

We Ought to Obey God Rather than Man By Trey Sullins

“Did we not strictly command you not to teach in His name?” This was the question asked to Peter and the other apostles shortly after the establishment of the church in Acts 5:28. In response to this question Peter and the other apostles made one of the greatest statements of faith: “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). These powerful words give a great example of exactly how we should conduct our lives and by studying the Bible we can find numerous instances of people who did this very thing!

Obedience is the key to putting God first above all else. No matter where you look throughout the Bible, the righteous were always those who were obedient to God. Hebrews 11 is a great testament to this fact. Notice how for each of these listed in Hebrews 11, the Bible says that by faith this person acted in obedience to God. That is no coincidence, but that is the pattern which God has laid out for us since the beginning of creation.

Luke 9:57-61 is a passage showing us that there is nothing in life that should come before our service to Him. As Jesus was journeying, He called on some to follow Him; one man desired to bury his father, and another wanted to say goodbye to those who were visiting his house. Even though these two had very simple requests their mindset was clearly wrong. The Son of God who holds salvation for all was standing before them and they were denying Him for other things. In our lives there must be nothing at all that comes before God; no compromises in our obedience to Him, period.

A big part of absolute obedience to God is maintaining our obedience during temptation. One important fact about life is that we all face temptation. Temptation is so dangerous because the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23); therefore, if we don't deal with temptation properly then we will be in danger of that spiritual death. Properly facing temptation looks like Joseph in Genesis 39:8-10. Here in this context Joseph was being tempted by his master's wife, but in response to her he refused and said, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Joseph understood that there is no temptation in life that is worth disobeying God.

We too must maintain proper obedience in the face of temptation. Remember again Acts 5:29. Those men there could have given in to the temptation of these evil Jewish leaders. They could have chosen to put their own desire for personal safety above the work which God had called them for, but they did not! This same mindset of the apostles and Joseph must be in us as well. If we remember that our Christian walk is most important then all of life's temptations will not be a problem. Thankfully, God has given us every opportunity to succeed by leaving a way of escape in every temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).

We have a great opportunity before us as Christians. We can choose to serve ourselves and face a future of no hope or choose to serve God and face a future of eternal hope. Now that is an easy choice! If we remember to obey God rather than man by our obedience in all situations of life, then that eternal hope will be ours. Why not make the choice daily to live like those apostles who said, “we ought to obey God rather than men”?