

Obedience Part One

It is fair to say most of us probably like to do things the way we want to. However, in our lives as a citizen of a country we understand that there is an earthly higher authority, the law of the land. We might not like it, but we know we must either obey the law of the land or suffer the consequence, it is our choice. Spiritually the concept of obedience is similar. We have a choice to obey God or not. Obedience to God will be rewarded eternally, not obeying God will be punished eternally. The choice is ours to make, but have we spent much time realizing how important it is to obey God? Hopefully this lesson will explore that topic. Because there is so much information to cover on this topic it will be broken down into two parts.

Necessity of obedience

1 Samuel 15:19-22 “Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD? And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal. And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” This is an exchange between Samuel and King Saul. Some very important points are made here. King Saul had done some of what God had asked, but not all. Then King Saul tried to blame other people for his disobedience to God. God expects His will to be followed completely. Partially obeying God is disobeying God. There is no part way, there is no half and half, one is either fully obedient to God, or they are disobedient to Him. Also, God will not accept blaming others for our poor choices. Our choices are our responsibility, not anyone else’s.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” If only we would all comply with that one simple verse. If we would all fear God and keep His commandments, we would all get to go to Heaven. God expects obedience, and will save all that do His will. God will save no one that does not do His will. Fearing God is both to recognize His awesome power, but also respecting Him for both who He is, and all that He has done for us. After all, without God none of us would even exist.

Matthew 7:21-23 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” One can say they believe in God and profess to be a Christian, but that is not enough, one must actually obey God’s will or they are lost. If I say I am a believer in God but do not obey Him, do I really believe? If I say I am a Christian but do not follow the teachings of Jesus am I really a Christian? Obedience to God is a requirement for salvation.

John 14:15 “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” In just a few simple words Jesus teaches us that loving Him involves more than lip service, it involves actually keeping His commandments. Also, Jesus’s words teach us that if we don’t keep His commandments, we do not truly love Him.

John 15:14 “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” Again, how simply Jesus teaches us we are His friends, if we obey Him. We are not His friends, if we do not obey Him.

Acts 5:29 “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.” The path to salvation is through obedience to God, and God alone. It makes no difference what I think, what you think, or what any other person thinks, only through obedience to God can one obtain eternal salvation.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” Eternal destruction is waiting for everyone that is not obedient to God. We have the free will to choose God, or not choose God. However, only God’s way leads to Heaven, all other paths lead to Hell.

Hebrews 5:8-9 “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” Christ will save only those that are obedient to Him, and no others. Obedience is absolutely necessary for salvation.

No substitute for obedience

Matthew 15:1-6 “Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.” Traditions or doctrines of anyone other than God cannot be substituted in place of obedience to God. Any teaching or doctrine contrary to God’s New Testament Law must be placed aside in order to be pleasing to God. God’s will must come first.

Matthew 15:9 “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” It is very important that we study the Bible to know if we are following God’s will or not. We can worship God in vain, and thus be displeasing to God. If we do not worship God in the manner in which He has put forth in the New Testament, then it is vain worship, and God will not accept it. Obedience to God includes worshiping Him in the way He has prescribed.

Matthew 21:28-32 “But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he

repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.” God expects us to do what is asked of us in the New Testament. Saying we follow God, but not doing His will, is not obedience.

Matthew 25:14-30 “For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Regardless of who we are God expects us do His will. Excuses for not being disobedient, will not be accepted by God. The one talent man was not condemned because he was less able than the other two men. He was condemned because He did not obey. God will condemn us if we do not obey Him.

Luke 6:46 “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” When we disobey God, we show that we do not respect or love Him enough to keep His commandments written in the New Testament. Saying one believes in God is not enough. One must actually do God's will to be obedient to Him.

John 5:39-40 “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” We must come to God

through obedience to His Word, if we want to go to Heaven, otherwise we will be lost. That is why God gave us the Bible so that we can know and obey His will.

James 2:14-26 “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” Faith in God is very important, we must have it. However, faith alone is empty and displeasing to God. One can only be obedient to God when their faith is followed by obedience. If one will not obey God by doing His will, as written in the Bible, they will be lost.

Eternal salvation is only for the obedient

Matthew 7:21-23 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Only by doing God’s will can one enter into Heaven. Thus, only those who are obedient to the New Testament Word of God will be in Heaven. Everyone that is disobedient to God, even if they believe in Jesus will not be in Heaven.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” God wants us all to be saved. Jesus suffered and died for us, so that we can be saved. True belief is followed by obedience. How can one say they believe in Christ, but do not obey His Word? Disobedience will cause anyone to be lost that does not change their ways. God’s love of us will save us, if we are obedient to Him. God will not force you to choose obedience, you must do that for yourself. Faith and obedience are necessary for salvation.

Acts 10:34-35 “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” God does not care what gender, race, or nationality you are. Salvation is available for everyone that is obedient to Him and no one that is not.

James 1:22-25 “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural

face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

There is simply no point in being someone that hears the Word, and believes the Word, but does not obey the Word. We must absolutely be believers in God, but we must also be obedient to God. Belief alone will not save us.

James 4:17 “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” It is a sin to not obey God. Sins must be repented of to be forgiven. One cannot be saved unless faith becomes obedience.

Due to the length of information on this topic the lesson Obedience Part One will conclude at this point. The next lesson Obedience Part Two will continue and conclude this lesson topic.