

Obedience, Yours and Christ's **Philippians 2:5-11**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Ever think about what obedience means? We understand very well that parents want obedience from their children, but is obedience only something that applies to what younger people must give to their parents, teachers, and such?

I invite you to think outside that box. How many situations can you think of that require obedience? In what areas is obedience expected of you?

Unfortunately, when we consider the term obedience, we first think of children. We remember the fourth commandment and what it says about honoring fathers and mothers. It is indeed true, children are to give to parents and teachers and others in authority over them. But, obedience is required of each of us, every day.

Every single one of us, even if we may have some authority over others in certain situations, must all offer obedience. Even though the fourth commandment specifically speaks to the obedience children owe their parents, it is much, more far-reaching. We are each to be obedient to those who have authority over us.

Employees must be obedient to their employers and do the job they are told to do. We are to be obedient to the Word of God. We are to be obedient to the laws of the land. We are to be obedient to those God has placed in authority over us.

Unfortunately, while obedience is required of us, we often fail to deliver it where it is owed of us. Understand this, when disobedience rears its ugly head in our lives, it is also called sin

Where is obedience required of us? Those red octagonal signs on some street corners do not read - slow, then go. Speed limit signs are not simply suggestions. The boss tells you to finish that project by lunch time. That bedroom isn't cleaned just because all the toys and clothes are out of sight under the bed. We may not think of some of these as issues of obedience, but that is exactly what they are. And if we get caught for disobedience in these cases, we grumble.

Even when we do offer our obedience, we often grumble. I remember my father hearing me grumbling about having to go do the dishes, and he told me, "just go do it, it won't kill you." He was right! Our obedience to those in authority won't kill us.

Our obedience is spoken about in our text. *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

A mind of obedience is what we are to have, for we are in Christ. The obedience required of us is that we are to humbly serve others, even as Christ served us. In whatever vocations we may have – student, son, daughter, parent, wife, husband, employer, employee, citizen, and any others you might think of – we are to serve others as Christ served us.

Christ, the Creator of all, took on human flesh to serve us. He who orders the sea and storm, humbled Himself and made Himself obedient to earthly parents and earthly authorities.

Jesus actively obeyed all the laws God ordained. His obedience as a Son was perfected in the things we will celebrate this week, for the Son was obedient to the eternal plan of His Father. We rejoice in His humble entry

into Jerusalem, to be obedient to that plan of serving salvation, first laid out in the garden of Eden. There it was promised that the descendant of Eve would crush Satan's head, paying the price demanded by Adam and Eve's first act of disobedience.

Our voices join the eternal song, praising Christ for His obedience, "Hosanna, hosanna in the highest." Hosanna means, save now. In obedience, Christ enters Jerusalem to save.

Unlike my father, God our heavenly Father required obedience of His only begotten Son, that **would** kill Him. There were no ifs, no ands, and no buts about it. "Jesus, yes, I know what I require of you will hurt. I understand that you will give up your life for sinners. But as I love you, so also I love and desire them to be with me for eternity. Only You can save them! Only your obedience in life, and in death, can free them from their bondage to sin and death."

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Christ prayed... saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." (Matt. 26:39) "Yes Father, I know the task you have laid out for me. I know the pain and the suffering I will endure. I understand that for the creatures to have life eternal, I need to be obedient to the authorities and allow injustice to happen. I may not like what must be done, but I will be obedient to you to the point of death, even death on a cross – I do this that the consequence of the disobedience of mankind, that all their sins might be forgiven."

This week we remember the obedience of Jesus Christ, who, as God enfleshed bore our disobedience to the cross and died there for our sins.

Today, in obedience to God's will, you have come into His house. Here in this place, He wants further obedience from you. But the obedience He requires is not burdensome. There is no pain involved. There is no work to do. In a way, it will kill you – your contrition and repentance drowns and puts to death the old man, your sins and evil desires. But in that death, God wants you to receive with joy the wonderful gifts He has to give to you. "Come so that I might give you a gift!" Now who would want to be disobedient?

In obedience to God's will, "Hear my Word to you," He says, "Your sins are forgiven." In obedience, by faith, trust that word of forgiveness, obediently believe that your sins have been put to death with Christ.

In obedience, come to Christ's table today. In obedience, take and eat of His precious body. In obedience drink of the cup of the new covenant in His blood. In so doing, you proclaim again His death for your salvation, eternal life, and forgiveness until He comes.

I invite you, the dearly beloved of God, to live in your baptism, for in your baptism, you are united to Christ's death and His resurrection. United to His death, you are given a new life.

God's wants your obedience. Live in love toward God and your neighbor in all that you do. Live in the new life that His only begotten Son has purchased for you. Live in the joy and peace of your salvation. He craves your trust in the work of His Son. He wants you obedient unto Christ's death, even His death on a cross – for you – for in that death you are granted eternal life. Amen.