LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

Liberty University
DigitalCommons@Liberty University

Discipleship Materials

Center for Global Ministries

1-1-2009

Step 7: What does God expect of me in regards to my Obedience?

Don Fanning
Liberty University, dfanning@liberty.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgm_disc_mat

Fanning, Don, "Step 7: What does God expect of me in regards to my Obedience?" (2009). *Discipleship Materials.* Paper 7.
http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgm_disc_mat/7

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Global Ministries at DigitalCommons@Liberty University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Discipleship Materials by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Liberty University. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunication@liberty.edu.

OBEDIENCE

1 John 2:3

What?

1. Do God's will in everything.
2. <u>It is not</u>:
— Serving God according to our own criteria
— Asceticism
— Legalism

Why?

1. Because God is trustworthy.
2. Because obedience proves our love for Him.
3. Because God demands it.

How?

Step 4
Learn to stand against temptation.
1 Co 10:13

Step 3
<u>Have the correct attitude:</u>
1. Delight yourself in doing God's will.
Psa 40:8
2. Do it with confidence.
Deut. 26:16
3. Be sincere.
Lu 8:15

Step 2
Trust in the power of God for obedience.
Phil 4:13
Acts 1:8

Step 1
Know God's commands.
2 Ti 3:16, 17

LIVE OBEDIENTLY

The secret for a purposeful and fruitful Christian life comes from obedience to the Word of God and the motivating work of the Holy Spirit. In **1 John 2:3-4** the Bible says that a man who says he knows the Lord, but does not obey His commandments is a "liar." Why is he called a "liar"?

_____

If a man knows the "Lord" (or Master), he should, therefore, be obedient to what He says. If he is not obeying, he does not know Him as Lord. Match the benefits on the left with the verses on the right. You must read each passage.

- ❒ We find rest and peace when we are obedient. a. John 14:21
- ❒ We find more intimacy in our relationship with God. b. 1 John 3:21-22
- ❒ We feel God's presence with us. c. Prov 3:5-6
- ❒ We find direction and guidance for our lives. d. Mt 11:28-29
- ❒ We find new confidence in prayer. e. Phil 4:9

What does obedience mean ?

The dictionary defines obedience as, "the state of act of being submissive to another." According to this definition, which of the following phrases do you understand as truth?

- ❒ Obedience is following the path of least resistance.
- ❒ We must be obedient to an external authority.
- ❒ Obedience is being resentful and stingy with our response to what is demanded.
- ❒ Obedience is the attitude of yielding ourselves to God's way as we trust in His knowledge of what is best.

You should have chosen the second and fourth statements. Some believers live their lives refusing to yield themselves to God's way, because they are afraid that He might ask something of them that they are not willing to give. If the truth be known, if they would yield their lives to the Lord, they would

discover that He would never ask them to do anything they were not suited for. In the meantime, their rebellion and refusal will cause them to lose God's blessing on their lives. Which of the following words reflects submissive obedience ?

- ❒ Receptivity
- ❒ Vulnerability
- ❒ Confidence
- ❒ Honesty

If, in reality, we **trust** God, it is easy for us to obey Him in everything. We frequently try to serve God according to our way, in our spare time. Though this is better than nothing, it does not show submission to His authority. Which statements below best expresses this attitude ?

- ❒ "I will go to church once a week. Why should I go more often ?"
- ❒ "They just want my money. I'm going to give only when I feel like it."
- ❒ "I will forgive him only when he tells me 'I'm sorry', and not a second before."
- ❒ "I do not agree with that leader's ideas, and I'm going to oppose him."

When a person thinks he can serve God by following his own **ideas**, he is wrong. Each one of the anterior sentences violates Scriptural commandments; However, they are the thoughts of many Christians.

Some think that obedience means losing the possibility of having fun and giving up personal possessions to appear humble. This is a form of **Asceticism**: depriving one's self and suffering in order to be spiritual. If we trust God with our lives, what promise do we have in **Psalms 37:4**?

_____

_____

Each one of us wants to receive the "petitions" or the desires of our hearts, but the obedient believer has the promise of God, that he will have them.

For some, an external or superficial conformity to *man's rules* is sufficient. It makes them feel more spiritual. In Isaiah 29:13, the prophet gives three negative descriptions of this superficial obedience. Write the three descriptions below.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Step 7: Discipline of Obedience

When a person attempts to more acceptable to God with words or deeds that men think are spiritual, thinking he needs to be more perfect, he is simply following *man's rules* in an effort to be more spiritual. This is called "***legalism.***" These "rules" become more important than God's commands. How did the people of Jesus' day treat God's commands compared with their traditions of right and wrong? (see Mark 7:9 for the answer)

_____

_____

Obedience is the heart attitude of yielding to any command of the Word God while depending on the power of the Spirit to obey it.

Why should we be obedient?

Motivation is always a special ingredient that precedes an action. So then, a believer must be motivated in order to be obedient. Can you put in one sentence why the believer should be obedient from your reading of **Revelation 4:11?** _____

_____

In the first place, we should be obedient because He is **worthy** of glory, honor and power, because He has created everything for His pleasure.

It is easy to obey a person who loves us profoundly, as He loves us. In **1 John 4:9,** how do we know God loves us? _____

_____

By sending His Son, God showed us how much He loves us. Therefore, He who loves us so much deserves our trust and obedience.

In second place, to love God means to **keep His commandments.** If we say we love God, what should we do? (See **1 John 5:3**) _____

_____

To Love God means to **keep His commandments**. We are not talking about sentimentalism, but about yielding ourselves to the will of God revealed in the Bible. If we love God by keeping His commandments, what additional benefits will we receive according to **John 14:21**? _____

_____

Wonderful! We will be loved by the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, will manifest himself to us in a special way. How exciting!

We are always obeying someone's desires, whether it is ours or someone else's. In Ro**mans 6:16,** thus what are we called? _____
_____

What opinions or choices do we have?

A person who always does the will of another is a *slave*. As believers, we can **choose our master**: sin (**disobedience**) which leads us to death and corruption; or **obedience** which leads us to justice and abundant life In **Romans 6:22** what are the benefits of being a slave to obedience? _____
_____

In **third place**, we should be obedient for the reasons found in the following verses. What does our obedience show?

Deut 10:12-13 _____
_____

Deut 8:2-3 _____
_____

James 1:22 _____
_____

1 John 5:2-3 _____
_____

In each verse we have seen that He expects us to be obedient only because **He told us to obey.** According to**1 Timothy 6:14,** to what extent should we be obedient? _____
_____

If we should obey Him "without spot or blame" then we should be obedient with a sincere heart simply because He **as asked it of us**, without trying to get something for doing it. He can not be manipulated by our obedience.

How do we become obedient?

In today's world it is not easy to be obedient because we must change or do things that cost us. There are **four steps necessary to achieve an obedient life**. In the following verses find the first step (or principle) to be obedient:

Psalm 119:9, 11 _____
Palm 119:73 _____

Palm 119:129 _____

The first step is in each verse: the **need to know and understand the commands** before they can be obeyed. We must grow more in the knowledge of the Word in order to understand what He wants us to do. Do you even know the Ten Commandments? Did you know that there are 183 commands in the NT for us to obey? Can you see the importance of being in a church that teaches the Bible?

According to Philippians 1:9, what should continue growing in our lives?
_____

How does knowledge (of the Word of God) help us grow according to Philippians 1:10? _____

This knowledge helps us choose "better" things, according to the Word of God.

a. The first step is to know… _____

Once we know the commands of God, then we need power to do them. It is evident that in our own strength we will fail. If we are going to obey, we need His power to strengthen us. How do these verses describe that power?

Acts 1:8 _____

Galatians 2:20 _____

Ephesians 5:18 _____

Philippians 4:13 _____

The second step in each verse is a promise of the **power of Christ that enables us to obey**. Obedience will be impossible without the power of the Spirit, which enables us to be obedient. Now we know that the first two steps for obedience are:

a. Know the … _____

b. Trust in God for … _____

What should be our attitude toward obedience? Write the answer in your own words:

Psa 40:8 _____

Deut. 26:16 _____

Luke 8:15 _____

The <u>third step</u> toward obedience is **to have the right attitude.** Obedience comes from the heart; a determination to keep God's Word out of love and gratitude for Him. Attitude! What was Paul's attitude at being enabled to be victorious in 2 Corinthians 2:14? _____

_____

The <u>fourth step</u> is the capacity to have **Victory over temptation**. We will study temptation in the next lesson. Look up 1 Co 10:13. In this verse there are three principle ideas. Write each idea in your own words.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

All believers face temptation, but God will limit those temptations to the level that we are able to resist, if we are depending on His provision.
The following is a list of areas in your life in which you must discover and apply the instructions from God's Word. Once you learn and understand God's commands, you are on the road to obedience… and reaping all the benefits of such a life.

- ❒ Witness
- ❒ Involvement in a church
- ❒ Prayer
- ❒ Giving
- ❒ Bible study and quiet time
- ❒ Work
- ❒ Use of time
- ❒ Marital relationships
- ❒ Priorities
- ❒ Discipline of children
- ❒ World evangelism

REVIEW # 7: OBEDIENCE

1. What differentiates a true believer from a "liar"?

   _____

2. Our obedience reflects an attitude toward God of T_____

3. There are three wrong ways of thinking about obedience. Write them:

   a. Follow our own I_____

   b. A_____ is to deny ourselves certain conveniences or possessions in order to seem spiritual.

   c. L_____ is when we feel "spiritual" because of conforming to certain norms of conduct.

4. Write the three things that motivate us to obey:

   a. Because He is W_____

   b. Because loving God means K_____ His commandments.

   c. Because God A_____ us to.

5. Write the four steps toward obedience:

   a. Know God's C_____ .

   b. Trust God for the P_____

   c. Develop the right A_____ .

   d. Learn how to have V_____ temptation.