

There are many who profess to know God, but by their deeds, they actually deny Him, revealing their disobedience, **Titus 1:15-16**, *“Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”* As we have already stated, to believe is to obey, for true faith always produces a desire to obey (**Romans 7:18**). In **Romans 6:17**, conversion is characterized as obedience, *“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”*

“Although we are sure that men are not saved for
the sake of their works,
yet we are equally sure that no man will be saved
without them.”

- Spurgeon

*“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said,
We ought to obey God rather than men.”*

Acts 5:29

“Faith is the starting point of obedience.”

- Thomas Chalmers



Victory Baptist Church
Pastor Robert W. Reed
14473 Bellingrath Road
P.O. Box 257
Coden, Alabama 36523
(251) 873-4422

*“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”*
Acts 16:31

The **RICHIES** OF GRACE

Robert W. Reed
February 2008

"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

Obedience

“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.”

I Samuel 15:22-23

+ Christianity is Obedience +

Obedience can be defined as compliance to God, keeping His commandments, and submitting to His authority. It is the opposite of disobedience.

One author described obedience as the positive side of repentance. Obedience is evidence of genuine faith in Jesus Christ and a right relationship to God. In a world filled with rebellion, our obedience is a sure sign of our love for the law of Christ. Obedience flows out of love (**John 14:15, 23-24**). This love for God and His Word is a result of the new birth (**II Corinthians 5:14**). Obedience is a work of God in the heart of the believer, starting with faith. Amen.

“Believing and obeying always run side by side.”

-C. H. Spurgeon

This article addresses the importance, the consequences, and the reward of obedience. God wants His people to obey and follow Him. In every aspect of our lives we are to be obedient. For example, children are to obey their parents (**Ephesians 6:1**), servants are to obey their masters (**Ephesians 6:5**), wives are to obey their husbands (**Titus 2:5**), citizens are to obey the magistrates (**Titus 3:1**), the church obeys the pastor (**Hebrews 13:17**), and every Christian is to obey God (**Acts 5:29**).

THE IMPORTANCE OF OBEDIENCE

In **Romans 5:19**, one act of disobedience plunged the entire world into darkness and one act of obedience reconciled the world, *“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”* The Bible clearly reveals the obedience of Jesus Christ (**Philippians 2:7-8**; **Hebrews 5:8**; **10:5-8**; **12:2**). Without His obedience, there is no salvation, eternal life, nor Kingdom of God.

Christianity began with obedience. There is no salvation without obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ (**Romans 10:16**; **II Thessalonians 2:8**). Faith begins with obedience (**Romans 1:5**, **16**; **6:16-17**; **10:16**; **16:19**, **25-26**). We are told in **Acts 6:7** that a great company of priests were obedient to the faith. “Believe” is synonymous with “obey” in **John 3:36**, *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”* These two words are inseparable throughout Scripture. To believe is to obey and any other concept is foreign. Disobedience is always connected with unbelief, and faith is associated with faithfulness (**I Peter 4:17-18**; **II Thessalonians 1:8**; **2: 9-12**). Many of the reformers put it this way, “Faith alone brings salvation, but the faith that brings salvation is never alone.”

THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE

The Bible plainly speaks about the consequences of disobedience in **I Samuel 15:22-23**, *“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and*

stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.” According to the context, King Saul had disobeyed the Lord's command and the end result was that he lost fellowship with the Lord, his kingdom and even his own life (**I Samuel 15:22-28**; **28:6**, **17-18**; **I Chronicles 10:13-14**). His partial obedience was rejected by the Lord. He had failed to do all that was commanded of him. He went as far as to rationalize his rebellion but judgment came. He had brought a sacrifice without obedience which is only sacrilege (**I Samuel 15:21**). We are told in **verses 22 and 23** that to obey is better than sacrifice. God has some strong language in connection with rebellion and stubbornness. They are as witchcraft and idolatry. The best measure of a man's spiritual life is obedience. There is only one cure for disobedience and that is obedience (**Isaiah 1:11**, **15**, **18-19**).

THE REWARD OF OBEDIENCE

The first time that obedience is mentioned in the Bible is in **Genesis 22:18**, *“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”* In the context, blessings and promises are the reward of obedience (**verses 12-18**). Abraham obeyed God in that he was willing to sacrifice his son as a burnt offering, and God reaffirmed all the previous promises that He had made to Abraham (**Genesis 12:1-3**; **15:1-21**; **17:1-19**). His obedience brought God's favor upon himself and his family. The Bible describes Abraham's faith and obedience in **Hebrews 11:18-19**. In **James 2:19-24**, he is called a friend of God, for he was a doer of the Word and not a hearer only. The Lord has many rewards for the obedient Christian.

IN CONCLUSION

According to **Matthew 7:21-23**, obedience, not profession, is the test of discipleship, *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?”* As one author put it, “Obedience is the positive side of repentance.” In **I Peter 1:14**, Peter designates believers as “obedient children.”