

OBEY AND BE BLESSED!

AUG 4, 2024

WORSHIP

This is Amazing Grace, Go and Follow, Indescribable, Your Great Name - Build my Life Medley

WELCOME

Can you recall a time when you followed a human authority in your life that helped you succeed in reaching a goal or dream you had?

WORD

JOSHUA 1:6-9

⁶ “Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the Law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may achieve success wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will achieve success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be terrified nor dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Why should we obey God’s word and why should we obey people in authority? Obeying God may be something understandable, but how about human authority? Others may have a problem with the Bible, thinking it’s antiquated, it’s been written only by human authors, etc. What’s the answer to these big questions? We depend on navigation apps today to help us get to our desired destinations. How much more can we depend on God’s word for navigating through life? Through the Bible, God tells us to obey authorities. Life is like flying in foggy weather; some of us try to look into the future, and we can’t see what’s waiting for us. We can’t predict what will happen tomorrow, but God does and so He gives us His word, and His authorities to guide us.

What is Biblical obedience? The word for obedience in the Old Testament is “shama”, which means, to hear, understand and submit to (obey). In the New Testament, it’s (hupakoe/hupakuou: listen attentively; submit to what is heard), which means to say that whether you hear the voice of God, or the voice of His appointed authority, we should submit. It is related to faith and trust. We refuse to obey because we think we know better! We are to trust the Lord that He can use even imperfect people to guide us.

If we obey Jesus, we will experience the manifest Presence of God (**John 14:3**). Obedience to God and His appointed authority shows not only our faith and trust, but also our love for Jesus. If we love God, we will obey!

Biblical obedience is attentively and humbly listening to and obeying what God says in His word and through His appointed authorities, as our expression of trust in Him and love for Him. Obey and be blessed! What kind of blessing can we expect from the Lord?

God tells Joshua to be strong and courageous; He commanded Joshua to obey all that Moses (Joshua’s “boss”) told him to do (**Joshua 1:6-7**). The result of such obedience is “to act wisely, prudently”. We need wisdom more than we care to admit or realize. God also told Joshua to meditate on the “Book of the Law” that Moses wrote (**Joshua 1:8-9**). Keep repeating it to yourself so that you will be careful to obey all that is written on it so that you will be prosperous (progress, go forward). God’s design for your life is to make us more like Jesus. The more obedient we are, the more we become like Jesus. The absolute blessing is God’s Presence!

THE BLESSING OF PERSONAL REWARD

Moses told twelve men to spy out the Promised Land for forty days before the Israelites would enter it; among those men were Joshua and Caleb. The men came back to give a report to Moses; ten out of the twelve spies gave a bad report of what they saw in the land (**Numbers 13:32-33**). But Joshua and Caleb encouraged the people with God’s promises. However, the people listened to the ten other spies and wanted to get rid of Moses. God brought judgment upon this rebellious group. Even though

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they grumbled against Moses, God considered it as against Him (**Numbers 14:29-30**)! Out of their generation, only Joshua and Caleb eventually entered the Promised Land. We can expect personal blessings when we obey because God is our Rewarder! Some personal blessings of obedience could be protection from sin and its consequences, wisdom, knowing God's will, etc.

THE BLESSING OF BLESSING OTHERS

This blessing is even greater than personal blessing (**Acts 20:35**). There was an issue that came up in the early church regarding the neglect of Greek widows and orphans. To address this, the apostles chose seven men to distribute food to those in need; Philip was one of them (**Acts 6:1-7**). Later on, Philip proclaimed Christ wherever he went (**Acts 8:5-8**). He was instructed to go somewhere else where he met a government official from Ethiopia who came to worship in Jerusalem (**Acts 8:26-27**). God commanded Philip to join this official in his chariot, shared about Jesus with him and led the Ethiopian eunuch to believe in Christ and be baptized (**Acts 8:28-39**). A greater blessing of obedience is being a blessing to others!

THE BLESSING OF PLEASING GOD

Jesus obeyed his parents (**Luke 2:51**). "God submitted to man. The God-child obeyed His mere human parents...the Son of God, Himself worthy of limitless worship and praise...God Himself in human flesh subjected Himself to two average, ordinary, inexperienced parents (David Mathis). What an amazing example of submission to God-appointed human authority! Years later, Jesus was very pointed about submission to government in paying taxes (**Matthew 22:19-21**). The issue is not whether the government is corrupt, or not but that we obey authority. Jesus obeyed the Father (**John 14:31**) and the result was that God was pleased with Jesus (**Matthew 17:5**). Wouldn't you want to hear that from our Heavenly Father? The greatest blessing of obedience is knowing that God is pleased with us.

We may struggle with obeying authority, but as long as what they do not ask us to do anything that goes against God's will we are to submit. If authority goes against God's word, we must not obey them (**Acts 5:28-29**). However, we can appeal to authority to reconsider their decision; we can also pray because God can change the heart of even the most powerful person (**Proverbs 21:1**). Many times though, it is our hearts that is changed to trust the Lord. Submit to governing authority in our everyday lives (**Romans 13:1-2**), to our superiors at work (**1 Peter 2:18**), spiritual leaders (**Hebrews 13:17**), to husbands (**Ephesians 5:22-23**) and to our parents (**Ephesians 6:1-3**).

The greatest act of obedience in the history of mankind was that of Jesus on the cross (**Philippians 2:8**). Jesus will always be the prime example of both humility and obedience; His greatest act of obedience led to our greatest blessing of salvation!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What challenges or struggles do you have in obeying God's word? What is the root cause? How can you overcome these challenges or struggles?

2. Setting It Right.

What challenges or struggles do you have in obeying God's appointed authorities in your life? What is the root issue? How can you overcome these challenges or struggles?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people you know who grumble and rebel against God, or His appointed human authority. Be pleasing to the Lord and be an example of someone who obeys God's word and His appointed leaders. Talk to others about Jesus and how He submitted to the Father's will, giving His life for us on the cross that we may be forgiven and reconciled to God.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort for the Sudanese people caught in violence and conflict.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; tension in East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.
- Continue to pray for the rest of Israeli hostages to be restored back to their families safely. Pray for Israel and the war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- For the recent political and social upheaval in the US to result in spiritual awakening in the church and a great spiritual harvest.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders; pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

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