

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

June 26, 2016

Obedience

by Frank Himmel

Preachers don't seem to talk as much about obedience these days. Some think it sounds too legalistic, that it puts our salvation on the basis of works and merit instead of grace. We ought to know better. Jesus said, "So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done'" (Luke 17:10). No amount of obedience will ever earn our salvation, but that does not make obedience unimportant or unnecessary.

To obey means "to comply with or follow the commands, restrictions, wishes, or instructions of" (Dictionary.com). The New Testament word literally means to hear under, that is, to listen as one who is under another's authority. And the New Testament stresses the importance of obedience.

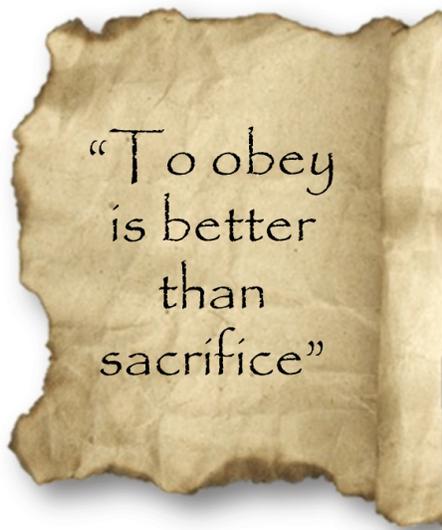
Jesus Was Obedient

Jesus said, "I always do the things that are pleasing to Him [the Father]" (John 8:29). That included times when the Father's instructions were hard. Jesus was obedient "to the point of death, even death on a cross"

(Philippians 2:8). "Although He was a son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). If Jesus was constantly obedient, and He is our example, why would anyone conclude that we may be nonchalant about obedience?

Salvation Is Through Obedience

Peter noted that "you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls" (1 Peter 1:22), identifying that purification with the new birth (v. 23). Paul wrote, "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness" (Romans 6:17-18). The Hebrews writer added, "And having been made perfect, He [Jesus] became to all who obey Him the source of eternal salvation" (5:9). None of this contradicts the frequent Bible references to salvation by faith. Why? Because the faith that saves is obedient faith (Romans 1:5; 16:26).



Obedience Characterizes Christians

We are "chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ..." (1 Peter 1:2). "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in ignorance, but like the Holy One ▶

who called you, be holy also yourselves in all your behavior, because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’” (1 Peter 1:14-16). Again, in Romans 6 Paul wrote, “Do you know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? ... So now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification” (vv. 16, 19).

Obedience to God requires obedience to parents (Ephesians 6:1), to those who are over us in the workplace (Colossians 3:22), to civil authorities (Titus 3:1), and to elders in the local church (Hebrews 13:17). Our obedience to these, however, is only to the extent we can do so and still obey God. When there is a conflict, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

The Disobedient Will Be Lost

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on Him” (John 3:36). “But for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury” (Romans 2:8, ESV). “... The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power” (2 Thessalonians 1:7b-9).

Have you obeyed the gospel of Christ? Are you living a life of faithful obedience to Him? ■

A Sanctuary?

by Frank Himmel

I listened to the President’s remarks in Orlando last week regarding the recent massacre in that city, and I was fascinated by his reference to the Pulse Nightclub as a sanctuary.

Sanctuary comes from the Latin word *sanctum*, a sacred or holy place. This word originally was restricted to temples or shrines. The book of Hebrews uses the corresponding Greek term to denote both the Old Testament tabernacle and God’s holy place in heaven.



Centuries later, when medieval church laws gave fugitives or debtors protection from arrest in some church buildings, *sanctuary* expanded to take on the idea of a place of immunity from punishment. From there it made its way into secular applications for places of refuge or protection, such as a wildlife sanctuary.

And now we have another kind of “holy place”: a nightclub! – a place of carousing and sensuality, and in this case, one that particularly caters to homosexuals. It’s hard to envision a more unholy place! The linguistic gymnastics of those who seek to legitimize sin are evidently boundless. “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20). ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Mark Clifton	Greg Winget	John Baucom
SONG LEADER	Gary Hagler	Chad Brock	John Baucom
OPENING PRAYER	Bruce Williams	TBD	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Steven Turner	Steven Turner	
CUP	David Gray	David Gray	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Jason Chandler		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	Mark Clifton
CLOSING PRAYER	Chris Brooks	TBD	Albert Harrison Sr