

Obedience

by Bryan Gibson

“By faith Abraham obeyed...” (Hebrews 11:8). Now, let’s insert our name in the place of Abraham, because what he did is what we must do. Here’s a look at what the Bible teaches about obedience—in outline form.

The Perfect Example of Obedience, Jesus Christ

Jesus “was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15; see also John 8:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5).

Jesus obeyed His Father in heaven (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29, 55; Hebrews 5:8), “to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8).

Jesus obeyed the governing authorities (Matthew 17:24-27; Mark 12:13-17).

Jesus obeyed His parents (Luke 2:51).

Our Obedience—Required by God in Various Relationships

Children must obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20; Romans 1:30; 2 Timothy 3:2).

Wives must obey their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1-6).

Servants must obey their masters, and by the same principle, employees must obey their employers (Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-25; 1 Peter 2:18-25).

Citizens must obey their rulers (Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

Members of a local church must obey their elders, or shepherds (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

If any of these authority figures tell us do anything in conflict with God’s will, “we must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Our Obedience to God

Manner of obedience—“from the heart” (Romans 6:17; Ephesians 6:6); “willingly” or “eagerly” (1 Peter 5:2); “not grudgingly or of necessity” (2 Corinthians 9:7); “with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12).

Extent of obedience—“all things,” or “all the will of God” (Matthew 28:20; Acts 3:22; 2 Corinthians 2:9; Colossians 4:13), including “every thought” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Like Jesus, we must be willing to obey God “to the point of death” (Acts 21:13; Revelation 2:10).

The power behind our obedience—the grace of God (2 Corinthians 5:14-15), which produces faith, love, and hope (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3; John 14:21, 23; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians 5:6; 1 John 3:3; 5:3).

Concluding Passages

“Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it” (Luke 11:28).

“For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother” (Matthew 12:50).

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

“And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:9).

“And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:17).