

Redwater Restorer

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness..." (Matthew 3:3)

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How Obedience Saves

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Redwater
Church of Christ

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The Bible shows conclusively that obedience is essential to salvation. Many religious people despise the thought of associating *obedience* with *salvation*. Many would defend with their lives some *man-made doctrine*, but they refuse to obey God's Word and they would not die for it (Revelation 2:10). It is no secret that we live in a disobedient society where disobedience manifests itself in various ways: failure to obey speed limits, disobedience to parents and teachers, widespread immorality, stealing, robbery, assault, murder, etc. Mankind in general has a long history of disobedience toward God. However, man can obey God, and he must obey God to receive God's grace and mercy, resulting in salvation. Obedience has always been essential to be saved.

Obedience to God was essential under Patriarchy. Cain was disobedient whereas Abel was obedient to God (Genesis 4:3-5; Hebrews 11:4). Faith results from the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Therefore, Scripture implies that Cain was disobedient to God's instructions pertaining to worship, but Abel was obedient to the same instruction from God.

The wicked world was disobedient whereas Noah and his family were obedient to God (Genesis 6-9). God chose a righteous man named Noah to build the ark to save he and his family from the universal flood. Noah obeyed God

regarding the construction of the ark and was saved from the impending disaster that enveloped the rest of the world and all of humanity. It is evident that had Noah disobeyed God respecting the building of the ark that he, too, would have perished with the wicked world.

There are other noteworthy Bible characters who admirably served God. Enoch, Abraham and Moses demonstrated an obedient faith in God under Patriarchy (Hebrews 11).

Obedience to God was essential under Judaism. The Old Testament is replete with instances of human disobedience to God, which God severely punished. Fortunately for fallible man, God provided for the forgiveness of ignorant sin, but God severely condemned willful disobedience (Numbers 15:27-31). A man violated the Sabbath Day by gathering sticks, for which God commanded that he be stoned to death (Exodus 20:8-11; Numbers 15:32-36). Korah and 250 leaders among the Israelites challenged God's choice of Aaron's family to be the priestly family, for which God burnt the disobedient with fire and caused the earth to swallow their families and personal property (Numbers 16). Moses and Aaron were accused by God of disbelief or disobedience for striking a rock to provide water for Israel, which prevented them from entering Canaan (Numbers 20:7-12; 22-29; Deuteronomy 34:1-6; Romans 11:30-31). King Saul disobeyed God and was rejected

How Obedience Saves (Cont.)

by God from continuing as king (1 Samuel 15:3-4, 7-28).

God also rewarded obedience under Judaism. Joshua and Caleb obeyed God and alone among the adults who left Egypt were permitted by God to enter Canaan (Numbers 14:22-24, 29-38; 32:11-13; Joshua 14:6-14). David obeyed God through which God raised up our Savior, his descendant, Jesus of Nazareth (1 Kings 15:5; Acts 13:22-23). King Hezekiah obeyed God for which God added 15 years to his life and spared Jerusalem from the Assyrians (Isaiah 38:3-6).

Obedience to God is essential under Christianity. It is abundantly clear from the New Testament that disobedience to God results in condemnation. Every accountable soul who refuses or neglects to obey the Gospel will be lost (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). The disobedient will be barred from heaven (Matthew 7:21-23). Jesus will reject everyone who does not obey his words (John 12:48).

Obedience is a requisite to receive salvation. The faith that saves is an obedient faith (Romans 5:1; 1:5; 16:26; Acts 6:7). Not only our actions, but also every thought must be brought to "the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Jesus Christ saves those who obey him (Hebrews 5:8-9). Obedience is not perfection, but the attempt to do what Jesus says (Luke 6:46). Only when we obey Christ by obeying the Gospel does God's mercy and grace make up what lacks between our obedience and our sinlessly holy God (Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5).

One correctly concludes, each period of religious history (Patriarchy, Judaism and Christianity) demonstrates the role of obedience in human salvation and that disobedience toward God results in severe condemnation (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Especially Judaism proved that mankind is incapable of achieving sinless perfection, even by those who otherwise are considered obedient to God (Hebrews 10:1-4). Yet, human obedience to the laws of God prompts him to extend His grace and mercy toward us (Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5). The human ideas of "If it feels good, do it" or "situation ethics" or "the ends justifies the means" or "a new morality" or human creeds, etc. are mottos of disobedience and will not prompt God to save us with His grace and mercy.

Obedience on our part whereby God will save us with His grace and mercy includes our response to his redemptive plan. The scriptures teach that we must Hear His word (Rom.10:17), believe in Christ (John 8:24), repent of our sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30), confess Christ (Matt.10:32,33; Rom.10:9,10) and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, 22:16, 1 Pet.3:21). If God has given these commands, why not obey (Rom.6:16-18) ? The proud, disobedient heart will ask "why?" The humble, obedient heart will ask "why not?" (Acts 8:36).

God's word also teaches that erring Christians must repent and pray (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9) and that we must obey the faith even unto death (Matthew 10:28; Revelation 2:10) In our next article we will see that God's word teaches that once we have become Christians there is the possibility of falling from His grace and the need

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