although obedience is not a requirement for salvation, it is a necessary fruit of salvation.

~Love of God~

A Christian is not driven by a "desire" to keep the commandments of God. A Christian is driven by a love for God. They will want to keep His commandments and to do the will he has planned for their life. The book of I John tells us about keeping the commandments of God. Let us look in 1 John 5:3; *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. (1 John 5:3 NASB)* It is true that obedience to God is love.

We hear so much now-a-days about how God loves us. Everywhere we go we hear the words "God loves us." And He does, He loved us so much that he died on the tree for us in order to save us from ourselves and save us into eternal life. But the real question today is, "How much do we, you and I, love God? Do we love Him enough to obey His commandments and to seek and do His will for our life? That is the question in today's society. We know that God is love; *The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

(1 John 4:8 NASB) God is love, so He never changes. The writer of Hebrews tells us; *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

(Heb 13:8 NASB) "God was love" in the beginning and "God is love today."

Is It Legalism or Love?

Ancil Jenkins shares this illustration:

"Fasten your seat belt, 'I said to my wife, Elaine, the other day.' It is the law, you know.' As she fastened her seat belt, I thought, 'Dummy, that is not the reason you want her buckled up. You want her protected from the harm of

any accident you might drive her into. 'How shallow would be my concern if I was more in fear of paying a fine than in her being seriously hurt!

"This can describe our approach to our obedience to God! Almost all we do is from mixed motives. Yet, which motive is overriding? Do we obey God because we fear God's wrath and judgment? Do we feel He will break our leg or burn down our house if we disobey? Do we feel that Christianity is just a set of rules to be obeyed and our satisfaction comes from doing a good job of keeping rules?

"The result of such an attitude will only breed fear and guilt. Fear comes from any failure to obey, and there will be such failure. Guilt comes from many sources, such as finding there was a law you had been failing to obey. Any failure at perfect obedience can lead to regarding some laws as more important than others. All this can lead to a disregard of others who do not keep laws as well as we do. It can lead us to giving more attention to the minute details and neglecting the major virtues God desires us to have.

[\(Matthew 23:23\)](#). *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.* (Matthew 23:23 NASB)

[\(Matthew 23:24\)](#). *"You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!"* (Matthew 23:24 NASB) We've become ridiculous gnat strainers and camel swallowers.

We should obey God because we love Him. We obey because He has done so much for us and we have done so little for Him. We obey because love is never content to accept, but must always give. Jesus said, *'If you love Me, you will do what I command'* [\(John 14:15\)](#). We then come to realize that our disobedience not only breaks the laws of God, it also breaks the heart of God. *How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness and grieved Him in*

the desert! ([Psalm 78:40](#)). "Such obedience is far fuller, richer, and freer than can ever come from a legal motivation.

Imagine a woman who is a nurse and a mother. She may work at a hospital all day caring for the sick. When she has worked eight hours, she goes home. Upon arriving at home, she finds her child is seriously ill. She will then give her child the same care she gives the hospital patients.

However, when she has cared for her child for eight hours, she will not quit. She gives care no one can buy. The difference is the motivation. Let me

LOVE

suggest to you that the motivation is love. You may ask yourself; "What is your major motivation that you have that you obey the Word of God? Seek to know God better, and you will find yourself obeying out of love. It will become 'richer, fuller, deeper' and will become 'sweeter as the days, weeks, months and years go by.'"

Read the obedience clauses in Deuteronomy 6:1-3;

"Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. "O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. (Deuteronomy 6:1-3 NASB)

Faith and Obedience

A person cannot obey God if they have not repented of their sins. See, we are born into a sinful nature when we came into this world. If you believe this is not true; just look at a small child? They will be selfless and self centered until they are taught otherwise. It is not the other way around; we don't have to teach them bad things to do. But, it is also the same for us senior

generation, we are still rebelling against God unless we have had our heart changed and repented to our Almighty Savior God.

We are saved by faith alone. What does faith alone mean; it means that “we cannot save ourselves.” Look at Romans 6:23; *“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

(Romans 6:23 NASB) A carnal heart (an unsaved person) cannot obey God.

By faith we are to come to Christ, which is the first step and then obedience is the test to see if a person has really received Christ as their Savior. Jesus put it in pretty simple terms; *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”*

(John 14:15 NASB) Don’t you just love the simplicity of Jesus, even a small child could understand His message. And then Jesus said, *“So then, you will know them by their fruits.”* (Matthew 7:20 NASB)

True Obedience

What is true obedience? Is there a difference between obedience and true obedience? The word “obedience” is used very loosely today. So true obedience is obedience as seen by God. We as humans, many times look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart and He knows the heart. This is the reason we cannot judge anyone because we do not know the heart, only God knows. Of course I’m not referring to a “righteous” judgment that is obviously sin. We just can’t judge our brothers and sisters in Christ.

True obedience comes from the heart and when true obedience is involved, you will delight to do the will of God. It will not become a burden to you. You will have a heart that will love to obey His commandments.

True obedience is the objective test as to whether a person has really received salvation. Jesus said; *“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit.”*

(Matthew 12:33 NASB) Yes, we are all known by the fruit we bear.

Some may think obedience has been done away with in the New Testament, as opposed to the Old Testament. Let us compare the two. In the

Old Testament Moses said, "Do not take off with another man's wife." *'You shall not commit adultery. (Deu 5:18 NASB)* Jesus said in the New Testament, "Don't even think about it." *"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28 NASB)*

Obedience must be seen from God's point of view. In the book of James, James tells us, *Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin. (James 4:17 NASB)* In other words, a person will be held accountable for what they know. A person who knows what to do and does not do it is guilty of sin and not obeying God. If you know and only do say 50% of what you should be obedient about, you are simply disobedient.

I love all of you, but the simple truth is that when God returns for judgment we are either guilty or without blame. There is no in-between; you are not 50/50 or 90/10, you are either going to heaven or hell. I guess you would say that here on earth is the in-between. We are now making our choices and we will be judged on those choices at the end of this sinful, lustful world. We should be continuously learning about our Savior, and learning and growing in the truth. John tells us that you will know the truth and the truth will set you free. See John 8:32; *and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."* (John 8:32 NASB)

~Obedience to God~

Obedience to God is important, well on second thought, I would say it is mandatory, in order for your Christian life to grow. We can maintain obedience to God by pondering on or meditating on, the Words of Jesus. The book of John is underscored time and time again that we should be obedient to God. The greatest commandment is to love God by keeping His

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commandments. When Jesus was asked what is the great commandment, he replied in Matthew 22:36-40. Look at the words;

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." "This is the great and foremost commandment. "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:36-40 NASB)

Don't pray to obey the rules, pray to obey Jesus and to do His will because you love Him. There is a saying that, "Some people are willing to do anything for the Lord, except for what He asks them to do."

~To Ponder~

I'll leave you with a couple of verses to ponder on this week. Remember it is God's Book, not mine. I'm only the messenger today.

We will first read from Isaiah.

"If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land;
(Isaiah 1:19 NASB)

And now for the reading of I Samuel 15:22.

Samuel said, "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. (1 Samuel 15:22 NASB)

Amen, in the Name of Jesus



I have gotten information for this article from a number of different sources; From God, internet, Bibles, dictionaries, and study materials from several different authors, etc. I do not take full credit for these writings since there are many. I did not in some cases keep up with this information in order to give proper credit. My comments, writings and rewriting of the sources are in this article. I therefore cannot take full credit for this writing. The full credit would have to go to Jesus Christ, the creator of all things.

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Dewey E. (Obed) Fox, Bond Servant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
