



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#71)
Good News – Misconceptions about obedience

Last time Misconceptions about the Good News, especially as it pertains to the Kingdom of God.

- ❖ **THE KINGDOM, under the New Covenant:**
 - is not the pursuit a physical kingdom or organization.
 - is about God's rule over individual people.
- ❖ **OUR KINGDOM FOCUS:**
 - is to be on changes in the hearts of individuals.

Today Misconceptions regarding our response to God's rule over us: The response of obedience.

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S RULE OVER US

✳ It's important to understand this issue. ✳
Our views will influence how we interpret the commands and obligations we find in Scripture.

WHEN THE BIBLE TELLS ME TO DO SOMETHING...

DO I REALLY HAVE TO DO IT?

OR IS IT JUST A SUGGESTION?

DOES IT EVEN MATTER?

Some people point to  **GOD'S COMMANDS**

They see all the commands, and conclude that we must do something.

Some even say that "doing something" is necessary for attaining salvation.

[LAST TIME, WE SAW AN EXAMPLE OF THIS.]

Their claim: Some men came from Judea and started to teach believers that people can't be saved unless they are circumcised as Moses' Teachings require.

"People who are not Jewish must be circumcised and ordered to follow Moses' Teachings."

Acts 15:1, 5b (GW); the apostles' answer: "NO!"

Other people point to  **PEOPLE'S FAILURES**

They see the failures of saved people in the Bible, and conclude that obedience is not that important.

Some conclude that any requirement to obey implies a "works salvation."

Others claim it's OK to sin, because (according to them) "grace and forgiveness covers it all."

Paul talks about this view: What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?
Romans 6:1 (NIV); Paul's answer: "NO!"

Others try to take  **AN IN-BETWEEN VIEW**

[Example #1.] BE GOOD WHEN YOU CAN... BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT WHEN YOU SIN.

[Example #2, applied to salvation.] I START WORKING FOR MY SALVATION... THEN GOD STEPS IN AND GIVES ME GRACE... TO FINISH WHAT I STARTED!



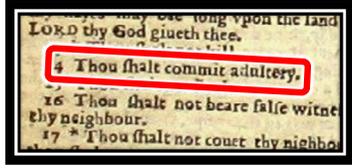
THE FIRST THING YOU MUST REALIZE...

OBEDIENCE has *always* been a requirement for humans.

If it weren't for sin, humans would have *always* fulfilled their obligation... joyfully and from the heart.

YOU WILL NEVER FIND A COMMAND ANYWHERE IN THE BIBLE THAT TELLS YOU TO SIN.

UNLESS it is a printer's error
(such as in this 1631 printing of the King James Bible).



!?! "Thou shalt commit adultery" !?!

People who want to endorse sin will base their arguments on the actions of people (*sinners*) who seemed to have God's favor, and *never* on the commands given by God. (They choose to interpret God-and-human interactions in ways that contradict clear commands.)



THE SECOND THING YOU MUST REALIZE...

Neither SIN nor SALVATION changes our obligation to obey.

Our sinfulness does not decrease our obligation; nor does salvation (and forgiveness) change it.

I THOUGHT JESUS TOLD US THAT LOVE WAS A MORE IMPORTANT OBLIGATION!

THE LOVE JESUS MENTIONS IS A COMMAND WE MUST OBEY!

It's the same in both Old and New Testaments!

For I **command you today to love** the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws...
Deut. 30:16a (NIV)

I command you to love each other.
John 15:17 (NLT)

THIS ISN'T THE WORLD'S TYPE OF "LOVE"!

[Jesus] said to him, "**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. *This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love* your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on *these two commands.*"
Matthew 22:37-40 (CSB)

WE'RE SINNERS. WE CAN'T HELP IT! SURELY GOD WILL LOWER HIS STANDARDS!

NO, GOD DOESN'T LOWER HIS STANDARDS. INSTEAD, ...

*** Just read the Bible and see! ***

Throughout the Bible, we read that our obligation is to be pure and holy, to love God with our complete heart, to not deviate right or left from God's righteous standard.

We read that the Law's unbending requirements are righteous – even though we, as sinners, don't (and can't) fully obey them. We also read that God's judgments are righteous and true, without favoritism or compromise.

God's standards are based on *his nature*, not our ability (or inability) to obey. He created us fully capable of obeying his commands. Our inability was caused by *our* willful choice to violate them.

... BY HIS GRACE, AND IN CHRIST, HE RAISES OUR ABILITY!

- He empowers his people!**
Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope.
Ephes. 3:20 (NLT)
[MORE ABOUT THIS LATER.]
- Even the Old Testament tells us about this empowering change!** (Jesus called this "being born again," in John 3:3-8.)
I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove your stubborn hearts and give you obedient hearts.
Ezekiel 36:26 (GW)



THE THIRD THING YOU MUST REALIZE...

 Nothing we can do will earn us salvation.

 Even "perfect" living cannot undo the consequences of past sins.

- ✓ From our very first sin, we've already earned death!

For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard. For the wages of sin is death, ...
 Romans 3:23; 6:23a (NLT)
- ✓ THE RESULT: Scripture describes us as dead in sin. Only God can make us alive!

When you were dead in your sins ... God made you alive ...
 Col. 2:13a (NIV)

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace* you have been saved.
 Ephes. 2:4-5 (NIV)

* ["Grace" = "Undeserved kindness."]



THE FOURTH THING YOU MUST REALIZE...

 In this present life, God's people are not sinless.

 But this does not give us an excuse for continuing to sin.

WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO RETURN TO BEING SIN'S SLAVE?

- ✓ Those who do that are on the path that leads to death.

Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, ...
 Romans 6:16a (NIV)
- ✓ God's people have been freed from sin, so they can serve a new master.

... or [slaves] to obedience, which leads to righteousness?
 Romans 6:16 (NIV)

You are not slaves; you are free. But your freedom is not an excuse to do evil. You are free to live as God's slaves.
 1 Peter 2:16 (NLT)

★ Besides, choosing to live in sin just isn't an option! ★

Those who have been born from God don't live sinful lives. What God has said lives in them, and they can't live sinful lives. They have been born from God.
 1 John 3:9 (GW)

We know that those who have been born from God don't go on sinning. Rather, the Son of God protects them, and the evil one can't harm them.
 1 John 5:18 (GW)

DON'T TURN GOD'S GRACE INTO AN EXCUSE FOR SIN!

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?
 Romans 6:1-2 (NIV)



THE FIFTH THING YOU MUST REALIZE...

 God's people are active in the pursuit of holiness.

 They haven't reached perfection yet, but the pursuit of it is genuine and from the heart.

★ **HERE WE SEE THE RADICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "UNSAVED" AND "SAVED."** ★

- ✓ If we are saved, it will be our heart's desire to do these things!

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.



Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

1 John 3:2-3 (NIV)

I delight in your decrees;
I will not neglect your word.

Psalms 119:16 (NIV)

★ **THIS OBEDIENCE IS ONE OF THE EFFECTS THAT THE NEW COVENANT HAS ON ONE'S HEART.** ★

I will put my laws in their minds
and write them on their hearts.

Hebrews 8:10b (NIV)

- God is the one who enables us to make these changes.

For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him.

Philip. 2:13 (NLT)

God willing, we will continue looking at this issue
NEXT TIME.

THIS WEEK, MAKE IT YOUR MISSION TO:

Pursue the things

that God has

saved and empowered you

to do!

**WHILE WE ARE DOING THIS...
WE CAN ALSO BE ADMITTING OUR WEAKNESSES.**

- ✓ If we didn't admit it, we would be lying!

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8 (NIV)

AND SO:

- ✓ We will be able to say

this →

Your statutes are wonderful;
therefore I **obey them**.

Psalms 119:129 (NIV)

and at the

same time,

this →

I **have strayed** like a lost sheep.
Seek your servant,
for I **have not forgotten** your commands.

Psalms 119:176 (NIV)

Credits (1)

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