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# The Heart of True Obedience

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

# The Heart of True Obedience

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*“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” —John 14:15*

Obedience stands as visible evidence of love for God. Holiness consists not in rigid rule-keeping, but in living in ways that honor and reflect His holy character. Through grace, one learns to say “no” to sin and “yes” to righteousness, allowing this pursuit to shape thoughts, words, relationships, and daily habits.

## **Obedience Within Relationship**

Some may wonder how obedience fits into a life defined by a relationship with Jesus rather than a list of rules. Human relationships offer helpful parallels yet fall short in fully capturing the bond with God. Children consider parental expectations, spouses weigh one another’s desires, and employees align with their employer’s standards. In each case, the relationship influences behavior.

The relationship with God surpasses every earthly example. Growing in intimacy with Him includes learning what matters to Him through His revealed will. Remarkably, the way He calls His people to live opens the path to a purpose-filled existence marked by peace, joy, fulfillment, and deeper fellowship with Him.

Motivations for obedience vary. Some obey in hopes of securing blessings, viewing God as a generous Father who rewards faithfulness. Others follow out of duty, rightly acknowledging Him as sovereign Ruler. Still others obey to avoid punishment, recognizing God as the righteous Judge whose justice addresses sin. Each perspective holds a partial truth.

Yet the purest motivation flows from love. Jesus declared, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” Obedience offered apart from love remains imperfect until it becomes a response to God’s never-stopping, never-giving-up, unbreaking, always-and-forever love. When rooted in the security of being loved, obedience fully pleases the One who first loved us.

## **The Gift and Weight of Choice**

God grants the profound freedom to choose. This self-determination gives obedience genuine value, yet it also carries consequences. The Lord knew before creation the human rebellion that would arise, the suffering it would bring us, and the sacrifice required to redeem us. Still, He extended this freedom to humanity, confident that the outcome would justify the cost.

Decisions, even seemingly small ones, shape the direction of life. Thoughts influence words, and words in turn affect actions. As Scripture warns:

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life” (Galatians 6:7-8).

Ignorance sometimes leads to poor choices. At other times, one clearly understands the right path and yet turns aside. In every instance, God’s patience allows room for growth. He desires not mere knowledge but wisdom rightly applied—a heart that discerns and delights in His will (Romans 12:2).

The apostle Paul prayed earnestly for the early believers:

“We have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way” (Colossians 1:9-10).

This prayer remains relevant today, calling each of us to make choices that bear fruit, deepen our knowledge of God, and honor the Lord in all respects.

## **Choosing Wisely Each Day**

The decisions made today form the building blocks of tomorrow. God offers freedom to choose, and yet He does not remove the natural consequences of those choices. A wise heart moves beyond knowledge to faithful application, ensuring life aligns with what pleases Him.

Obedience, therefore, is not burdensome but liberating. It flows from love, respects God’s authority, and trusts His perfect wisdom. As we consistently choose the way of the Spirit over the flesh, the harvest is the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23),

growing intimacy with our Heavenly Father, and the multiplied fruitfulness in our service to our King Jesus. Obedience out of love not only pleases God but also witnesses His holy character to a watching world.

Still, the decision is ours.

'May the pursuit of faithful obedience mark every area of life. In choosing to honor God's commandments out of genuine love, one discovers the fullness of a walk that pleases Him and reflects His character to a watching world. The path lies open before each one; the invitation is to walk in it with a willing and steadfast heart.

Still, the decision is yours.

*"[C]hoose this day whom you will serve...But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:17)*