



## Obedience

To many people mostly in the grace circle, obedience sounds like a curse word. Many believe that the word obedience is a bad word and it is seen as legalism and being legalistic if you speak about obedience. Nothing can be further from the truth. I want to make this clear that although I'm a big proponent for obeying the Lord, **our obedience does not earn us right standing nor righteousness with God.** It's not our good deeds and obedience that causes God to bless us but our faith in the Lord Jesus and His finished work on the cross. Nonetheless, there is a place for obedience. We should be very cautious not to live a disobedient life.

God loves us, but does not love or approve everything we do. Study the Word. Paul continually instructed believers against living ungodly. It is detrimental to us. God loves us and wants us to experience victory He has for us but that does not come through living contrary to His Word.

God blesses and delights in us but He does not bless nor delight in anything or everything we do that is against His will.

God is for us (Romans 8:31) but is not for everything we do. God died for all our sin but does not delight in it. Let them that call on the name of the Lord depart from iniquity (2 Timothy 2:19).

What is obedience and why is there a need for obedience?

Webster Defines Obedience as "the performance of what is required or enjoined by authority, or the abstaining from what is prohibited, in compliance with the command or prohibition."

The Greek word used for obedience most of the times this word is used is translated to mean "attentive hearkening, that is, (by implication) compliance or submission:" (Strong's Concordance)

I believe there are two types of obedience and their difference can be seen from their source.

- Under the OT we see the obedience of self and will power.
- Under the NT we see the obedience of faith

Obedience under the New Covenant is believing the Gospel. Trusting and believing in Jesus is the obedience of faith. This obedience then leads to the obedience of doing. We need to obey in believing to obey in doing.

A. Obedience in believing or the obedience to the faith.

- a) John 6:28-29 “Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”
  - i) This is the obedience we go through to believe on the Lord Jesus. When we choose to believe the Lord Jesus Christ, we have entered into the obedience of the faith in the Lord. This is not an action but an obedience to the faith or believing (Romans 10:9-10).
- b) Romans 1:5 “By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:” (Emphasis mine)
- c) Romans 16:26 “But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:”
- d) Hebrews 3:18-19 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.
  - i) Obeyed not = Unbelief
- e) Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.
  - i) Holy Ghost is given to them that obey Him. How? This is believing. It’s given to the believers.
- f) Galatians 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?
  - i) Not obeying the truth = not believing.
- g) 2 Thessalonians 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- h) Hebrews 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;
- i) We know salvation does not come by works and personal effort but by believing on the Lord Jesus. Jesus is the author of salvation to all them that obey Him by believing on Him.
  - ii) Those who have not believed on Jesus as their personal Lord and savior have not yet obeyed the Lord. They are in disobedience.
- i) 1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?
- i) By one man's obedience.
- j) 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.
- i) God moves in our lives through the obedience of Jesus.

## B. Obedience in doing

Our obedience in believing is critical to our obedience in doing. Right believing leads to right doing. Doing before believing is a disaster waiting to happen.

### a) Obedience is better than Sacrifice

- i) 1 Samuel 15:22 "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."
- We must learn to obey the voice of God and the Word of God. It's a lot better to obey the Lord and fail than succeeding and attaining your goals without obeying the Lord. Anyone who has not obeyed the Lord has failed even though they may have some results to show. The end doesn't justify the means, but the means justify the end. Some people will just go against the instruction of the Lord thinking, I will offer such and such to the Lord or I will repent after I mess up. News flash: We should never forget that obedience is much more important to the Lord than repentance and sacrifice once we have sinned.

b) Willing and obedient

i) Isaiah 1:19-20 "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

- If we are disobedient, we will not walk in the full manifestation of the blessing of God. God will not punish us for disobedience as He did in the Old Covenant, however, we will miss out on the reward that is released by our acts of obedience.
- We will go forward and be used of God only to the degree we are obedient to the Lord. Although our obedience doesn't cause God to love us more or less, to the largest extent, it determines how far we will go and be used by God.
- One of the reasons we may not be experiencing an increase and breakthrough is because we have refused to obey the Lord. Obedience doesn't cause God to bless us because He has already done that even before we obeyed, but what it doesn't is that it releases or causes those blessings to flow and manifest in our lives.

c) Doer and continue therein

i) James 1:22-25 "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. [23] 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: [24] For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. [25] 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."

- Some of the key determinations of whether we are convert believers or disciples lies in whether we are doers of the Word, not on how much we know and the head knowledge we possess.
- These verses further emphasize the need to not just look into the Word but continue in it and be doers of what we learn.

d) Faith without works is dead.

i) James 2: 16-18 "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.”

- The “works” in these verses is a reference to our obedience. Works of faith are the works of obedience to the Lord. After our obedience in believing, we must follow through with our obedience in doing. Our actions are very important because that is what people see before they hear what we are saying.

e) Obedience of One

i) 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.”

- What would have happened if Jesus had disobeyed and refused to go to the cross? We would be forever lost. Jesus’ obedience to the Father is the reason we are saved and free. Our actions of obedience are very critical. They could be the door to another man’s breakthrough and miracle.

f) We are servants of who we obey

i) Romans 6:16 “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”

- Our obedience either yields us to the Lord or Satan. Whenever we obey the Lord, we release the power of God to flow in our lives and we enjoy life and peace but when we do not, we release Satan to come into our lives to steal, kill and destroy. Our obedience either releases God or Satan. There is no middle ground. We are servants of whoever we obey—God or Satan.

g) Obedience is come abroad

i) Romans 16:19 “For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.”

- Our obedience goes beyond us. It will go far than we can imagine. We should never shy away from obeying the Lord. It will either positively

or negatively affect people. The obedience of these people Apostle Paul was speaking about in this verse had crossed cities and borders.

h) Confidence in our obedience

i) Philemon 1:21 "Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say."

- Paul had tremendous confidence in the obedience of Philemon. Do others have confidence in your obedience? How about God? Our desire should be to have a reputation like that of Philemon. This man was obedient, and it was commendable.

i) Obedience can be learned

i) Hebrews 5:8 "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;"

- School of hard knocks or the Word of God, you choose. How do you want to learn? This verse makes it clear that we can learn obedience through the things we suffer but this is not God's way of teaching us but another way we can learn if we do not listen to the Lord.

A lack of obedience in believing and doing is a flaw in one's character.