

# Holiness and Obedience

by B.H. Clendennen

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*Obedience is the key to experiencing God's holiness and coming into contact with His will.*

**Duration:** 56:13

**Scripture:** Exodus 19:4

**Topics:** "Obedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being a faithful steward of what God has given us. He highlights the need to function in our purpose and to walk in total freedom by surrendering ourselves to God. The preacher shares personal examples of how he has chosen to live in obedience to God's will, even when it goes against societal norms. He also addresses the danger of becoming legalistic and judgmental towards others who may not conform to certain outward standards. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the power of unity among believers and the blessings that come when we align our will with God's.

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## Transcript

It's always very encouraging to see people out in an early morning meeting. People come early, day services, usually are the people that have a great desire to draw near to God. You know what we're saying has nothing to do with a person being saved, has everything to do with God using your life.

In this walk with God, we're born justified by the death of Christ. The blood of Jesus Christ cleansed me from all unrighteousness. But for 56 years, there's been this work that we call in the Bible called sanctification taking place in that life.

But you must never allow the experience of sanctification to touch that experience of justification. They must never mix the two. One is the enlargement of the vessel, preparedness.

That'll go on until you meet him, folks. You won't, you know, you think you've got it made, then there'll be a terrible discovery of part of you that's still alive and still working. But all the while, God is bringing us to the image of his Son.

That's the ultimate goal. When we see him, we'll be like him. But as we behold him now in the Spirit, we will one day see him face to face.

But all the while, it is working in us that we may be transparent, that God can project his Son through us, that men, women around us really see Christ. That's the only reason we're here. There's nothing about you will save anybody.

And there'll be no attack upon your life if there's nobody in you to attack. You know, the Bible makes it very plain that the attack isn't against you. Satan's not afraid of you.

It's what's in us. If there's nothing in us worth attacking, he will not waste his time upon us. It's only, that's a very assuring thing.

When the enemy comes in like a flood, there's something to come in against, or else he wouldn't be there. He doesn't waste his time. We, a lot of time, fighting enemies has been dead so long, they don't even bother the church anymore.

You have to deal with what's present, with that church. If the church is going to function. I'm going to read from Exodus chapter 19.

I'm going to continue to talk to you on this service this morning about obedience. Fathers, we turn to the Word of God this morning. You anoint us as we read, as we speak, as we hear.

Let it be a revelation to our hearts that you're preparing a vessel through which you can pour pure spirit. A world has lost its way. But worse than that, a great part of that which calls itself, the church has lost its way.

This morning, open our eyes spiritually that we may see and our hearts that we may believe in Jesus' name. Amen. Exodus chapter 19 verse 4 through 6. You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bear you on eagles' wings and brought you unto myself.

Now you mark that. He didn't bring you to an organization. He didn't bring you to some church membership, some fellowship of people.

He said, I brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice, indeed, keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar people unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine. And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. You know, I've noticed over the last maybe two years, God has dealt with this heart of mine. I've become more sensitive to God.

Not near as much as it ought to be, but more sensitive to God. What God really wants out of our lives. That He may be able to use us.

And I thought it's very strange the way that He was dealing with me. So I went back to a lot of history. I read much of Mr. Murray in regards to how God dealt.

I believe that was one of the great Christians perhaps that ever lived. I read Mr. Simpson, who was one of the most prolific writers on this thought. I went back and looked at the history of revivals.

And one of the great marks, that evidence that God is about to move, there comes a great sensitivity to sin to the elect of God. We're not committing adultery. We're not murdering.

We're not stealing from anybody. But we become very careless sometimes about the little things. The big foxes only eat the grapes.

It's the little ones that destroy the vine. And it's those little things that we look at things and we begin to make a difference in sin. We, well, everybody's doing this or everybody's doing that.

And carelessness, the neglect of the altar is a terrible sin against God. Because whatever will pull you out of that altar will eventually pull you out of God. You cannot live outside of the environment of that altar.

God, all of God's purchase is for a people of the altar. A people who recognize who they are, what they are, and what God is after. So this is always, as I look back into the history of things, I was able to see that this is marked the beginning of every move of God.

They become a sensitivity to sin among the people. When the revival broke in Wales a hundred and one or two years ago, Mr. Roberts preaching was to those people. He repeatedly said to them, Is everything right with your brother and your sister? He constantly, through the message, he would deal with them.

Is there any bitterness in that heart? Is it right between you and your brother? Is there any questionable habit in your life? Are there things in your life you question? And all the way through, there's been that. God began to deal particular because he was working on a vessel. Had nothing to do with their salvation, but bringing them to a point that a pure word of God, and a pure spirit of God could come through them.

Now, at the time that I read here in the book of Exodus, it was a time the law was being given. At this very time, the law was being given, and the covenant with those people made on the basis of that law. God is telling them what to do, and he set before them a blessing and a curse.

He said, now if you do what I tell you to do, none of the diseases of Egypt and the problems out there are going to come to you. But on the other side, there's going to be this. If you don't do what I tell you, then trouble is surely going to come.

Now, here was God's word to his people. Now, he's not just talking to ancient Israel. He's talking back there then, because everything is now with God.

He was talking to a 21st century Pentecostal church. When he dealt with them, he speaks of redemption and the blessings of fellowship with him. He said, you've seen how I brought you unto myself.

Now, that's the key to it all. He didn't bring me unto religious organization. He didn't bring me into some kind of a system, but unto himself.

I bought you with a price. That's the word of God when transferred into the New Testament language. He said, you are not your own.

That's hard to settle upon a people, especially we of the West, we of Americans. The freedom that we've enjoyed, and we don't realize. We're born rebels, and we think it's natural.

It's hard for God to get over to us how subtle is the working of this thing called self. It can be so rapid in our lives, but we never recognize it because it's become a natural thing with us. It's a very galling word in this society, the word discipline.

We have trial marriages. We abort our babies. I'm talking about the world we live in.

And it's very difficult for God to bring us under the discipline of his voice, where we can weed out and know. There's so many voices, none of them without signification. We live in a culture, folks, that can swallow you up so quickly.

They're screaming at us by television, by radio, by every direction, this world, to brainwash, to wash that mind. So there's so many, so many voices, and the apostle said none of them without signification. None of them.

They all have one goal. Satan wants you for his purpose, and God wants you for his. Both of them demand the body to express themselves.

For God to reveal his son, there has to be a vehicle for that son to be revealed through. And for Satan to manifest his own evil nature, he has to have a body. That flesh, as the Bible calls it, is the body of Satan.

And it has no place in this kingdom. Now you understand, this is a progressive thing. With Christ, it is complete.

With us, it is potential. This absolute obedience must be an absolute committal to God, but God gives the power to do that as I commit to God. There will be along this trail where we fail Him here and there, but there'll be an instant response of that conscience and that heart.

If you're walking with God, then there'll be an instant response. God will deal with that heart. He said, I have bought you unto myself.

Now that has to be settled. I am not my own. Paul constantly referred to himself as a bondservant, and he spoke of those around him as servants of the Lord.

Now the word in the Hebrew is dulus. It means a bondservant. In the Old Testament, when a man come time for him to be free, and he loved his master, he didn't want to be free.

He went to that master and he said to him, I don't want to leave. I want to stay here. So he took him to the temple, bored a hole in his ear, then expunged his name from the record.

He no longer had a last name. He couldn't own any property. He could own nothing.

His children, no matter how prolific he were, they belonged to that master. You see, everything. Now that's what God is saying to us.

As bondservants, to function in the name of Jesus means I act in His stead, but it also means now that belonging to Him, I have no last name. I own no property. I own nothing.

I'm a steward of what belongs to God. Now if we believe that, we're going to come to understand more about how we handle our money and what we do with it. If the Bible teaches anything, it teaches that we're mere stewards now that we're servants of the Most High God.

Whatever we have belongs to Him. And we're just simply stewards of that. He said it's required of that steward that he be found faithful.

That's all. He called one in and he said, I need to talk to you, for you may no longer be a steward of how you're handling what I've given you and what's mine. But I'm just pointing this out, that now that we're His,

we must learn how to function in that because we've been brought unto Him.

But the only place of total freedom is when I give myself to Him in this manner. I'm free to do whatever this heart desires if I really walk with God. I've gone to all the movies I've wanted to go to in 56 years and I haven't been in the theater one time.

But I've never missed nothing. I've never stayed at home and wished I could be there. I've been in that room up there since I've been here.

Television hasn't been on the first time because there's nothing on it that I'm interested in. It has nothing to do with this meeting. I wouldn't get anything out of that.

You understand. I don't leave it off to be saved. I leave it off because I am.

There's nothing on the thing that would help me to help you or to help my own sin. You understand what I'm saying. We are His and our whole lives should be always coming into line to please Him.

He speaks of His holiness as His purpose in redemption. I've brought you unto Myself and He says you'll be a holy nation to Me. So God speaks of His holiness as the reason for that redemption.

We're going to be to Him this. Now as the link between that is holiness. The link between these two.

I've brought you unto Myself for the purpose of holiness and the link between them is obedience. You understand. Obedience is not holiness, but that's how you come in contact with God's holiness.

There's a lot of people that try to be obedient to God. There's a lot of things they don't do just because they think that that's not what God wants. But that's not holiness.

They believe that. I said this, I believe, the first night when we come here. I was born in the Pentecostal church.

All of us have been referred to as holiness people. Anybody that belongs to God ought to be referred to as that. But I've watched them.

Every true revival ever come in history has brought great conviction to people. I don't care who they are. If revival comes to that heart, there's a lot of things sheds off of that life.

Well, the second generation of those people make those convictions rules. It's not now what I am, but if I keep the rules, I'll become that. Now that's the legalism of it all.

It becomes that. I've preached to a group of people and their conviction was you shouldn't wear a wedding ring. Well, I've been wearing one at that time 52 years.

And I said, I just don't believe it won't pull it off. I believe I'm more holy with it on. This day it seems to me like women are more aggressive than the man is.

And this ring tells them I already belong to somebody. But that was a rule that got upset with me because I just didn't want to conform. But you see, this holiness that they've got of rules, then you look at their lives, most of them, they wouldn't give a quarter to get a town saved or a world saved.

In one group of those churches, they called me to preach their camp meeting, and I got me and the superintendent both fired. Amen. Just preaching what I'm preaching here this morning.

Amen. I dealt with that. I said, you know, the second generation becomes rules and you think you're holy because you look a certain way and you hate everybody else.

Don't look like you do. At least in three days, they'll give you a week. You know, the women to grow their hair a foot longer and different things.

And if you don't, then you're hated because you never got there. Well, the superintendent got up and told them what I was doing. And the people were stirred by it.

They gave \$14,000 to the school of Christ. They'd never give that much money to missions in all their lifetime. But they gave \$14,000.

The mission superintendent wasn't there. And when he heard what happened, he became so angry, stirred up so much, that the board fired the superintendent and said they won't meet back for a camp meeting anymore. But talk about holiness.

You don't obey God. What kind of a foolishness is that? Your holiness is an illusion. If you don't obey God, because that's the only way you come in contact with the holiness of God, is by your being obedient to the will of God.

You belong. You're His servant. And as you learn to obey Him as He talks to you in all the matters, not to be saved, but because I am.

I walk with God, you see. God's will is the expression of His holiness. And we do His will, as we do His will, what He knows to do.

I come in contact with His holiness. If I refuse to do His will, I'm a rebel and I'm moving away from that. This is one of the truths that seems to me over the years, has slipped away from the church.

Everybody wants to do what's right in their own eyes. The murmuring, the complaining, you have every kind of a way. It becomes to a point that somebody don't like something all the time.

A preacher friend of mine begun a new church. He was having good success. Things were happening.

But then some of them didn't like the music, so they left. Some of them didn't like this. I said, you know what's happening, don't you? I said, God's weeding this thing down.

So the people that come here, come because you're preaching the Word of God. Not because somebody has a pretty voice that can play the music good. I said, if they're here only for the music, then when the music goes, they're going to go too.

There has to be a weeding out where our heart is set on finding God. People all over, they say, there's no real church. I don't find a church where there's real Spirit of God.

What I look for? Look for a man that wants it to happen. Find a man in that pulpit, no matter what it looks like. If his heart is set on seeing God, move, join him in it.

Don't find something wrong. Don't run around always looking for a fire to warm by. Wherever you find that desire, that preaching, where the man wants God to function, then join with him in that altar and believe God for it to happen.

This is what brings it all back to God. Now this takes us back right to the beginning. What I've said here.

God sanctified the seventh day as a time for sanctifying man. God is always right back there. The first thing God did with this purpose was He gave man a commandment.

He gave him a commandment. Obedience to that commandment would have been the entrance into the holiness of God. God said to Adam in the very beginning, the start of it, He said to him, everything in this garden you can eat, but that one tree, leave it alone.

Now that obedience to that is what keeps man or brings man into contact with the holiness of God. But a refusal to obey that is what breaks that link with God and drove Adam out of that garden. It is here.

You see, that is it. Obedience to that command would have been the entrance into that holiness. Holiness is a moral attribute.

Every one of us. It's a moral attribute. And a moral is what free will chooses and determines itself.

It is that. God talks to me. I have to make a choice.

You see, when you are born again, the sovereignty ends right there as far as your moving with God is concerned. When you were saved, you sat in that audience and God spoke. You were dead.

You were dead in trespasses and sin. Whatever God did with you had to be a sovereign move of God. Because He said we were dead.

You hath He quickened. That means made alive. So it was a sovereign move of God to deal with you.

But now that you're born again, the same life is in you that's in the Word of God. So that demands a response on your part or nothing ever happens. When the angel said to Mary, you're going to have a baby.

And she said, he never said another word till she responded. And she said, how can this be? I've never known a man. Well, then the angel came back and told her that the power of the Holy Ghost would overshadow her.

Then he waited. Nothing happened till she said, be it unto me according to thy Word. You see, there had to be a response of that life to God in obedience to what He had to say or they never would have come in contact with that holiness.

Now what God creates and gives is only naturally good. All that about it. What wills to have God in His will and reappropriates His moral worth leads to the holiness.

When I hear what God has to say and I determine myself to obey God in those matters, it leads to the holiness of God. I've been saved two weeks, three maybe, been a long time ago, but I had to move because I run a drilling rig at that time and it would dry a hole and we're going to move somewhere else to drill. And as I went over to tell the pastor that I'm going to be moving, he set me on the steps and began to

talk to me about tithing.

I knew nothing. I didn't even know the word tithing. I had no idea on this earth what it meant.

But he told me and explained to me. Well, I determined at that moment to obey what he was saying. I believed him.

I went and told my wife. I said, the pastor says that everything we get, earn, whatever comes to us, 10% of it belongs to God. That we bring that in and give it to God.

We both were very, very happy with that because we felt that's the will of God. That brought us more into contact with the holiness of God. That wasn't holiness, but that's what brought us.

When we began to do the will of God, you understand, it brought us into that holiness, in contact with that holiness of God. If we would have refused, it would have the opposite effect because we would have rebelled against the word of God. This has to be our life.

If we're going to be that vessel, he can't have a bunch of rebels, everybody doing what they want to do and be able to reach a world. The pastor brought it so beautiful last night as we're closing out. The great miracle of Pentecost was that one accord, that 33rd Psalm, such a short verse, but he said, how good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity for there God will command His life.

Life comes by command when that unity is brought in. But it can't be brought until we will to do the will of God. When we will to do the will of God, that's a graduation of things when we first come in.

You know, God demanded of us the things that we do like the tithing, those things. But as we progressively move in God, then more responsibility. When I was a child, Paul said I acted like a child.

But when I become a man, then I acted like a man. I put away childish things. When he told Timothy, don't let any man despise your youth, what he said to him was, if you won't act like a child, they won't treat you like one.

You're very young for the position you're in, but God put you there. Now don't act like a child and God will see to it that they don't treat you like a child. Grow up is what he said.

How do we do that? By being obedient to what God deals with us in our lives. I just, over the last couple of years maybe, I've just seen that we don't realize how rebellious we have come just by neglect. We think that all the Bible we need is just what's read in the church.

So the Bible is really not God's Word talking to us, it's an icon. Won't everybody know we got one, but there's really no relationship between that Bible and the people, a great part of them. You'd be shocked if you know how little men and women obey God in living in His Word.

Men ought always to pray and not to faint, but yet there's so little prayer. It isn't that we need more prayer meetings called, we just need more praying people in the church. We just need more people that realize this is God's will for my life.

And the fellowship with God in prayer is where the eyes are open, where we know what He is. We mentioned here three or four times in prayer this morning about those gentlemen on the Emmaus Road. They walked with the Christ.

They didn't even know who He was. You know, it's so easy to know Him theologically and not even know Him. But it's when we enter into that communion with Him, we obey Him and pray and waiting on Him that our eyes are open and we really come to know who that Christ is.

We really come to know. Now, what God creates and gives is naturally good. In creation, God manifested His wise and good will, His holy will, though He speaks to us in His commandments.

He reveals Himself in creation. All of that. But His will, He speaks to us in those commands.

As that holy will enters man's will, as man's will accepts and unites with that will, it is then that man becomes holy. A woman becomes holy. As we unite with that, as I choose, I have to make a choice.

Life is always a choice with the believer. Everything depends now upon the choices that you and I make. Once we've entered in to this relationship with God, all of the time, there's a choice forced upon us.

And that choice is always, am I going to stay in myself or am I going to stay in God? Whatever choice you make is going to determine the course of your life. Obedience is the pathway to the holiness of God. It is not the holiness of God, but it is the pathway because it is the path to union with the holy will of God.

And you cannot walk outside of the will of God and have any fellowship with God whatsoever. So life must be constantly a learning the will of God. That's the reason we must walk in the Spirit.

We must walk because only the Holy Spirit knows these things. With man, with angels, with Christ, amen, Himself. Obedience was the path to that holiness.

That humble, meek, total resignation to God marked Christ more than anything else. I do nothing but what I see my Father do. I say nothing but what I hear my Father say.

It was an attention to God in everything that He did. He never made a move till He was sure this is the way God would have it. Now, that's a lifetime.

But that doesn't happen. But I do know in experience of 56 years of trying to know this Lord, that as you begin to do what He tells and live in the good pleasure of His will, there will become a check in that heart. When you begin to say something, you begin to do something that's not pleasing, there will be that check.

And if you obey God, you see, every act of vice makes you a more vicious person. But every act of virtue makes you a more virtuous person. You tell one lie, it's easy to tell the second one.

But if you tell the truth, it becomes easier to tell the truth. And as I learn and keenly come to obey God, I'm brought more and more into the holiness of God. Obedience, not the knowledge of the will of God, not the approval of that will of God, not even the will to do it, but doing it is the key to it, folks.

I know a lot of people that approve of it. You know, I know a lot of people that say, I know that's the will of God. I've had Christians say, well, I know that's the will of God.

They're not doing it. See, that means nothing to God. It isn't your approving of what God says, it is your doing what God says that brings the power and the blessings of God upon your life.

There's a lot of people, no, but don't do. Knowledge, approval, and will must lead to action. The will of God must be done.

That's the reason the whole purpose of Christ upon this earth. He said, I come to do thy will, O God. That was His purpose.

Why do we think that it'd be any different from us? We think we can choose and pick what we'd like to obey and what we wouldn't like to obey. This fits me and that fits somebody else. But He said, I come, one purpose, to do thy will, O God.

If you indeed obey My voice, here's the Word of God, you shall be a holy nation. If you indeed obey. Well, the opposite of it has to be true.

If you don't obey Me, you will not be a holy nation or a holy person either one. You hear the Word of God, it is to be incorporated into your life. You know, when you're outside the gate, I've said to people, I'd like to get saved, but they're so afraid of giving up something.

You know, so afraid. That's from out here. But once I walked inside, I'd give up nothing that'd give me up.

I wanted no part of that life. I never wanted to go back to what I was. I've never had the first desire to go back and be again what I was.

I didn't say that I failed God. I've let this temper and a lot of things, you know, the attitudes and different things come along. But yet, I've never once in 56 years that that heart didn't smite me.

Amen. If I spoke in the wrong way to a human, I had to say to that human, I'm sorry, that is wrong. That heart, you understand, but as I obey God, then I see.

Now, knowledge, approval, that leads to the action. God's will must be done on earth as it is in heaven. Remember and do all my commandments that you may be holy unto your God.

Numbers 15 and 40. That's God's Word. Remember, do what I tell you to do that you may be a holy people.

I don't think language could be any plainer than that. Today, you have the scream of legalism. Anytime a man just wants to walk with God, we've invented a salvation.

Amen. We're so afraid of having a salvation with works. Amen.

We've invented a salvation without obedience. It's just a church, believe it. Now, all I've got to do is go to church on a Sunday morning and everything's going to be alright.

Well, I've got to go to church, but I've got to obey what I hear. If a man of God's preaching the Word of God, I have no right to throw that over my shoulder. You know, in the church, while I was there in Beaumont, we had the prayer meeting every morning at 5. We had a noon prayer meeting every day at 12 o'clock, five days a week.

Had a lot of wonderful ladies in that church that worked. Well, instead of going to lunch, they'd be 15 or 20 every day. You'd see those cars.

They'd be in that altar at noon praying. The last Friday night of every month was an all-night prayer meeting. We'd come all night in that prayer meeting, the last Friday night, and every October was a month of fasting and prayer.

That is just the way it was. Well, when we began to approach that October, I began to tell them, now, October is a month of fasting and prayer. We're going to set that aside.

I knew that we're not going to do without food 30 days in a run. You've got to know that's God for you to move into such an area. But I said, we're going to fast our minds for 30 months.

We're going to fast food. Maybe you'll fast 4 or 5 days. You may eat a day.

But we're going to unplug the television, put that newspaper on furlough, vacation, unplug the radio, and let nothing enter this mind but the Word of God. Well, a lot of people come to me and they said, well, you know Pastor, if I miss a meal, I get a headache. I said, man, don't get that shot of liquor, it gets the same thing too.

There's no difference between being addicted to food and it is to alcohol, folks. We try to make a difference, but your gluttonous spirit is no more honorable to God than a wine beaver is. I mean, that's just the word.

I didn't write it. I'm just telling you. We want to make a difference with people, but it isn't.

Do you understand? But the people said, who are you to call me to a fast? I said, the pastor. That's who I am. That's what God put me here for.

I see something wrong with this place, I've got to deal with it. And I said, if I call it, if I'm really seeking God, then you're called. I understand that folks that are ill may fast one meal and be equal to you fasting ten days.

I understand that. The older people maybe couldn't fast, but maybe one or two meals a day, but all are called is what I'm telling you. And it is that entering in and obeying what is the voice of God that puts me in contact with the holiness of God and the fullness of the Holy Spirit in my life.

This is all rebellion. It's the work of the flesh. And that has to be dealt with if I'm going to come.

Obedience. It's a man's work. It is in a man's work, rather, that manifests what He is.

What He does. I know what is good, yet may not approve it. I may approve it, and yet may not even will to do it.

I do know what God wants. I find people all the time, they know what God wants, but they don't will to do what He wants. They know it, they'll tell you.

Well, I know, but I just haven't do it. I just don't think so. I may will it, yet not do it.

Thinking is easier than willing, and willing is easier than doing. But it is the doing of the will of God that really brings me into contact with His holiness. Now, we look at the larger picture out there of the world and sin, and we want to judge ourselves by churches that have made the church a circus.

But that isn't where we look. It is right here in our own heart. And it's the people that determine to holy, that is completely give themselves to God that begin to really see that a lot of things we thought was alright, is not alright, because it deals with our heart.

He said, lay aside every weight and the sin. Weights are not always sins, but they're that excess baggage on our life that dulls our sensibility, that keeps us from really being able to press in and to know God. And He said, lay those things aside.

Whatever hinders you in your relationship with God. You know, I've learned that in my wife, 58 years being married. We learned there's a lot of things that I wanted that was going to interfere.

And so I just said, well, this better that isn't in this house. Same way with her. I can call her this afternoon.

It would be afternoon here. She gets up. She says hello on that phone.

I can tell you the very mood of that woman. You know, I thought I knew her when I married her when she was 18 years old. But after 58 years, when she says hello, I can say, what's wrong? Are you awful happy? You know, just immediately, because our hearts have become one.

Amen. We've decided if what I'm doing is messing up this marriage, then that's not important to me. You understand? What's important is she and I get along.

Amen. I tell people all the time. I married a lot of young people.

I've said that boy. I say, I'm going to tell you something, son. If you treat that woman like you treated her when you tried to get her to go home with you, all your life, you'd be on a honeymoon 58 years from now, it'll still be working.

Amen. If you'll always treat her like you did when you tried to talk her into being your wife. Amen.

It'll always be that way. But there's a give and a take to the thing. You can't always have your way.

But with God, see, when I chose that, I chose that. I've never been so happy. There's a lot of things looking at it from the first.

I didn't want to do that. But if this is what you want, then that's what I'm going to do. But once I did, I didn't want to be a preacher.

I said, I'd do better support than a preacher. I've got a good job. I'll help him do that.

I'll give to go. I didn't want to be that. But oh, I'd hate to be anything else.

I'd sure hate to spend my life at anything else than being this preacher. But God said, now, you're like the Levites. You own nothing.

There's no property to give to you. I'm your portion. Don't you involve yourself with other things.

Well, everybody else seems to be involved with a lot of things. Man, when I first got saved, give me a business. He'd just come in, pretty wealthy man.

Called me and said, you know, I do love what I'm hearing here and how it's going. I built this shopping center over here in a little town away from here. I put on the end of it a cleaning shop and a wash area where you come do your laundry and get your clothes cleaned.

He said, I'd give that to you. He said, I paid for it. Everything.

There's a mortgage, but it'll pay itself and make you a lot of money. Forty-five years later, you can't hardly get around. You should drive over and look.

Cars all the way around it. Oh, he said, this will take care of your retirement. Everything's going to be alright.

Well, I thought, how wonderful. Me and my wife, we just rejoiced. Two o'clock that morning, I woke up.

He said, you'll not take that. I mean, life has just suddenly got wonderful. I mean, everything took care of.

Finances is, you know, it's going to be alright. I mean, that thing, I don't know what it's made, but I've never been down there. Forty-five years later, still as busy as it ever was.

He said, you'll not take that. I didn't call you for that. He said, you'll be going down there two or three times every week trying to see how much money it's making.

I didn't call you for that. I said, I understand you Lord, but I've got to deal with that woman about this too, you know. He talked to both of us.

I got up the next morning, I'm sitting there drinking coffee while she's cooking them eggs. And I said, I've got to tell you something. She said, I know we can't take that.

Oh, I said, thank you Jesus. You took a real load, but you understand what I mean. But the joy, oh, I'd hate to be in business.

Folks, this is more business than I can handle. I don't want to worry about that. There are people that do that and that's wonderful.

I've said all over this world, a businessman can preach, but a preacher can't be a businessman. No, no. He may have to be something for a little while, but that's not what God separated him for.

Amen. The obedience comes with the responsibility. And it's there that we contact the holiness of God.

Amen. Now, God has no other way of making us holy. No, no other way.

Except in disobedience. We come, He deals with. To all who would be holy, I believe this is a lesson.

Of so importance. And God never uses the unholy. Mark that down.

He never uses. See, it is the holiness of Christ, but only in obedience do I come in contact with that. I'm holy in Christ, but if my life is against Christ, then I don't come in contact with that.

Obedience, God never waives that, folks. Somehow, I just don't understand how we lost that sense all through the Bible. God takes great pains to make us know that what He wanted was implicit obedience to His command.

He never commanded anything out of us that He would not do through us if we would give ourselves unreservedly. If we commit ourselves, all He wants out of me is a commitment. I will do what you want me to do, and make that commitment with no back doors and no escaping.

Doesn't matter what it looks like. And when I do, then I've entered into that place with God where whatever He calls me to do, I'll be able to do it. It will work.

Over these last 13 years with this school, I've been totally amazed. My wife and I, she looked at that map every year. She says, I just can't believe I look up that Moscow where this was born, and see those dots all over this world.

I just can't believe. Where did all the finances come from? I said, I don't have any idea because I've never spent time. I don't talk about that money anymore anywhere than here.

I have not chased a dollar bill. I said, you call me. You call me.

This is your business. And one of the ways I'll know if I walk with you, one of the ways I'll know if you're through with it, if you don't support it, if you're through with it, I will be too. I learned that from Mr. Hudson Taylor.

He said, if God's through with it, so am I. And I said, if He ceases to support it, then He must be through with it. So I'll have enough sense to get out of it. Search my heart.

If God wills something, God will take care of something. He didn't tell me to spend my life trying to find enough money to do what He told me to do, and never would have got it done. But to believe Him, and just will to do the will of God.

And I want to keep telling you, obedience is not holiness. Holiness is something of God that comes into us, but that never comes in a rebel. It never comes in a rebel.

That man that knows what to do and refuses to do it. But obedience is indispensable to holiness. Holiness cannot exist without obedience.

It cannot. There's no blessings from God to rebels, people that refuse to do. I had people in that church.

They sat there all those years. They never tithed. You know, I have one thing.

I got that first computer. A little old lady. She was way up in years.

She was so disturbed. She come to me and she said, Pastor, I'm about to talk to you. Wonderful lady.

And I said, Yes, ma'am. I could tell she was distraught. She said, You know the devil is going to use that computer.

I said, He's going to be an idiot if he don't. I'm telling you, that sure did help me out. I let a lot of thieves down there to teach Sunday school until I got that.

But if I'm thinking about appointing my good friend Brother White, I just tapped that. See whether he's sport complex or not. He's not.

I'm not going to send him down there to teach others how to steal. Amen. No, I won't have that down there.

But you see, that made it. I had people, they never tried. They'd come in there and go through all the motions of religion, but they never, they never brought that offering to God.

We bought a campground. They've sold it since I left. And it was, it belonged to a major oil company.

But when Lyndon Johnson said that you have to, they, you know, it was a lily white thing. They never let people in that they didn't want in. But the government passed the law that if you're going to have that, then all employees must be allowed to be out there.

Well, they sold it. They're prejudiced. They sold it.

Well, I bought that thing for \$35,000. Unbelievable what I bought. They sold it for nearly \$200,000 after I left there.

But I brought it to the men. I had a men's fellowship. There's about 150 men there that night.

And I told them, I told them what I was doing. I said, I myself believe that's a very, very good thing. I wanted to tell you, you know, see what you think.

Anybody got any comments? One man got up. Anybody got any comments? One man got up and said, Well, I don't think we ought to spend that money like that. I said, I wish you hadn't got up.

I said, I've never told anybody in here that you didn't support this church. But I said, I want to tell you, sir, you don't give nothing in here, and you're not going to tell us how to spend it. Now you just sit down.

We'll talk to people who give. I wasn't being mean. I said, I wasn't being mean.

But I know one holy man going to get up here and tell us how to run this church. You see, he's not in contact with no holiness nowhere. A man that willfully refuses to do what God tells him to do.

Don't come around here tiptoeing me wanting to prophesy. And don't come around trying to tell the rest of us how to spend this. That don't work that way.

You understand? I'm just saying that it is disobedience that brings me into that holiness that God will give me if I walk with Him. Begin at once. Here's what I want to say to you.

Begin at once to do everything that appears to be right. What God deals with you about. In the least of things, if you don't have peace about a thing, just leave it alone.

You know, I'd rather get to heaven and God say to me, Son, you know, I had nothing against you. You could have done that. You know, you never.

But, you know, it wouldn't have bothered anything. I'd rather it be that way than wind up in hell and said, if you'd have listened to me, you'd have been here. You know, it's just, if it's questionable is what I'm saying, why bother with it? Amen? Nothing is important as God is.

And the happiness is to be able to go to bed at night and say, I have walked with God. I have walked with God today in my heart. I have truly tried to do what only He wanted.

Give up at once whatever conscious tells you is not according to the will of God. Not only pray for life, but act on what God says. Just do what He tells you.

They do not know that Christ's redemption and faith all lead to obedience. All lead to obedience. You've never believed anything until you do what He tells you.

You know, that's a very difficult thing. I think if the Bible would have been in American English, if it would have translated to come to American English, the word believe may not have got there. It would have been fathing.

F-A-I-T-H-I-N-G. You know, believe is kind of a weak word that we substitute for the verbal action of believing. And what we've done, we've produced multitudes of people churches full of them that say they believe, sit around, do nothing.

And they're deceived. You see, whatever doesn't lead you to act is not faith at all. The bottom line is an act.

The bottom line of faith is an act. I do what I'm told. If I don't, I have believed nothing.

No, I've never believed anything. You can sit around and talk about the great visions you had, but until you put those visions into practice, you begin to do. You have not believed anything.

You can talk how holy you are, but if you can let that mission offering come by without ever contributing, when God said to you, go in all the world. If you don't go, you must sin. And if you don't do that, there's nothing holy about your life, folks.

No matter how much you believe, how much you have been able to decorate yourself, to look the part, has nothing to do with it now. I believe I will be temperate in all things. Yes, sir.

That's just simply because I believe that's the way God is. But if I don't obey and do what he tells me, then there's nothing holy about this life. Now, most Christians do not know that the supreme place and importance of obedience in a Christian's life.

They believe they can just take it how they want. They can throw the preacher's message over the shoulder. They read what God says in the Bible and don't feel that they're obligated to make that.

You see, when you make the decision, then God comes. The sovereignty is gone. Now, you got to make the decision when God speaks to you.

He calls you to preach. You have to make that decision. Once you make that decision, then the joy of the will of God comes at that point.

No matter what it looked like before. All of us have suffered. You know, all of us have suffered.

In our prayers for the abiding joy, increased power of Christian life, there's been hindrances. Most likely, a wrong impression of the absolute necessity of our doing what God says. That's probably the biggest problem with unanswered prayer.

Amen. Obedience leads to God and his holiness. The power of grace from our conversion onward is to restore us to active obedience and in harmony with the will of God.

To walk always. To make that decision sets you at odds. A lot of times, all along the road, my daughter was in school and in the sports, they said she had to wear shorts.

She said to the teacher, no, I won't do that. I won't do that. Well, he said you will, but you won't pass.

She came home and told Papa. Well, Papa and me in the super tent the next day, I'm looking at him. And I said, I'm going to tell you sir, she told you what she'll do and that's the way it's going to be.

No matter what you have to say, she will not dress like you want her to dress. And he turned to her and he said to her, why are you like this? Is it because of what you believe or because of what your church says? She said, no sir, I just don't believe Jesus would have me out there. Well, he said, I'm going to let you then.

He said, I don't think he'd be popular. Well, she'd become the captain. Can't play nothing.

Amen. Girl, she's no good at none of those sports. She'd never made a soccer.

Well, she played, but they made her captain. Took nothing away, but I'm just saying there was a conviction. Whether it's yours or not, it was hers.

And she would not violate that if it wasn't going to even give her a grade. She said to him, I'm not. I never did that to her.

I taught her the things of God and to walk with God in holiness. I said, you're a lady. Be one always, everywhere.

Amen. That they recognize that you're not what they are. She did that.

That is obedience. And if I always, under every circumstance, on that airplane, in that hotel, where I am, just be a Christian. And that will contact me always with the holiness of God.

Holiness always, obedience rather, always leads to holiness. Let us stand. Hallelujah.

Blessed be the name of the Lord.

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