

Obedience

by Arlo Moehlenpah

To obey is to do that which you are commanded. We are not only to fear and love the Lord but also to keep His commandments.¹ Jesus said if people love Him they will keep His word² and those who do are His friends.³ We cannot even say we know Him if we do not obey Him.⁴ Solomon wrote that the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep his commandments.⁵ To obey is better than performing religious rituals.⁶ Children are to obey parents for this is right⁷ and pleasing to the Lord.⁸ Wives are to obey their husbands,⁹ and we are to obey those who have rule over us.¹⁰ However, if, we have to choose between the commands of God and the commands of men we need to obey God rather than man.¹¹ When commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus, Peter had a higher command from the Lord to preach to all nations.¹² The three Hebrew children refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's image¹³ because they had a higher command not to worship idols. Daniel refused to cease praying to God even though there was a command given to not to pray to any one else but king Darius.¹⁴

Obedience brings blessings but disobedience brings curses. Jesus promised blessings on those who kept the word of God.¹⁵ God promised the Israelites blessings if they obeyed His commandments and curses if they did not obey.¹⁶ Some of the blessings included health,¹⁷ rain, fruit, peace, children, God's presence,¹⁸ long life,¹⁹ and good understanding.²⁰ Some curses God said he would send to the Israelites if they did not obey were pestilence, drought, disease, blindness, captivity, famine, plagues and fear.²¹

There are many examples of obedience and disobedience in the Bible. The greatest example of obedience was when Jesus died on the cross²² and by His obedience many will be made righteous.²³ Noah was an example of obedience. God told him to make an ark when it had never rained before and he obeyed and saved his family.²⁴ At the command of Jesus, Simon let down his net and caught many fish.²⁵ The first example of disobedience was when Adam and Eve took of the forbidden fruit and were driven out of the garden.²⁶ Other examples of disobedience are Lot's wife who looked back and became a pillar of salt,²⁷ Moses who smote the rock when he was told to speak to it and was not allowed to enter the promised land,²⁸ and Saul who lost his kingdom, his life, and his sons lives when he did not utterly destroy the Amalekites.²⁹ All these examples and many more show if you obey you will be blessed but if you disobey you will be punished. With flaming fire God will take vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.³⁰

We need to be doers of the word of the Lord and not just readers or hearers. Jesus likened a person who heard the word and obeyed to a man who built a house on a rock and that house withstood the storms. On the other hand, He likened a person who heard and did not obey to a man whose house built on sand. did not survive the storms.³¹ James likened a man who heard the word but did not do it to a man who looks in a mirror but failed to correct the problems he saw.³² We should be like Ezra who not only sought the law of the Lord but did it before he taught others.³³

¹ Deuteronomy 10:12-13 ...what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the commandments of the LORD...NKJV

² John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; NKJV

³ John 15:14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. NKJV

⁴ 1 John 2:3-4 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. NKJV

⁵ Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, NKJV

⁶ 1 Samuel 15:22 Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice NKJV

⁷ Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. NKJV

⁸ Colossians 3:20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. NKJV

⁹ Titus 2:4-5 admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. NKJV

¹⁰ Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. NKJV

¹¹ Acts 5:29 "We ought to obey God rather than men. NKJV

¹² Luke 24:47 ... repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. NKJV

¹³ Daniel 3

¹⁴ Daniel 6

¹⁵ Luke 11:28 blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it! NKJV

¹⁶ Deuteronomy 11:26-28 "Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God,...NKJV

¹⁷ Exodus 15:26 "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you." NKJV

¹⁸ (Lev. 26:3-13)

¹⁹ Proverbs 3:1-2 My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. NKJV

²⁰ Psalms 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments. NKJV

²¹ Deuteronomy 28:15-68

²² Philippians 2:8-9 He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross NKJV

²³ Romans 5:18-20

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

NKJV

²⁴ Genesis 6 & 7

²⁵ Luke 5:5-6 But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. NKJV

²⁶ Genesis 3

²⁷ Genesis 19:26 But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. NKJV

²⁸ Numbers 20:11-12 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." NKJV

²⁹ 1 Samuel 28:18-19 Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. NKJV

³⁰ 2 Thessalonians 1:8 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. NKJV

³¹ Luke 6:46-49 "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great." NKJV

³² James 1:22-26 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. NKJV

³³ Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel. NKJV