

"Christ's Obedient Mind"

In a world filled with people who want to do their own thing, whatever happened to obedience? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Is obedience important? Today we're exploring the place of obedience in the mind of Christ.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Scriptures teach us the heart and mind of God. They teach what matters and what doesn't. They teach us we should have a heart and a mind like the Lord Jesus, to love what He loves and value what He values. The more we become like the Lord, the more blessed and fuller our lives will become. The more we reject the ways of the Lord, the harder our lives will become. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

The word obey is used quite frequently in Scripture. It means to hear, to heed, and to respond in conformity with what you have heard. An obedient soul pays attention to what God says and observes it. He is willing to submit his will to the will of the one that he serves. Jesus chose to be a servant, to follow the Father's rules and commands. He yielded control to another. And He was willing to set aside His own will and His own desires in order to please His Father in heaven. He didn't fuss with His Father; He didn't try to correct His Father; and He didn't reject whatever the Father told Him to do. That's obedience, and our Lord Jesus was obedient.

Our culture tells us to follow our hearts, and whatever we do is alright. Well, this pleases many but fails to take into account what the Lord says. There is an eternal authority above and over us, and we must one day give an account of ourselves to Him. Now obedience is often demanding and hard, but we must learn to obey Him in everything. Obedience comes from trust and from love. And when we love and seek to please, obedience becomes a true joy.

Now, this is an important study, and we offer it free on Christ's Obedient Mind! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at www.searchtv.org and on YouTube. Well we'll now worship in song, we'll read from Philippians 2:5 to 11, and we'll explore the obedient mind of Jesus Christ.

Our reading today comes from Philippians 2:5 to 11, and it talks about the attitude and the heart of Jesus Christ, and the kind of heart God wants us to have as well. "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of JESUS EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father." Because Jesus humbled Himself and was obedient, God exalted Him. Let's be obedient as well.

Let's pray. "Father we're thankful for Your love, and we're thankful for the gift of Jesus, for the forgiveness of our sins. Father help us to be like our Lord Jesus, to humble ourselves, and to be obedient. In Jesus name we pray, Amen."

If we wish to be obedient, the first thing we must do is learn to listen. The first lesson of first grade is to listen to and follow instructions. We can never outgrow that lesson. Listening is a challenge throughout life, and we mustn't let growing into adulthood keep us from following the Lord's instructions. The most important thing we can do is listen to the Lord Jesus. We can never be obedient to the Lord if we don't know what He said. We can't assume that we know the truth. We can't assume that whatever someone tells us is the truth, because this world is full of lies and half-truths. Now, we have to search the Scriptures for ourselves to be sure. Jesus promised those who believed in Him in John 8:31 and 32, that "If you abide in my word, you are truly disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Now, the first step to obedience is listening to what God has said, but the second step to obedience is humbling ourselves. Now even though Jesus passed through the heavens, created the universe, and was the Savior of us all, He was never arrogant or full of Himself. Arrogant people are useless to God, because they aren't humble and willing to obey the Father. While the world will tell you to exalt yourself, the Lord humbled Himself and urges us to do the same.

The Lord Jesus said to His apostles in Matthew 20:25 to 28, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." The Lord Jesus was a servant in heart and mind, and He expects those who follow Him to be servants as well.

The Lord Jesus calls to us not with arrogance but with humility. He said in Matthew 11:28 to 30, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Jesus was gentle not harsh, lowly not arrogant. He doesn't put on our shoulders a burden that we cannot bear. He knows what it is to bear a yoke and to carry a burden, and He wants to make it possible for you to have it easy and light. Even as Lord, He is a servant to those who serve Him and serve with Him.

For you to find the life that He came to give, the Lord Jesus says in Luke 9:23 to 25, that "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" The Lord cannot use you if you're unwilling to humble and deny yourself. You must give up your life for His sake, if you wish to save your life! The new life that Jesus gives is far greater than a selfish life of sin; it's an abundant life and an eternal life.

Giving up your life may seem difficult. It certainly was not easy for Jesus to sacrifice His life for your sake, but it was necessary. Hebrews 5:7 to 9 says, "In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. And although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him." Because Jesus learned obedience, because He suffered death, He was made perfect and was able to save those who obey Him. Now His obedience made it possible for you to obey Him.

Romans 5 and verse 19 contrasts Adam's sin in the Garden with Jesus's sacrifice at Golgotha, "For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous." Because Jesus was sinless and obedient, He was the perfect sacrifice for

our sins. Hebrews 2 verses 9 and 10 says, "But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings."

Obedience to God is not some small thing. Proverbs 19:16 says in the New American Standard Bible, that "He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, But he who is careless of conduct will die." Now obedience begins with listening to what the Lord says. The Lord Jesus said in Luke 11 and verse 28, "blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it." Now it's not enough merely to believe what the Lord says, we must obey the Lord. John 3:36 says, that "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." The Lord Jesus Himself said in John 8:51, "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death." Now if you wish to live with the Lord, keep His word.

Jesus emphasized obedience in John chapters 14 and 15. The Lord said in John 14:15, that "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." Now that's a simple statement. Loving the Lord is demonstrated by keeping His commandments. Keeping the commandments in the mind of the Lord Jesus is not legalism, as some suppose. In His mind, keeping the commandments is relational. It's how we love Him. And He repeats this in verse 21, "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

Now He repeats this simple message but adds what causes the Father to love us and what leads Jesus to love us. That is the result of keeping His commandments. Now these are the sincere words of Jesus, not mine. One might wonder how Jesus discloses Himself to us. Well verse 22 says that Judas (that's not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?"

And Jesus answered and said to him in verses 23 and 24, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. Now he who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me." Now when a person loves the Lord deeply enough to keep His commandments the Father loves that person and Jesus loves that person to the point that they make their abode or "home" with that person. Now if you want God to make His home with you, love Him enough to keep His words. People who don't keep His words fail to love the Lord and the Father the way they ask to be loved. The Lord will not make His home with them.

Now the Lord Jesus said in John 15:8 to 10, "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. And if you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." Now if we wish to abide in the love of God, we do this by loving the Lord enough to keep His commandments.

Has it ever occurred to you that by living outside the will of God that you're also living outside the love of God? Has it occurred to you that you can leave the Father's love and no longer abide in it? Jude 21 tells us to "keep yourselves in the love of God." Now you're probably recalling Romans 8:37 to 39 which says nothing can "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." But look at the context; Paul is speaking about the harsh things of life. It's true that these things cannot

separate us from the love of God; but if we stop hearing, if we stop believing, if we stop loving, and stop obeying the Lord, we cannot keep ourselves in the love of God.

First John describes some people who thought they had a loving relationship with the Lord but failed to hear and obey the Lord. First John is written to Christians, not the world outside of Christ. 1 John 2:3 to 6 says, "And by this we know that we have come to know him (that is have a relationship with Him), if we keep his commandments. And whoever says 'I know him' but doesn't keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked." Now those who teach once saved always saved and live in sin lie to themselves. They can lose their relationship with the Lord and be lost. You cannot live in sin and say that you're walking with the Lord. Paul described those who are defiled in Titus 1:16, "They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work."

Now all the commandments of the Lord Jesus find their foundation in the Lord Jesus Himself. They are defined by His character and His practices. Jesus was obedient to the Father out of humility. And Philippians 2:5 to 8 urges us, to "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, didn't regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Now arrogance and conceit will not allow us to be obedient to the Father or to the Lord Jesus. Obedience is humble, it's humble listening to the One that we obey rather than insisting on our own way. Obedience means doing things the way the Lord wants them done. On the night before He was facing the cross, Jesus said, "so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me." (John 14:31) Now obedient people do not fuss with the Lord, they don't question the Lord, or edit what the Lord says. The Lord Jesus said in John 8:29, "I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." Now Jesus was blessed as a Son of the Father, because of His willingness to be obedient to the Father and to please Him, and so the Father gave Him a name above every name. And our knees will bow to Him one day and confess Jesus as Lord.

Would you pray with me. "Father, help us to be obedient to Your will, to love You always, to be more and more like Jesus our Lord. So that we may humble ourselves and be obedient to the things that are easy and to the things that are difficult. And to love You from a full heart. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen."

The Lord Jesus said, "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them, I will show you whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when the flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who's heard and not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great."

We're all choosing either to listen to the Lord or to listen to sinful things. Romans 6:16 to 18 says, "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, that you're slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? 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.”

Now which are you? A slave of sin or a slave of righteousness. To obey from the heart, one must hear God’s word, believe the Lord Jesus and His teaching, repent of sin, confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized into Christ. Now baptism into Christ is an immersion in water, and it’s done so that all sins will be forgiven (Acts 2:38 and Acts 22 verse 16). Now when you’re baptized, you’ll rise to walk in newness of life. Why not obey the Lord today? You won’t regret doing the right thing.

We hope today’s study about Christ’s Obedient Mind has stirred you to do what is right. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord’s Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there’s also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches that are in your area at www.searchtv.org. You can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry.” Now when you go to our programs, be sure to like the programs on YouTube; and that helps spread the program to other folks. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don’t worry, if you write to us, we’re not asking for money. We’re here to help you draw close to God and to get to heaven.

We do ask that you focus your heart on God. Do that by worshiping at church. Everybody needs a church family. And there’s probably a church of Christ that’s near you. And if you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll gladly help you find one. Well we’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God’s Word with us and tell a friend about this program. And as always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.