

## "Obeying the Lord"

Does it matter what Jesus says and whether not we obey Him? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're looking at what it means to obey the Lord. So stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. We love God and we want to hear all He has to say. We love God and know that doing His will blesses everybody. We aren't like those who don't care. We care because we know it affects our lives and our eternal destiny. We pray that you will care too! 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 Greek word for "obedience" means "to hear what an authority is requiring and then act upon it." In other words, to obey is to submit to the command of one in authority; it's to be compliant with the demands or requests of someone who is over us. The first-grade teacher repeats endlessly to children "Listen and follow instructions." Now if we learn to listen and follow instructions, we'll obey. We intentionally do what we are told to do the way it should be done. We don't argue or change the instructions. When we were young, our parents used to say, "I told you what I wanted. Mind me!" Well we knew that pleasing our parents brought trust and reward. We also knew that failing to mind our parents had consequences that we didn't like. Loving and trusting our parents' instructions mattered!

Our obedience to God also comes from putting our faith in Him, listening carefully to Him, and acting on His words. Paul describes the role of his apostleship was "to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake" (Romans 1 verse 5). Now obedience trusts in the One who gives the command. Disobedience is an act of defiance. Loving obedience draws us close to God. Defiance always leads to disaster.

Now this is an important study about obeying the Lord and we offer it free! 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](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have free materials on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Psalm 1, and explore how important it is that we lovingly and carefully obey the Lord.

Our reading today is from Psalm 1. The six verses.

How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,  
Nor stand in the path of sinners,  
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!  
But his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
And in His law he meditates day and night.  
He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water,  
Which yields its fruit in its season  
And its leaf does not wither;  
And in whatever he does, he prospers.  
The wicked are not so,  
But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
But the way of the wicked will perish.

That's God holy word. Let's pray together. Oh Father help us to be people who love You and meditate upon Your word and practice it. And help us always to do Your will. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

We are all servants of someone or something. Some serve Satan, some serve their passions, some serve the ways of the world, but some serve the Lord. Whom do you serve? Romans 6:16 says, "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, (that) you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?" We either serve God or we serve our desires. (and) One brings life, the other brings death. Obedience is a choice. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 6:24 that "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and (mammon or) wealth." You can't serve God and serve sin. You can't serve God and serve Satan.

God "will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury" (Romans 2 verses 6 to 8). Now what we obey matters! The Lord Jesus on judgment day will judge the dead "by what was written in the books, according to what they have done" (Revelation 20 verse 12). Our works reveal whether we believe God, and how we live will be what judges us according to the written Word of God.

Now the Scriptures show how faith and obedience fit together. 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." Faith without obedience will not work, and obedience without faith will not work. It takes both! Galatians 5 and verse 6 says what really matters is "faith working through love."

Now Hebrews 11 speaks of the faithful who did the will of God. And Hebrews 11:7 to 8 says, "By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going." You see an active faith is a living faith; and obeying faith; Noah and Abraham acted and obeyed out of faith and reverence.

Jesus Himself set the example for what true obedience means. On the night before His crucifixion, He told His disciples that the world will know His love for the Father when He does "exactly as the Father commanded Me" (John 14:31). Jesus set aside His own will for the will of the Father. And He prayed, saying, "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22 verse 42). The Lord's obedience mattered to the Father. The Lord Jesus said in John 15:10, "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."

Philippians 2:5 to 8 explains and teaches us to follow His example. "Have this attitude (this mindset) 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 (He) 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." Jesus was willing

to humble Himself and die the cruelest of deaths to obey His Father, even though He was and is Himself deity. And we need to embrace a heart like Jesus who humbled Himself.

I'm amazed at religious groups who call Jesus Lord these days. They have a funny way of treating Jesus, when it comes to the beliefs and practices that they pursue. And in the end, they have ceased to listen to Jesus and have given themselves to the culture of our times. Many blindly follow that broad way that leads to destruction. They never give a second thought to where that road leads. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:13 to 14, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."

You know churches once united in following Jesus and the Scriptures, studied themselves into a form of consensus religion. They imagine, "Well, if we all believe that a certain practice is okay, then it is okay"--even if the Scriptures declare that practice as unlawful and going against "the Lord's commandment" (1 Corinthians 14:33 to 37). You know it appears that they have trusted more in their consensus than in the Lord. They somehow believe if enough people agree to believe a certain practice is acceptable to themselves, then the Lord will approve it too!

Even if a million religious leaders believe or practice something, their ways cannot override what the Lord Jesus says. It's presumptuous to think that we know better than God. It reminds me of God who through the prophet Samuel told King Saul to destroy the Amalekites completely. Well the Israelite people won the battle. You see they convinced Saul to not do that. And they presumptuously offered sacrifices of the best sheep and oxen rather than to obey the Lord (1 Samuel 15:12 to 28). Well, Saul gave in to what the people consented rather than what the Lord commanded. He followed consensus religion rather than the Lord.

And Samuel said to Saul, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king." That's what Samuel told Saul. (1 Samuel 15:22 to 23).

Now in a society, such as ours, where being woke and inclusive has become more important than the teaching of God in scripture, people have relied on the consensus of people for their faith and their practices, rather than on the distinctive teaching of God according to 1 Corinthians 14:33 to 37. And when people introduce their cultural ways that contradict the Word of God, they inevitably cause division in the church. They must choose the broad way or the narrow way.

And lest anyone thinks this is harsh, remember that even Jesus could not serve as a priest in the temple at Jerusalem, because He was of the tribe of Judah not Levi (Hebrews 7 and verse 14). When people cease to follow the Lord, even in small things, they cease treating Jesus as Lord. God's distinctions matter! Romans 12 and verse 2 says, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Now two words in the New Testament are synonyms for obeying. One is the word observe and the other is the word keep. These words include the idea of close listening and carefully obeying what God instructs us to do. First, let's look at how Jesus uses the word "observe." The Lord Jesus said in Luke 11:28, "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it." Well, the Lord Jesus was instructed the apostles what they must do once a person is baptized in Matthew 28 and

verse 20, “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Second, let’s look at how Jesus uses the word “keep.” The Lord Jesus said in John 8:51, “Truly, truly, I say to you, (that) if anyone keeps My word he will never see death.” Again, He said in John 14:13 to 15, “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (and) If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” When we hear God, God hears our prayers; and when we keep His words, He keeps His promises and keeps us from evil.

Now another phrase found in Scripture that refers to obeying the Lord is the phrase, “doing the will of God.” The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:21 to 23, that “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.’” Wouldn’t you hate to hear the Lord Jesus say to you, “depart from me”? A lawless person is one who will not keep the laws of God morally or spiritually.

Mark 3:31 to 35 says, “Then His mother (that is the mother of Jesus) and His brothers arrived, and standing outside (and) they sent word (in) to Him and called Him. (well) A crowd was sitting (all) around Him, and they said to Him, “Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You.” (well) Answering them, He said, “Who are My mother and My brothers?” Looking about at those who were sitting around Him, He said, “Behold My mother and My brothers! “For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.”

When people do the will of God, the Lord Jesus considers them as family. They’re not legalists but loving children of God. Jesus told His disciples that love for Him is measured by obedience to His commandments. Jesus simply said in John 14:15, that “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” He explains this idea more fully in John 14:21, “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.” Do you wish to be loved by the Father and the Lord? Then keep the commandments. You see you change your relationship when you love God enough to keep the commandments. God loves those who love Him and obey Him.

The Lord Jesus expressed the idea a third time in John 14:23 to 4. He said, “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. 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.” You see keeping commandments is God’s measure of whether or not we love Him. When we love God and keep His commandments, He loves us enough to make His home with us. Do you love God? And do you make, allow Him to make a home with you by your loving obedience to Him? You know if you won’t keep His commandments, you show God that you don’t love Him. And one who claims to be a child of God demonstrates His love by continuing to obey the commandments of God.

Do you love the Lord? 1 John 2:3 to 6 says, “By this we know that we have come to know Him, (that is have a relationship with Him, love Him that) if we keep His commandments.” The one who says, “I have come to know Him, God’s my friend I love God” and he does not keep His commandments, that person is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him

the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He (that is Jesus) walked.”

Let’s pray together. Oh, Father we pray that our obedience will not just be in word or an idea, that is will be in deed. That we’ll show you our love that we show you our faith by how we live and how we honor the things that You have taught us to do. This is our pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Obedience is not simply a response; it’s the right response to God’s commands. It does what the Father requires without complaint. It does what God commands without editing, adding to or taking away from His words. Some people have the notion that God ought to be glad that they did anything at all, but obeying the Lord means we have listened closely and carefully enough to do exactly what He says.

James 1:22 to 25 says, “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.”

Obedience demonstrates our love and faith. Obedience is an act of faith. We don’t earn salvation by obedience alone or faith alone. We receive the grace of God by our obedience of faith. And we urge you to obey the gospel in faith and love by placing your faith in Christ Jesus, repenting of your sins, confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and by being baptized into Christ, immersed in water for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2 and verse 38). Now when you act in faith by being baptized Colossians 2:12 to 13 says that, “God will make you alive and forgive all your transgressions.” Trust and obey the Lord.

We pray that today’s study about obeying the Lord has helped you see God’s concern for you. If you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy of this message, then 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](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. 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](http://www.searchtv.org). Now you can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry.” And be sure to like the programs; this helps spread it. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. We don’t ask for money. But we want you to draw close to God.

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