

Obedience and the Cross

Intro: Western society is increasingly plagued by rebellion toward authority. Parents, teachers, policemen have little respect. The law is an obstacle to personal freedom.

1. Jesus: Obedient unto the Cross

A. Jesus repeatedly declared His submission to the Father:

1. Came to do the Father's will – Jn 5:30; 6:38.
2. Came to teach the Father's words – Jn 8:26-28.
3. In Gethsemane Jesus asked 3 times for God to suspend will – Mt 26:39, 42, 44.

B. Phil 2:5-8 – The obedience of Jesus included humility.

1. Though He was a Son, He did not demand privilege but took the form of a servant.
2. As a servant, His obedience knew no limits. He did not obey with conditions or stipulations but “became obedient to the point of death.”

C. Heb 5:7-8 – The obedience of Jesus included suffering.

1. In what sense did Jesus *learn* obedience?
2. Before Jesus was flesh (v 7a), He was equal in rank with the Father. But when He became a man, He had to fully partake of man's nature, including obedience.

2. Our Obedience to God's Will

A. Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him – Heb 5:9. Need to obey presupposes need to *know* God's will.

B. Obedience is not challenged until God's command conflicts with our self-interests.
Hindrances to our obedience:

1. Denial of consequences – Gn 3:4. Fail to see sin in its true light.
2. Rationalization – also played a part in the very first sin (Gn 3:6). We are masters at reasoning around the law's application to ourselves.
3. Peer influence - Adam followed Eve's example – Gn 3:6b. We cannot just “go along with the crowd” or trust the preacher.

4. Fear of man's reaction – Jn 9:22; Mt 10:27-31.
5. Feeling that God asks too much, as in the case of divorce, remarriage – Mt 19:9-10.
6. Emotion that sets aside reason – When we find ourselves saying, “I just don't believe God would ...,” then we must be very careful. We cannot pit our sense of propriety against God's will, for it often clashes with our judgment.
7. Greater respect for religious tradition than what the Bible plainly says.

C. Jesus could have resorted to any one of these avenues to avoid the cross.

3. True Basis for Our Obedience

- A. The Bible does not encourage a mindless, slavish conformity but action born of love and honor for God – 1 Cor 13:1-3.
- B. But the basis of this love for God is the cross, that “*He loved us and sent His Son ...*” – 1 Jn 4:9-10.
- C. For those who love God, His commandments are not burdensome – 1 Jn 5:2-3. The cross teaches gratitude that leads to joyful obedience.

Conclusion

1. Jesus' goal in life had been to finish what God had given Him to do – Jn 4:34.
2. The last utterance of Jesus from the cross – “It is finished!” (Jn 19:30).
3. What a joy to face our death knowing that we have diligently loved and obeyed the Lord!