



The Link

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A quarterly non-denominational publication to the body of Christ

“If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land” Isaiah 1:19(NIV)

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EDITORIAL

Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ will soon come. While we await His coming, He has given much instruction to His bride, the Church and He is still speaking to us today. It is expected of the Church today to arise and continue to obey Him in all things, and seek to please Him.

If Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ is present with us today, she will instruct us again and again “**whatsoever He says to you, do it**” (John 2:5). We trust that the Lord will prosper His Church, He will make us great, shinning for His glory but we ought to obey Him before we can begin to experience the atmosphere of great happenings.

We don't know what God is saying to you now, but He will speak to you. We don't know what the Lord has spoken to you before now, but He may not speak to you again if you will not obey Him in what He has said.

Brethren, the Lord will reveal more of His ways and what He expects from you. As you read take appropriate action and the Lord will make your life a blessing and bless you in Jesus name.

We love you dearly and trust God to be a blessing to you through this outreach.

Thank you for all your comments through the feedback form [(please we will love to read from you soon, use this form (inserted)] & your phone calls and messages. Thanks for all words of encouragements to us. May the Lord continue to give us opportunity to reach you.

Praise God for His grace to be available to serve you through this ministry.

Yours in His Service,

'Segun Ajayi

THE WAY OF OBEDIENCE

'Segun Ajayi

"....To this man will I look, even to Him thattrembles at my word" (Isaiah 66:2)

Obedience, in the New Testament usage, means to give earnest attention to the word, to submit to its authority and to carry out its instructions. It also means doing what God tells us to do and doing it the way He wants it done.

Obedience in this sense is almost a dead word in modern day Christianity. It may be taught now and then in a relaxed sort of way, but it is not stressed sufficiently to give it power over the lives of the hearers. Severally when we teach obedience it is to enforce our authority over the lives of men we lead but not actually to enshrine God's ways and will in the lives of these men.

The Church in our day has soft-pedalled on the doctrine of obedience, either neglecting it altogether or mentioning it apologetically and without urgency. Today we emphasize so much of faith without a corresponding emphasis on obedience. No wonder we seem to be getting little result of our shouts of faith. The word 'believe' has been made double for "obey" in the minds of millions of Christians. The result is a host of mental Christians whose characters are malformed and whose lives are all out of proportion. So many are not living the kind of lives that demonstrate whom we said we believe. Imagination has been mistaken for faith, and belief has been robbed of its moral content and made to be little more than an assent to gospel in the rarefied air of imagination that it seems next to impossible to relate them to reality. Disobedience has paralysed their moral legs and dissolved their backbones, and they slump down in a spongy heap of religious theory, believing everything ardently, but obeying nothing at all.

Indeed, they are deeply shocked at the very mention of the word 'obey'. To them it smacks of heresy and self-righteousness. But we trust the Lord that as we discuss deeply on this subject of obedience many shall be drawn to God and begin to tremble at the word of God again to consider doing according to what God expects of His children. We shall all experience a great awakening and great signs and wonders shall be done in His name as we walk to please Him before He returns again (Amen).

What will our walk of obedience show?

Our obedience to God is so vital as people that profess Christ because it is the foundation of our walk with the Lord. When Jesus came, it is not strange that His mother, Mary gave out an instruction (before the first miracle that Jesus Christ performed, turning water to wine, took place) "*whatever He says to you, do it*" (John 2:5); when the servants carried out Christ's instructions to fill the pots with water and fetch it unto the guests without questioning or rationalizing they experienced a miracle. I am so sure this set of servants must have ended up becoming a follower of the Lord Jesus. Our obedience will show us the path of great experience and miracle and will make us to become His followers.

As many of us that thought we are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we need to examine ourselves. The reason why we have not experienced great things and not being used for great exploits is because we are not ready to carry out what instructions he has given us.

When we carry out His instructions, we will not only see great things but the world we see that we actually follow the Lord because He will readily work with us to sweeten the lives of men and women with the new wine of His spirit

Furthermore, we want to see some other things that our walk of obedience will show:

1. It will show that we are indeed children of God. The manner of lives we live will quite be different from that of the world. It will be obvious without any self-advertisement that we are the children of God. ***Godly living and righteousness characterize the way of obedience.***

"This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother" 1John 3:10 (NIV) - To do what is right or love the brethren are actions that will have their foundation in obedience to every command to live right and love. No one can live a righteous life without obeying totally the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ; neither can anyone love his brethren without living according to God's commands regarding love of the brethren.

In 1 John 2:3-4, the bible says, *“we know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says ‘I know Him, but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him”*

2. It will show that we love the Lord

Brethren, you cannot say you love someone you do not obey. If indeed we claim we love the Lord it will show in our passion to please Him.

In 1 John 5: 2-3 the scripture says-- *“This is how we know that we love the children of God; by loving God and carrying out His commands. This is love for God; to obey his commands. And His commands are not burdensome”*(NIV)

Jesus Christ say in John 14:23-24 *“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teachings. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teachings...”*

Let us examine ourselves; do we actually love the Lord? Are we sure we are obedient to Him in all things. Do we not rationalize and begin to excuse ourselves over instructions He gives; that some things are not meant for our culture or for us today? Who are we to believe? Our culture, our world today or Christ that gave us the instructions. May the Lord open our hearts and lead us back to Him, so that His presence and His Father’s presence will be restored to us.

3. It shows we are not out to please ourselves but to please Him.

Men and brethren, we are in a generations that do not have regards for pleasing the Lord. Everyone wants to do things in a particular way or do things to satisfy themselves or to gain particular thing not minding the instructions the Lord has issued out concerning various things.

In fact, if many are to be sincere, several things we do today are devoid of God’s instructions. So many things are being done to satisfy carnal desires and please ourselves.

To everyman that the Lord has called unto himself He has instructions already given in His word. He is willing to give specific instructions to us to the intent that we will be able to do all things to please Him. So many of us do not care for details of what the Lord will want us to do. We set up our own ways and decide to do things the way we like and we will return to the Lord only when we have pleased ourselves

either to thank Him or ask Him to rubber stamp what decisions we have made. At the end we make a shipwreck of the expectation of God and sacrifice dearly for our foolhardiness. May the Lord deliver us.

Remember, obedience is better than sacrifice; it is better for us to get instructions, carry them out accordingly than come back to make offerings and sometimes shed tears on altars.

Even Christ pleased not Himself. He pleased His Father *“For even Christ pleased not Himself...”* (Rom 15:3a)

Sometime pleasing Christ may not be altogether what may please us, but remember through the obedience of Christ we found salvation (Romans 5:9); Whatever He will expect us to do we ought to do it to please Him. No greater thing to do to Him who pleased His Father by suffering to bring us to God again; *He learnt obedience from what he suffered and once made perfect, he became the author of salvation for all those who obey him...”*(Heb 5:8-9) We ought to obey Him, which is our act of service to Him.

Examples of those that obey Him

The way of obedience cannot be conclusive if the lives of men that have gone before us do not challenge and motivate us to so walk in obedience to God.

Abraham

Abraham was instructed in Gen 12 to leave his country, his people and his father’s house to a land that God would show him. He was promised blessings; God promised to make him great and to be a blessing.

Abram, as he was called then, departed at the instructions of the Lord. It was not difficult for Abram to obey the Lord; he wanted to please the Lord not knowing where he was actually going. He later sojourned in the land God promised him as a stranger, dwelling in tents and tabernacles.

As at the time his name was changed to Abraham, the father of many nations, his wife Sarai still has no child for him, yet he believed God and obeyed God; God continued to instruct him to walk before Him and be perfect; at this time, I am so sure, many of us would have discarded God’s instructions and would have stopped following the Lord and probably would have thought of returning back to Haran.

When the Lord eventually made Sarah to conceive, the Lord gave Abraham an instruction to sacrifice his son Isaac to Him (Gen 22: 2). Abraham obeyed God; He withheld not this child from God and later experienced God's provision and further blessings and promises (Gen 22: 16-18). This is a wonderful thing for us to learn regarding obedience. As we follow the Lord and obey Him and we are ready to risk our lives, go on difficult journeys for Him, rid ourselves of things that are precious to us, in obedience to His instructions, we shall surely hear His voice pronouncing blessings and promises. We shall see Him providing and meeting with us every step of the way. Abraham cannot be forgotten; He has many seed (as the stars) following him, including as many as have come to believe in Christ as a result of his obedience. His obedience was regarded as righteousness. Praise God.

Brethren for us to get into the Promised Land, heaven, whose builder and maker is the Lord, we need to walk in obedience; for us to be accounted as righteous because heaven is only for the righteous. Have you been walking to please the Lord? Do you consider Him who promised you faithful? Do you follow Him in all things?

Noah

Noah is another man that is worthy of mentioning; when men's wickedness began to grieve God (Gen 6: 5-6) and the Lord purposed to destroy man from the surface of the earth, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and God instructed him to build an ark for Him. The Lord gave specific instructions on how the ark is supposed to be (Gen 6:14-16) and the instructions regarding how to bring creatures into it. It is recorded that Noah did according to all God instructed him (Gen 6:22). It was not recorded how easy or difficult it was for Noah to work alone (I am so sure he did), and how much effort & resources he put into building the ark, but we were made to know that He obeyed the Lord.

So many times the Lord will give instructions to us, do we not begin to complain and grumble? Do we not begin to despise the instructions we were given as whether they are from God or not? Do we not consider that it is not easy to do what the Lord instructs us to do? Do we not actually do what seems easy for us?

Hebrews 11:7 recorded that Noah was moved by fear and prepared the ark to the saving of his household

(Gen 7: 7) It was recorded that God blessed Noah and his sons (Gen 9:1) after his acts of obedience.

After your obedience comes God's blessing.

The Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ our perfect example of obedience and the author of our faith is also a personality to mention. He said in John 5:30b, that *He seeks not His own will but the will of His father*. A testimony was given to this effect that he was faithful to the father that appointed Him (Heb 3:2). His father acknowledged this that in Him, He is well pleased (Mathew 3:17)

Brethren, it certain that except we are in Christ, actually we cannot walk to please the Lord. It is only in Christ that we can walk in obedience to the will of God.

Christ perfected obedience once more by what He suffered: Rejection, shame, bruises and eventually died a painful death to bring you and myself to the Father, so that He can please His Father. It is not very easy to arrive at this point for the Lord Jesus Christ, but there after He earned a name that is above every other name; "*At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow*" (Phil. 2: 9-10); Praise God.

If we will learn to walk in obedience, we are walking on the way to greatness. We will be made to sit in high places with Christ Jesus far above principalities and dominions.

How much of reproach, shame, rejection, bruises are you willing to suffer on the path of obedience to your Lord? Are you willing to be different from the world out there and be rejected of men? Are you prepared to pay the price to become great in the hand of a mighty God?

We trust the Lord that the Lord will open our hearts and we will be called by a new name (the name by the Lord), which will bring other powers unto their knees.

Walk in obedience and the Lord shall make you great in this generation in Jesus name. Surely, He will come for us soon. He is expecting the best from us when he appears. I surely trust God to perfect us in obedience to Him in Jesus name (Amen).

God bless you.

Obedience is better than Sacrifice or the Fat of Rams

'Kunbi Ajayi

Often times we tend to wonder why the Scriptures puts certain instructions in certain ways; for instance, have you considered why the Scriptures commands "rejoice in the Lord **always** and again I say rejoice" Phil 4:4 (why not **always**). Often times you will wonder why the Scripture says Obedience is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams (why not the horns of rams).

Why the fat of rams? The virtue, obedience, must be indeed very great an all-important one for it to be compared to the fat of rams as we would soon see.

The Fat of Rams: The fat of rams was prominent in usage in the Old Testament as it pertains to the offerings, rituals and sacrifices of the nation of Israel. Let us quickly take a look at some references made to the fat of rams:

1. Exodus 23:18 "*Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the **fat of my sacrifice** remain until the morning*"

Here the fat of rams is an important element of the sacrifice.

2. Exodus 29:13,21,22

*"Then take all the **fat around the inner parts**, the covering of the liver, and both kidneys with the fat on them, and burn them on the altar".*

"And take some of the blood on the altar and some of the anointing oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments and on his sons and their garments. Then he and his sons and their garments will be consecrated."

*"Take from this ram the **fat**, the fat tail, the fat around the inner parts, the covering of the liver, both kidneys with the fat on them, and the right thigh. (This is the ram for the ordination.)"*(NIV)

It was used for ordination of priests.

3. Lev 3:3 "*From the fellowship offering he is to bring a sacrifice made to the LORD by fire: all the **fat that covers the inner parts or is connected to them***" (NIV)

It is referred to as an offering that gives the Lord much pleasure.

4. Lev 4:8-10 "*He shall remove all the fat from the bull of the sin offering-- **the fat** that covers the inner parts or is connected to them, both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins, and the covering of the liver, which he will remove with the kidneys--just as the fat is removed from the ox sacrificed as a **fellowship offering**. Then the priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering"*(NIV)

It is for a fellowship offering.

5. Lev 4: 13-22 & 26

26 He shall burn all the fat on the altar as he burned the fat of the fellowship offering. In this way the priest will make atonement for the man's sin, and he will be forgiven. (NIV)

Here the reference made to the fat of rams is for the propitiation and the forgiveness of the sins as a sin offering.

6. Num 18:17 "*But you must not redeem the firstborn of an ox, a sheep or a goat; they are holy. Sprinkle their blood on the altar and **burn their fat** as an offering made by fire, **an aroma pleasing to the LORD***"(NIV)

It is used for an offering by fire, which the Bible says it's very pleasing to the Lord.

[**Editor's Note:** We are not emphasising on this sacrifices or offerings, the writer is just taking this references to point our attention to some issues regarding obedience (as you will soon see)]

From the foregoing we can notice that the fat of ram is of very important spiritual significance but the bible says obedience is better than all of this. The bible is trying to say without your obedience your ordination, your sin offering, your thanksgiving offering, your fellowship offering and all that you may be presenting to the Lord, in your attempt to please Him and give Him pleasure, may amount to nothing.

What a serious discovery this is in I Samuel 15:22.

*...."Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? **To obey is better than sacrifice**, and to heed is better **than the fat of rams**.* (NIV)

This statement came as a result of Saul's disobedience; the disobedience in prosperity, when the Lord has given him victory over the Amalekites. What was his excuse? I hear you say he had none, he was downright disobedient; but he had an excuse, the kind of excuse we have for disobeying the Lord. He said "***The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the LORD your God at Gilgal***" 1 Samuel 15:21(NIV)

Is that not the same way some of us, as leaders and even followers, disobey the Lord?

The leaders will say that if I obey completely it will displease the people; it will go against the wish and the need of the people: How about the wish and need of the Lord?

Most times we do this knowingly and cover our sins in various ways; remember Saul said, "***The LORD bless you! I have carried out the Lord's instructions***" 1 Samuel 15:13(NIV)

He carried out the aspect that suited him. (He was given an instruction to "***go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.***" 1 Samuel 15:3 (NIV))

The same way we obey the Lord in the areas that suit us.

Let's look at 1 Samuel 15: 9, the Bible didn't say anything about the people imposing their will on Saul. He was the king anyway. Guess the things they didn't destroy, everything that was good!

*(But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs--**everything that was good.** These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed)*

1 Samuel 15:9(NIV)

They didn't destroy them, they didn't bat an eyelid at slaying men and women, infant and suckling as the Lord requested **but every other good thing was too good to be destroyed.** You can see yourself and myself in that picture.

We don't obey the Lord when it comes to the things we want, our desires, what will add to us, what will make us rich?

What is the end of such disobedience? Does it actually bring prosperity? Does it bring the pleasure of the Lord?

Saul claimed he feared the people.

*Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the Lord's command and your instructions. **I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them**".*

1 Samuel 15:24 (NIV)

He actually feared the people more than the Lord.

Just like we Christians today prefer pleasing the world.

Conforming to the world: the lust of the eyes, the lust of flesh and the pride of life. As many that have this, the scripture says the love of the Father is not in them. For friendship with the world is enmity with God. (1 John 2:15)

The Lord says if you love me you will obey my commandments.

Brethren what is the use of your ordination, your titles - the fat of rams? What is the use of all the offerings we bring to the Lord, all the donations, all the giving, all the songs and special programmes when we don't obey Him who has called us to glory and virtue

The Lord says He has no delight in all these things if you will not obey Him.

The Lord delights in your love. He says, "***How delightful is your love,...! How much more pleasing is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your perfume than any spice!***" Songs 4:10 (NIV)

He wants your love and the testimony of that love; the fragrance of it is your obedience in prosperity, in adversity, in season and out of season.

Let us stop accepting a form of godliness but denying the power thereof (2Timothy 3:5). The power of godliness comes with obedience.

If the Lord says **do not**, just don't give your own private interpretation. Don't rationalise it, just obey. The Bible says the commandments of the Lord are not burdensome (not difficult).

"This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome" 1 John 5:3 (NIV)

He will not tell you to do something He has not given you power to do.

Most of us are like Saul; we graduate from one level of disobedience to the other, till we completely sever our relationship with the Lord. Remember He took upon himself the duties of a priest.

"He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter. So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering. Just as he finished making the offering, Samuel arrived, and Saul went out to greet him"

1 Sam 13:8-10 (NIV)

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CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE

'Sesan Idowu

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous". Rom 5:19

"Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him"
Heb 5:8-9 (NIV)

The man whose life the Bible referred to here is our Lord Jesus Christ. He was a perfect example of obedience. He came in a very humble manner, born in a manger, not to a wealthy family but to a man who make his living in carpentry.

He lived for a short time; a very short time that had the whole wide world in awe. His life was characterised by obedience. He was obedient even to the death on the cross.

"And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!" Phil 2:8(NIV)

"Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father". Phil 2:9-11(NIV)

The whole story of Christ consists of living by obedience. During His whole ministry, from beginning to the end, obedience was His very essence. He said, "I came not to do my will but the will of my father".

Believers can we say this kind of statement today? Are you doing the will of God? As Christ came in obedience to His Father to connect us with God again, we ought to keep His commandments so that His Father will be our God"

"Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God". Ezek 11:20(NIV)

This will only happen when there is obedience; the kind that our Lord Jesus Christ showed unto His Father.

Christ made obedience possible

In Heb 5: 8-9 the Bible says, "*He learned obedience--*-----" Christ became a pupil in the school of obedience to show us the way. He showed us an example to make it known to us that obedience is possible. Since the world made us to believe it is humiliation to seek and live by God's will, Christ came to show us the blessedness, the realness of obedience and more so how noble it is.

How was he able to do this?

1. He made it a matter of principle

Jesus Christ said, "I have come **TO DO** thy will O God".

"Then I said, "Here I am-- it is written about me in the scroll-- I have come to do your will, O God." Heb 10:7(NIV)

This shows that to Him, it is a resolution, uncompromised and undiluted, TO DO the will of His Father. Little wonder then, obedience became the all-controlling power of His life even unto death.

2. He made it the source of His joy

Jesus Christ made obedience the source of joy in His life. He willingly obeyed His Father, with great delight. He said, "*I delight to do thy will, O God*" The one thing that invigorates and refreshes Him is to do the will of His Father that sent Him. It is His meat to Him to do His father will. Remember Him with the Samaritan woman.

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work" John 4:34(NIV)

You too can enjoy doing the will of God from your heart and enjoy the fullness of God riches.

"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue": 2 Pet 1:3(KJV)

You can tap into a relationship that brings you to greatness by living a life of obedience to God's will in your family, at work, in the ministry, etc.

A story for the Heart

The Unmoved Rock

Once upon a time, there was a man who was sleeping at night in his cabin when suddenly his room filled with light and the Saviour appeared. The Lord told the man He had work for him to do, and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might. This the man did, day after day. For many years he toiled from sun up to sun down, his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock, pushing with all his might.

Each night the man returned to his cabin sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain. Seeing that the man was showing signs of discouragement, Satan decided to enter the picture placing thoughts into the man's mind such as: "You have been pushing against that rock for a long time, and it hasn't budged. Why kill yourself over this? You are never going to move it." Thus giving the man the impression that the task was impossible and that he was a failure.

These thoughts discouraged and disheartened the man even more. "Why kill myself over this?" he thought. "I'll just put in my time, giving just the minimum of effort and that will be good enough." And that he planned to do until one day he decided to make it a matter of prayer and take his troubled thoughts to the Lord.

"Lord," he said, "I have laboured long and hard in your service, putting all my strength to do that which you have asked. Yet, after all this time, I have not even budged that rock a half a millimeter. What is wrong? Why am I failing?"

To this the Lord responded compassionately, "My child, when long ago I asked you to serve me and you accepted, I told you that your task

was to push against the rock with all your strength, which you have done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push.

And now you come to me, your strength spent, thinking that you have failed. But, is that really so? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled; your back sinewed and brown, your hands are callused from constant pressure, and your legs have become massive and hard. Through opposition, you have grown much and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. Yet you haven't moved the rock. **But your calling was to be obedient and to push and to exercise your faith and trust in My wisdom.** This you have done. I, my child, will now move the rock."

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Obedience is better than Sacrifice or the Fat of Rams

What was his excuse? The appointed time of waiting for Samuel (7 days) has passed. So he made the sacrifice himself. Is that also not your excuse for not obeying the Lord or obeying in part? The set time for your breakthrough is over so you begin to apply "wisdom". The set time for your marriage is past so you settle down with an unbeliever. You bend the rule here you bend it there and in the end you sacrifice unto God your money, your office, your title, etc.

Our God is not a dog; if He is hungry he will not ask you.

He delights more in your obedience, in your trust, than your sacrifice, than the fat of rams.

As soon as Saul offered the burnt offering Samuel came. A little waiting, a little more patience, a little longer in the place of obedience and he will not have been rejected by God.

My brethren judgement shall start in the house of faith, the standard of God stands sure having this seal: the Lord knows those who are his.

As you are waiting for His appearing, purify yourself as He is pure, the way of purity is a way of obedience. "If ye Love me" says the Lord "you will obey me".
HEARKEN TODAY, BE OBEDIENT

STUDY TIME: The Spirit-Filled Life

Everyday can be an exciting adventure for the Christian who knows the reality of being filled with the Holy Spirit and who lives constantly, moment by moment, under His gracious direction.

The Bible tells us that there are three kinds of people.

1. **Natural Man** (One who has not received Christ)

"A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

2. **Spiritual Man** (One who is directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit)

"He who is spiritual appraises all things...We have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:15).

3. **Carnal Man** (One who has received Christ, but who lives in defeat because he is trying to live the Christian life in his own strength)

"And I brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to carnal men, as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still carnal. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshy, and are you not walking like mere men?" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).

God has provided for us an abundant and fruitful Christian Life

Jesus said, *"I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (John 10:10). "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).*

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Spiritual Man should experience spiritual traits that result from trusting God:

"But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Galatians 5:22, 23).

The degree to which these traits are manifested in the life depends upon the extent to which the Christian trusts the Lord with every detail of his life, and upon his maturity in Christ.

One who is only beginning to understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit should not be discouraged if he is not as fruitful as more mature Christians who have known and experienced this truth for a longer period.

Why is it that most Christians are not experiencing the abundant life?

Carnal Christians cannot experience the abundant and fruitful Christian life. The carnal man trusts in his own efforts to live the Christian life and does not fully trust God:

1. He is either uninformed about, or has forgotten, God's love, forgiveness, and power
2. He has an up-and-down spiritual experience.
3. He cannot understand himself - he wants to do what is right, but cannot.
4. He fails to draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life.

(Romans 5:8-10; Hebrews 10:1-25; 1 John 1; 2:1-3; 2 Peter 1:9; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Romans 7:15-24; 8:7; Galatians 5:16-18)

Some or all of the following traits may characterize the carnal man.

(The individual who professes to be a Christian but who continues to practice sin should realize that he may not be a Christian at all, according to 1 John 2:3; 3:6, 9; Ephesians 5:5).

Jesus promised the abundant and fruitful life as the result of being filled (directed and empowered) by the Holy Spirit

The Spirit-filled life is the Christ-directed life by which Christ lives His life in and through us in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 15).

1. One becomes a Christian through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, according to John 3:1-8. From the moment of spiritual birth, the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian at all times (John 1:12; Colossians 2:9, 10; John 14:16, 17). Though the Holy Spirit indwells all Christians, not all Christians are filled (directed and empowered) by the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit is the source of the overflowing life (John 7:37-39).
3. The Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ (John 16:14-15). When one is filled with the Holy Spirit, he is a true disciple of Christ.
4. In His last command before His ascension, Christ promised the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to be witnesses for Him (Acts 1:1-9).

How, then, can one be filled with the Holy Spirit?

When the Holy Spirit fills us, then we can experience the abundant and fruitful life that Christ promised to every Christian.

You can appropriate the filling of the Holy Spirit **right now** if you:

1. Sincerely desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:6; John 7:37-39).
2. Confess your sins. By faith, thank God that He has forgiven all of your sins - past, present and future - because Christ died for you (Colossians 2:13-15; 1 John 1; 2:1-3; Hebrews 10:1-17).
3. Present every area of your life to God (Romans 12:1, 2).
4. By faith claim the fullness of the Holy Spirit, according to:

(a) His Command - *Be filled with the Spirit.*

"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18).

(b) His Promise - He will always answer when we pray according to His will.

"And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked of Him" (1 John 5:14, 15).

Faith can be expressed through prayer...

How to pray in faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit

We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone. However, true prayer is one way of expressing your faith. The following is a suggested prayer:

"Dear Father, I need You. I acknowledge that I have been directing my own life and that, as a result, I have sinned against You. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Christ to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as You commanded me to be filled, and as You promised in Your Word that You would do if I asked in faith. I now thank You for directing my life and for filling me with the Holy Spirit."

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If so, bow in prayer and trust God to fill you with the Holy Spirit right now.

How to know that you are filled (directed and empowered) with the Holy Spirit

Did you ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit? Do you know that you are now filled with the Holy Spirit? On what authority? (On the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word (Hebrews 11:6)) Do not depend upon feelings. The promise of God's Word, not our feelings, is our authority. The Christian lives by faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God Himself and His Word.

We as Christians do not depend upon feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God and the promises of His Word.

How to Walk in the Spirit

Faith (trust in God and in His promises) is the only means by which a Christian can live the Spirit-

directed life. As you continue to trust Christ moment by moment:

1. Your life will demonstrate more and more of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23) and will be more and more conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18).
2. Your prayer life and study of God's Word will become more meaningful.
3. You will experience His power in witnessing (Acts 1:8).
4. You will be prepared for spiritual conflict against the world (1 John 2:15-17); against the flesh (Galatians 5:16-17); and against Satan (1 Peter 5:7-9; Ephesians 6:10-13).
5. You will experience His power to resist temptation and sin (1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 1:19-23; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 6:1-16).

Spiritual Breathing

By faith you can continue to experience God's love and forgiveness.

If you become aware of an area of your life (an attitude or an action) that is displeasing to the Lord; repent today, and ask Him for His forgiveness and cleansing. As you want to walk with Him and sincerely desiring to serve Him, simply thank God that He has forgiven your sins past, present and future on the basis of Christ's death on the cross. Claim His love and forgiveness by faith and continue to have fellowship with Him.

If you retake the throne of your life through sin a definite act of disobedience, breathe spiritually. Spiritual breathing (exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure) is an exercise in faith that enables you to continue to experience God's love and forgiveness.

1. **Exhale** - confess your sin - agree with God concerning your sin and thank Him for His forgiveness of it, according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25. Confession involves repentance - a change in attitude and action.
2. **Inhale** - surrender the control of your life to Christ, and appropriate (receive) the fullness of the Holy Spirit by faith. Trust that He now directs and empowers you; according to the command of Ephesians 5:18, and the promise of 1 John 5:14, 15.

FRUITFULNESS

Dare Odeyemi

Fruitfulness means producing, having good results, being productive.

The desire of God for every one is to be fruitful.

"God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground" Gen 1:28(NIV)

Fruitfulness can be manifested or it can be experienced in every areas of one's life provided one is obedient.

To be fruitful is just a matter of choice.

"If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth". Deut 28:1(NIV)

"Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds" Isaiah 3:10(NIV).

Many have been offended and taken God to be wicked and unjust. This set of people has chosen to be disobedient children by not keeping to the laws of God.

We want to look at some of the things that can make a man to be fruitful:

Paying of tithes and offering

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty". Mal 3:10-11(NIV)

"Honour the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops, then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine". Proverbs 3:9-10 (NIV)

Obedience to this instruction will automatically make one to be fruitful.

We still find people today that do not obey this simple instruction. Yet they start to jump here and there, running helter-skelter and saying that things are not working well. Refusing to pay tithe and offerings is just like taken gravel in a cup of tea, in substitution for sugar.

Prayer

“..., men ought always to pray, and not to faint;”
Luke 18:1(KJV)

“Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.” Isaiah 55:6(NIV)

We are instructed to seek the Lord, but many are lazy in their prayer life. As we fail to seek the Lord, we with our own hands block the door to our fruitfulness. We cannot get anything done without seeking the Lord in prayer.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing”. John 15:5(NIV)

As we seek the Lord in prayer we will find out that it will be easy for us to enter into fruitfulness and we shall experience good things all the way.

Fulfil God’s condition

Laying claims or claming and meditating on the promises of God is good, there is no doubt about it. But we must never forget that every promise of God is based on conditions.

Have you fulfilled the conditions stated in the Bible as related to fruitfulness? If yes, be cheerful, your time of celebration has come.

If you have not, there is no alternative. No partial or half obedience. What God requires from you is total obedience, no matter how long you stay on the mountaintop. You must not fail in any of His commandments. I pray you will not fail in Jesus name. The grace to obey Him will be given to you and you will experience fruitfulness in every area of your life in Jesus name.

THE PATHWAY TO A FULFILLED LIFE

Rotimi Daniels

Walk before me and be perfect [Gen. 17^{1,2}] and I will make my covenant between thee and me and multiply thee exceedingly [Gen 17²]. That was God’s word to a ninety-nine year old man. God from the beginning of creation has never been a taskmaster in whatever He commands to do. He knows we are capable of doing it.

Right from Gen.12 when Abram was called out, he showed himself a man of faith but not yet made perfect.

Abram was a man of great substance but not a fulfilled man, a very rich man [Gen 13²] but with a big and empty void in his life [Gen 15²]. God gave him a promise to fill and remove that void for all generations [Gen 15⁵] but because Abram had not attained that state of perfection the Lord spoke to him later about it in Gen 17¹.

He felt he could take the shorter course [Gen 16¹⁻⁴] but that brought pain and anguish to his household. The fulfilment and peace he so much desired eluded him but as he learnt obedience and became perfect, the Lord himself attested to his obedience [Gen 18¹⁷⁻¹⁹].

If we look carefully at this scripture, we would see that a dramatic change has taken place in the relationship between Abraham and the Lord and the fulfilment of the promise did not come till the perfection came as we can see in Gen 21¹. We see a total release of his will to the Lord in all things even when it conflicted with his view.

Let’s remember the casting out of Hagar and her son, the Bible say this was grievous in Abram’s eye [Gen 22¹¹] but he listened to the Lord and acceded to the desires of his wife, Sarah [Gen 22¹²⁻¹⁴].

Also God made a demand, a supreme sacrifice, from Abraham but he did not deny God (Gen22¹⁻²) and look at what followed; the blessings of God came in its fullness [Gen22¹⁶⁻¹⁸].

The word of God has integrity, brethren, in perfection there is fulfilment, and without obedience there is no perfection, in walking before God, we would attain the all-important state of perfection. The scripture says in Matt. 5⁴⁸ *“be ye perfect as your Heavenly father is perfect”*. This is the pathway to a fulfilled life, the stairway to blessing, to prosperity and abundance.

(Continued on page 17)

Steps to Prosperity

Kemi Oluwadara

“If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land;” Isaiah 1:19(NIV).

“Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant” Ps 35:27(KJV)

Prosperity, by the standard of the world, means economic well-being; having all, what you acquire in terms of material things, the number of cars, houses, amount of money in bank account, your worth in Gold, etc. But according to the scriptures prosperity involves more than economic well-being. It includes joy, peace, good health and divine favour. All this cannot happen except the following conditions are met:

1. God is with man

A man’s prosperity actually starts with his knowledge and relationship with God.

*“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, **even as thy soul prospereth**”*. 3 John 1:2(KJV)

Prosperity begins with a right relationship with God; a man identifying with His creator & saviour Jesus Christ. You need to be born again. Then your soul is regenerated and begins to long after God, the source of all Good things. This is the beginning of true prosperity that will not be taken away.

“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows”. James 1:17(NIV)

2. Obedience

*“If they obey and serve him, they **will spend the rest of their days in prosperity** and their years in contentment”*. Job 36:11(NIV)

“If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and

accompany you if you obey the LORD your God”: Deut 28:1-2(NIV)

“Carefully follow the terms of this covenant, so that you may prosper in everything you do”. Deut 29:9 (NIV)

Brethren, to every covenant of blessing we can see in the scriptures there are conditions to be fulfilled, and the bottom line of those conditions is obedience. Obey the Lord in all things and you will see His hands prospering the works of your hands.

“And observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in his ways, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go,” I King 2:3(NIV)

3. Delight in the words of the Lord, meditate on it and do what it says

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

*He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. **Whatever he does prosper.**”* Ps 1:1-3(NIV)

*“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. **Then you will be prosperous and successful**”*. Josh 1:8(NIV)

As you delight continually in the words of the Lord, the Bible, and meditate to do all that is stated in it, you will experience prosperity. Very many financial principles are embedded in the words of God and countless things as are needed for us to prosper are already clearly spelt out in the scriptures.

4. Have faith in God

"Listen to me, ...! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." 2 Chronicles 20:20(NIV)

"But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today." Deut 8:18(NIV)

Put your trust in the Lord and have faith in Him. It is the Lord that can make a man to be prosperous and He gives the ability to make wealth.

You may actually not have much today, but as you hold unto God He will lead you through every thick & thin and will set you up on high.

"He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honour. For the foundations of the earth are the LORD's; upon them he has set the world". 1 Samuel 2:8(NIV)

He is the only one than can change the fortune of a man overnight. Praise God. Remember without faith it is impossible to please God (**in other to make it quickly you will actually displease Him**). Wait on the Lord He will get you there.

"The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty". Hag 2:8(NIV)

5. Seek the face of God

Pray Until Something Happen (PUSH). Take His word back to Him. If the Lord promised to prosper you, after you have obeyed Him you have the ground to take His promises back to Him.

"God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?" Num 23:19(NIV)

Remember King Amaziah sought the Lord and he prospered; He did what was right in the sight of the Lord.

"And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper." 2 Chronicles 26:4-5(KJV).

6. Give

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." Luke 6:38(NIV)

The wonderful 'first-aid box' in prospering is giving. Every great man that have lived and we saw their prosperity were men whose lives were characterised by giving. Jesus our perfect example gave His life and got a name that is above any other name and got a throne that is above other thrones. Men down the ages realise this principle and have applied it to their benefits.

Learn to willingly give to your brethren and to the work of the Lord. Tell God to always grant you opportunity to sow that you will be able to reap later.

As you give, you are literally opening yourselves to a time of harvest and great prosperity. The measure you sow will determine how much harvest you will have.

7. Be hardworking & diligent

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." Proverbs 22:29(KJV)

"Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth" Proverbs 10:4(NIV)

This whole discussion cannot be conclusive until we consider being hardworking and diligent. Every man that is diligent will surely experience prosperity. The Bible says in Ps 126:6, *"He who goes out ..., carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him".* (NIV).

Surely there is a time for 'hard' sowing, it is not actually easy to plant or engage in any labour, but you will do it to enjoy the harvest in due time if you faint not.

Prosperity is the portion of the children of God but everything that started in God must continue in God, in obedience to His counsel and His commandments. Let your obedience to His word be total and you will experience abundant prosperity in Jesus name.

THE MARK OF A TRUE CHRISTIAN

Odunayo Ogundipe

Man normally comes under five principal authorities that require obedience. Under these authorities, obedience must be total. Half obedience is equal to disobedience. Do you not know that Christians are called obedient children (1 Peter 1:14)? He who obeys because he loves God is very wise; there is wisdom in obedience. Glory be to God for his son Jesus Christ. Romans 5:19b says, *“Through the obedience of one man, many will be made righteous”*. Christ obeyed His Father even unto death (Philippians 2:8); giving us supreme example of obedience. Under any authority we found ourselves we must obey and this must be total.

The five principal authorities are as follows:

1. As a child under the authorities of parents, obedience is a must.
2. As a student under the authority of teacher or instructors, your obedience must be total.
3. In the industry or business, you must obey your employers or masters.
4. As a citizen of a country we are under the authority of government; hence our obedience is a must
5. Lastly and principally, the authority of God, Jesus and Holy Spirit. Anyone that calls himself a Christian and is disobedient to the Trinity is just carrying ordinary nomenclature (Christian) such a person is of the devil; the love of God is not in him.

Disobedience in the school, to parents, to your boss, to the law of the land, or to God should only be mentioned among unbelievers.

Obedience must be part of anyone called a Christian; this is not synonymous to foolishness.

Let us examine these authorities one after the other and see what the Bible says concerning each:

As a child you must obey your parents

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord (Col. 3:20) (NIV).

Equally Ephesians 6:1-3 says, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honour your father and mother”-- which is the first commandment

with a promise--“that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.””(NIV)

As a Christian you need to obey your parents; by doing this, God will be pleased with you and the promises of God concerning this will be fulfilled in your life. Christians are called obedient children and this must be seen in us. Let your parents see Christ in you. Honour them for this is right.

As a student you must obey your teachers’ instruction.

A good Christian must be obedient in the school and this must be total. Christian should not join bad gangs or unbelievers in the school to cause problem. There must be a clear distinction between a believer and unbelievers. Christ must be seen in you through obedience. This must be far from you *“How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors”*. Proverbs 5:12-13(NIV)

This should not be your statement as a Christian. As long as you are still under the school authority you should be obedient.

In the industry or business, you must obey your employer or your master

“... Submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh”. 1 Peter 2:18 (NIV)

You must obey all rules and regulations in your establishment as a Christian.

“... Obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favour when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does...” Ephesians 6:5-8 (NIV)

When others are doing eye service, you must be different. You must obey your superior or your boss; by doing this, Christ will be seen in you.

As a citizen of a nation you must be very careful.

Many have compromised their faith today. What the people of the world are doing the same thing is what Christians are doing also. They disobey governing authorities forgetting that nobody comes to the

position of authority without the knowledge of God. Christians be careful.

Let us see what the Bible says in Romans 13:1-3

“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you”. (NIV)

Romans 13:5-7 *“Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour”.* (NIV)

Also 1 Peter 2:13-14 *“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right”.* (NIV)

With all these in our heart you will know that when you obey the government, you are obeying God.

You must obey God, Jesus & Holy Spirit and His representatives here on earth.

God is the Lord who has revealed Himself to be the Creator, Redeemer and Judge. It is the duty of His creatures to do what He commands.

Exodus 19:5 say, *“Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine”* Leviticus 18:4 say *“you must obey my laws and be careful to follow my decrees. I am the Lord you God”.*

Obedience is a commandment from God.

Deut 4:1-2 *“Hear now, O Israel, the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you”*(NIV).

God has standards, laws and decrees, which must be obeyed, therefore we must be very careful.

Also because Jesus is the Lord, he also is to be obeyed as God. John 14:15 say, *“If you love me, keep my commandment”*; that is Jesus talking there.

Verse 23 also says if anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching my father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

Don’t keep God away from your life due to your disobedience.

There are also Gods representatives (Pastors, heads of ministry, etc) among us, which must be obeyed. Many because of their wealth or may be they know one senior Pastor somewhere they no longer submit to their immediate Pastors or their ministry heads. This ought not to be. People in this category must know that they are disobedient to God not the Pastor. For the fact that your leader in the church is not rich, that doesn’t mean that you should not obey his instructions. He is there by God’s order not by money. You know what happen to people like this in the Bible, so be warned.

Beloved, where is your obedience? Do you want to live long? Do you want the promises of God to be fulfilled in your life? Do you want to enter into the kingdom of God? Do you want to be buoyant? Obedience is the main thing and it must be total. Half obedience is equal to disobedience. Obedience is a must for Christians. God bless you.

THE PATHWAY TO A FULFILLED LIFE

(Continued from page 12)

Remember God’s own words to Abraham in Gen 22:16-18 *“I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”*(NIV).

Fulfilment came to Abraham as a result of Obedience. He became perfect as a result of his obedience. Are you walking on this same path of perfection that will bring the fulfilment of God’s plan on your life? Please consider your life today and God will raise you to enjoy a fulfilled life in Jesus name.

When your Obedience is Complete

Rufus Oladosu

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strong holds.” “And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete”. (II Corinthians 10:4,6).

Man God’s under-ruler

It is clearly revealed from the creation accounts that man was created to be God’s under-ruler over His earthly estate. Genesis 1:26 says *“Then God said, let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over all the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth”*.

This man had a mandate to exercise dominion over all the earth on God’s behalf. This powerful truth is borne out in many other passages of the scripture. For example in Psalms 8:6, the Bible says, *“thou has made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou has put all things under his feet”* So all things on earth whether physical or spiritual things were made subservient to man, the crown of God’s creation.

It’s pertinent to know that despite the fact that there are over forty sextillion stars in the universe, many of them a million times bigger than the earth the primal focus of God is on the planet earth. And what is more, it appears the stellar heavens owe their existence to the earth. Why is the earth so important? It is the abode of God’s special creation. So the scripture says *“the heaven, even the heavens are the LORD’S, but the earth hath he given to the children of men (Psalms 115:16).* So we are creatures of God’s love the manifestation of His primordial desire to have His children rule and to reign through His Glory and authority. Thus, all the man’s breakthroughs, in arts, science and technology, as well as in all other enterprises, attest to man’s potentials to live in dominion.

Disobedience – the circuit Breaker

It is self evident that the dominion of man over spiritual forces and resources of the earth is to be exercised through man’s subjection to God’s will. Ultimately every authority has its source in God. Therefore whenever an heir becomes disobedient to God he forfeits his authority to rule and he’s brought

under elemental forces of life and then becomes enslaved. This is the reason servants are on horse, while the princes walk on the ground like servants (Ecclesiastes 10:7). As it was in the beginning so it is today. Whenever there is a wilful disobedience to God’s expressed will, entrapment will follow. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they were driven from Garden of delight to till an unyielding ground. (Genesis 3:17; 18:24) And what is more, Adam transferred God’s given dominion of the earth to the devil (Luke 4:6). It was through the mercy of God by the sacrifice of God’s Son that the dominion was taken back from Satan’s grasp.

Nonetheless, the fact remains that individuals or corporate wilful disobedience to God is a sure way to bondage: most ills experienced by believers today are symptoms of a disconnected life (John 15:5).

Jesus said, *“Without me you can do nothing”*. It is fruitless trying to operate an appliance when the electrical circuit in it is already cut.

Even so only the fervent prayer of A RIGHTEOUS man avails much (James 5:16:17). If a man rejects God’s law, his prayer becomes a useless exercise irrespective of its fervency.

The Bible gives several records of “those who stay in darkness and in the shadow of death bound in affliction and irons- because they rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the most high. Therefore He brought down their heart with labour, they fell down, and there was none to help” (Psalm 107:10-12). This same experience of afflictions and oppressions abound today even in the Church. There are many who erroneously think that despite their apparent disobedience to God’s known will, all will still be well. Of course they have painfully discovered this reasoning to be a fallacy.

Others have seen that their twenty-one shout of hallelujah, the seven ‘smashing’ of devils head and their ‘agonising’ prayers have not brought the much-needed relief. The fact is any supposed act of faith by the disobedient is an act of presumption. God may sometimes help, out of His abundant mercy, but He is not committed. It is dangerous to live a day without a solid assurance of God’s presence.

The path of Total Recovery

“If they obey and serve Him, they shall spend their days in prosperity and their years in pleasure. But if they do not obey, they shall perish by the sword and they shall die without knowledge” (Job 36:11-121). This verse offers an encouragement as well as a warning. The good shepherd is also the great judge. God of love sits on throne whose foundation is made of justice and truth.

Before the fall at the Garden of Eden there was a great recovery program. God always provides way of escape only if we will discover and walk in it. From the scripture it is clear that the link between ruin and recovery is repentance. Act 3:19 says, *“Repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”*. Repentance is more than saying “I am sorry”. “I change my mind”, “I will walk on the right path” are the pivotal elements of repentance.

In 2 Corinthians 10:4 & 6, the weapons of our warfare are said to be mighty through God. This means the weapons derive their effectiveness through connection with God. And what is more, they can demolish and shatter all diabolical build-up against us. In fact the ‘Law Enforcement Agency’ of God is ready to deal with whatever is disobeying our orders once our own obedience to God is complete.

It’s important to note that God demands complete obedience. We are not given the allowance to discriminate or to choose which of the laws of God to obey and which ones to disregard.

In Deuteronomy 28:1 the Bible says *“Now it will come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully ALL HIS COMMANDMENT which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth”* (emphasis mine) Again in Joshua 1:8 the scripture says *“this Book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night. That you may observe TO DO ACCORDING TO ALL that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success”* (Emphasis mine). These passages as well as many others hold out to us great promises and great challenges. We can see the possibilities of being lifted above all, being blessed beyond curse, having success with great peace, and much more.

However we are challenged to obey God fully. That is the limiting factor.

The ground is level at Calvary. Every one in the kingdom starts out as a newborn babe. Down to the basics, the level of advancement in God’s reckoning is determined by what you know and what you do with the measure of your knowledge. Those who are enjoying total liberty and are commanders in the kingdom have a secret: they are learning more and they are obeying more. God does not advance a man beyond his last act of disobedience. Hence disobedience is a dyke. When it is removed the power and the blessings of God will flow in every area of our lives.

Beloved, you can experience total liberty. You can be healed from that affliction that plagues you. You don’t have to live in poverty. You can be lifted to sit among the princes. You don’t have to be a beggar. You can be a commander and distributor of blessings. You should not be stagnant. There is a new lease of life awaiting you.

Are you today under a yoke of slavery with no apparent way of escape? Hear this: there is a hope for you. *“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you”* (James 4:7). Repent from every dead work. Reconnect with God through genuine commitment to obey Him as He reveals His will. Take your stand against all diabolical forces and reclaim what is yours. You will enjoy sweet victory.

This is Gods word’s word to you as you obey Him:

“I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten-- the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm-- my great army that I sent among you. You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed.” Joel 2:25-26(NIV)

This is for you the dawn of a new day!

Jesus is Lord.

Nuggets Of Wisdom

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Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.

Victory is not the absence of problems; it is the presence of power - Joyce Meyer

A diamond cannot be polished without friction nor man perfected without trials.

Everyone wants to change, but change demands desire and discipline before it becomes delightful. There is always the agony of choice before the promise of change. - Larry Lea

Faith takes God without any ifs. If God says anything, faith says, "I believe it"; faith says, "Amen" to it. - D. L. Moody

Faith's role is to grasp that which appears impossible or strange to human eyes. - Andrew Murray

You're life is only as productive as the freshness of your walk with God. - Randy Shankle

The Blood of Jesus washes away our past and the Name of Jesus opens up our future. - Jesse Duplantis

**Do what you can, with what you have and do it now!
- George Washington Carver**

Those who live most devoutly for the world to come are often in the best position to change the present. - Bruce Shelly

Repentance is a change of willing, of feeling and of living, in respect to God. - Charles Finney

The overcoming power is God's; the overcoming privilege is ours! - Jack Hayford

Dependence upon God makes heroes of ordinary people like you and me! - Bruce Wilkinson

The only way to carry a heavy load is with praise. - Earl Lee

God is missed through laziness, indifference and unwillingness. - Jesse Duplantis

Earth's circumstances are insignificant when compared to Heaven's provision - Albert Hibbert

**I know success or failure in my life or ministry does not depend on my own skill or even on external circumstances, it depends only on my faithfulness. God will give me the gifts necessary to do whatever He calls me to do, and He will not be hindered in His work by circumstances.
- Lester Sumrall**

Great sea captains are made in rough waters and deep seas. - Kathryn Kuhlman

Healing is not always obtained by saying a prayer. It is obtained by obeying God

Christianity is not a struggle to become something; it is a choice to let Jesus be! - Malcolm Smith

The devil knows if he can capture your thought life he has won a mighty victory over you. - Smith Wigglesworth

**When we demonstrate our faith in God by our obedience, He not only promises to provide for us, He will provide.
- Benny Hinn**

I have found that there are three stages in every great work of God: first, it is impossible, then it is difficult, and then it is done.

God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supplies. - Hudson Taylor

**Your success and usefulness in the world is going to be measured by your confession and by the tenacity with which you "hold fast" that confession under all circumstances.
- F. F. Bosworth**

Some never get started on their destiny course because they cannot humble themselves to learn, grow, and change. - Casey Treat