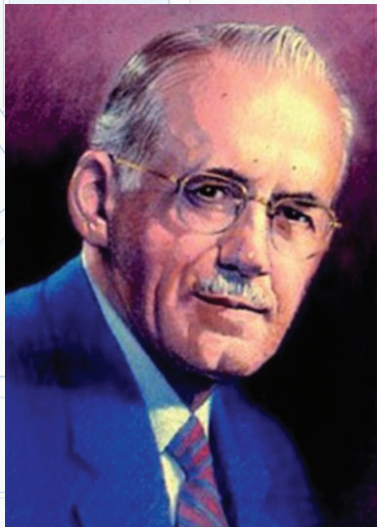


WARM UP



"The church of our day has soft-pedalled the doctrine of obedience, either neglecting it altogether or mentioning it only apologetically and without urgency. This results from a fundamental confusion of obedience with works in the minds of preacher and people. To escape the error of salvation by works, we have fallen into the opposite error of salvation without obedience. In our eagerness to get rid of the legalistic doctrine of works, we have thrown the baby out with the bathwater and gotten rid of obedience as well." A.W. Tozer

READ Ephesians 5:23-33

QUESTIONS

1. If Jesus learned obedience through suffering, how has suffering (or trials and afflictions) taught you the lesson of obedience? Discuss with examples.
2. What reward was promised for obedience in our key verse? What reward was promised to Israel in Exodus 19:5? Note: It didn't say the blessing was to all who accept Him or believe in Him, but to those who obey Him. Discuss the difference between these 3 responses.

BACKGROUND

True Christianity is not so much truth to be believed as it is truth to be done because it is believed!

We need to ask ourselves what is sin? The answer is spelled out clearly in 1 John 3:4, *"Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness."* The Living Bible puts it more simply, *"...every sin is done against the will of God"*. So disobedience in its simplest form is **going against the will of God**; man's will crossing the will of God – doing your own thing instead of God's. Obedience is the progressive act of bringing our lives into conformity with the revealed will of God.

3. In Deuteronomy 28:1-13 we have a list of blessings that Israel would experience if they obeyed God's word. Read it and offset these blessings against the curses that God said would come upon them if they disobeyed Him (Deut 28:15-68). Relate some of the blessings you have received as a result of your obedience. For those who have learned the hard way, share your experiences as well.



CONSIDER THIS

Jesus said, *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father..."* (John 14:21). That, I believe, sums up the greatest benefit that all those who obey Him will enjoy, not only here in this world, but in the world to come. Jesus spelled it out clearly when He said: *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."* (John 14:15). Those commandments extend to the commandment of the Spirit written upon the table of the heart. That's not legalism, that's obedience!

7:20

IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER

MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER

I will be committed to uphold the #1 Promise of a Promise Keeper, which is to "Honour Jesus Christ through worship, prayer and **obedience to God's Word** in the power of the Holy Spirit."



WRAP UP

For those who really mean business with God, may I challenge you to pray David's prayer out loud, *"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."* (Psalm 139:23-24). May God search out any area of disobedience in our lives, and help us to put it right!