

# The Basic Requirements of Obedience

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's commandments and statutes, and the consequences of not doing so.*

**Duration:** 25:05

**Scripture:** Leviticus 26:1-4, Proverbs 14:34

**Topics:** "Obedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith focuses on the Book of Leviticus and the importance of obedience to God's commandments. He emphasizes that the strength of a nation lies in the faith of its people and their trust in God. Pastor Chuck explains that if the people walk in God's statutes and keep His commandments, they will receive blessings such as rain in its season, abundant produce, and safety in their land. However, if they disobey and rebel against God's commandments, they will face tragic consequences such as terror, disease, and the loss of their crops to enemies. The sermon concludes with an invitation to embrace God's Spirit and allow Him to fill and transform their lives.

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## Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul  
Oh, let Him have the things that mold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life and make you whole  
Welcome to The Word for Today Featuring the Bible teaching of Pastor Chuck Smith Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California  
Pastor Chuck is currently leading us on a verse-by-verse study through the entire Bible And on today's edition of The Word for Today our focus will once again be on the 26th chapter of Leviticus as Pastor Chuck Smith continues to address the basic requirements of obedience So, let's follow along as we pick up in Leviticus, chapter 26, verse 1 for today's lesson As we begin the 26th chapter God takes and sort of summarizes the first table of the law,

man's relationship with God And he rather summarizes them in a negative and in a positive The negative, you shall not make idols for yourself Interestingly enough, that word in Hebrew translated idols is literally nothings You shall not make nothings Of course, it's double negative in English, so Translated idols For yourselves Neither a carved image, which is indicative of a wooden carved image Nor a sacred pillar As in the pagan religions they often had These sacred pillars Nor shall you set up an engraved stone That is an image that is carved out of stone To bow down to it For I am the Lord Now this, to bow down to it, in the Hebrew Is literally, you're not to worship Or bow down before an image Even though the image, you say,

is just representative of something else There are people

today Even within the church Who have little altars before which they bow Expressly forbidden here in the scripture They say, well, I'm not really bowing to this idol, you know I'm not really praying to the idol But the idol just reminds me But it is forbidden here to have images, graven images Nothings for yourself, carved image or engraved stone Those things that would be representative of God The interesting thing is that when a person Makes an image The reason why he makes that image Is he has lost the consciousness of the presence of God If you really live in the consciousness of the presence of God You don't need any images or any reminders But when a person loses that consciousness of God's presence They want something to remind them of God's presence And so they often take a relic

That they make sort of a sacred shrine or a sacred relic A reminder of God's work Usually in some past experience And there are people who make images out of a place When I was sitting in that chair Oh, I can remember it still, 15 years ago I had such a marvelous experience of God's presence Don't touch that chair Don't move it, you know It's sacred, because there God met me Well, that's really sort of an indictment Against your present relationship with God It is really rather sad when a person has to look back Into the past To remember a time when they were near to God And God was near to them in a conscious way And so the making of an image is an indication of a spiritual decline The loss of the consciousness of the presence of God And yet deep inside there's a yearning still for God

And so I make this substitute This reminder And so whenever a person begins to make little shrines Or special places or memorials It's really a testimony against their own relationship with God In the now, in the present If your relationship with God isn't richer Fuller, more blessed than it's ever been in your entire life Then you are in a backslidden state If you have to talk about the good old days And you're looking back at past experiences To relate the power of God within your life You're backslidden You haven't been going forward, you're not progressing Into that fullness that God has for us In a positive sense, you shall keep my Sabbaths You're not to make the idols, but you shall keep my Sabbaths Plural, because that's the holy days Passover, the new moon Sabbath The feast of

Pentecost And the blowing of trumpets, the Yom Kippur All of these are Sabbath days, so keep my Sabbaths plural And reverence my sanctuary The tabernacle that was erected For I am Yahweh, Jehovah Now, God begins to give what Would be described as a conditional covenant And over and over we'll find the word if If God's promises and God's blessings are conditional If I will meet the requirements, I will get the results And so here are the conditions of God's blessings upon the people If you walk in my statutes And keep my commandments and perform them Then, I will give you rain in its season The land shall yield its produce And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit Your threshing shall last till the time of vintage And the vintage shall last till the time of sowing And you shall

eat your bread to the full And dwell in your land safely I will give peace in the land I will make you lie down, none will make you afraid I will rid the land of evil beasts And the sword will not go through your land You will chase your enemies And they shall fall by the sword before you Five of you shall chase a hundred A hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight Your enemies shall fall by the sword before you For I will look on you favorably And make you fruitful, multiply you And confirm my covenant with you You shall eat the old harvest And clear out the old because of the new I will set my tabernacle among you And my soul shall not abhor you I will walk among you and be your God And you shall be my people For I am Jehovah your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt That

you should not be their slaves I have broken the bands of your yoke And made you walk upright So these are God's promises of blessing Now, throughout the Old Testament We find several places where there are What we would call parallel passages to this Where God renewed His covenant with the people Or where God made similar covenants with His people In Ezekiel chapter 34 You'll find God promising much of the same things As He establishes His covenant with the people In Joel chapter 2 Again, the same and similar promises To those who will walk with God and keep His ways In Deuteronomy chapter 28 As we go through Deuteronomy The second time around the law We find in the 28th chapter Again, very parallel to this As God is promising the blessings Basically, He will bless the land It will bring

forth abundantly They'll have sufficient rain Their crops will last throughout the entire year At the end of the year, they'll be getting rid of the old So they'll have room to put the new crops in And they will be blessed of God in the land Their enemies will be subdued before them And they will walk in the joy and in the presence of God God loves to bless His people And God promises these blessings But to them they were conditioned Upon their walking in His statutes Keeping His commandments and performing them Now as you read on into the history Especially in the book of Judges You will find that God kept His covenant with the people When they would walk with God God would subdue their enemies And often five would chase a hundred And a hundred would put ten thousand to flight They were

often outnumbered by their enemies From a numeric kind of a sense But the problem with people in figuring the things out They didn't put into the equation God And what a difference God makes in any equation Like someone said, God in me is a majority And all I need is God And I can go out and be a majority against the enemies We read in the book of Judges Shamgar, I think he was the sixth judge Killed six hundred Philistines with an ox goad One fellow We remember how the Gideon with three hundred men Defeated a hundred and thirty five thousand of the Midianites Often they were vastly outnumbered by their enemies And yet God put their enemies to flight before them And over and over we read how God delivered their enemies into their hands Though they were vastly outnumbered by their enemies

And this is something that you get through the historic books of the Old Testament First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, First and Second Chronicles The book of Judges And we find that often times this took place We find that it has taken place in modern days As God has brought them back into the land So many times they have faced numeric odds Superior numbers against them And yet the scripture was fulfilled And five would put a hundred to flight I think of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the War of Atonement Where when the Syrians had broken through on the Golan Heights The armored brigade of the Syrians, a hundred tanks plus the armored personnel carriers Mobile cannons Were just one mile from the Golani headquarters The whole armored division of the Syrians And the Israelis had

only two tanks In their Golani headquarters A young lieutenant hearing that the Syrians had invaded Hitchhiked up to the Golani headquarters He reported to the commanding officer Lieutenant Greengold Zviv, and they called him Zwiggly And he said, I'm a tank commander If you'll give me some tanks We'll see what we can do against the Syrians And they said, well we only have two operational tanks Wait an hour, we can get the third one running They serviced it He started out in his tank With a tank on either side And they no sooner got around the corner from the Golani headquarters Than they saw this armored brigade of the Syrians right there And so Zwiggly began to fire And he began to call the commands to the tanks on either side Directing their fire and nothing was happening So he popped the

hatch and looked and already The other two tanks had been knocked out And along the tap line route There are just several little hills And he was racing up and down behind those hills With his tank, coming

over the top Popping a Syrian tank, backing down Racing up to another hill, coming over the top Popping another tank, backing down And racing back and forth behind the hills Wiping out this Syrian armored brigade And he kept reporting back to headquarters Every time he got a tank The Zwiggy brigade just picked off another Syrian tank And in 15 minutes, Zwiggy brigade just got another Syrian tank It's in flames, you know And he kept making the reports back to the headquarters They didn't know, but once Zwiggy had a whole brigade out there They didn't know he was operating by himself Nor

did the Syrians And because he kept coming over different hills They figured that the Israelis must have a whole tank brigade On the other side of the hill And after he destroyed several tanks 20 or so, they decided to retreat And the whole armored brigade turned and retreated They could have gone all the way down to Tiberias On the Sea of Galilee The Israelis did not have any defenses The Golani was totally without defenses at that point But one put a hundred to flight God's promises But, verse 14 If you do not obey me And do not observe these commandments If you despise my statutes Or if your soul abhors my judgments So that you do not perform all my commandments But break my covenant Then this is what I will do to you So the blessings of keeping the covenant The commandments But now

The tragic results of hating them Rebellng against them Failing to perform them I will even appoint terror over you A wasting disease and fever Which shall consume the eyes And cause sorrow of heart You will sow your seed in vain For your enemies will eat it We remember at the time when Gideon was called of the Lord He was hiding in a cave threshing the wheat Because no sooner would the Israelites thresh their wheat Then the Midianites would move in and take it You will plant your seed in vain Because your enemies are going to eat it And I will set my face against you And you will be defeated by your enemies And those who hate you shall reign over you And you shall flee when no one pursues you And as you read the book of Judges And tragically and you think My what does it take for people

to learn As the children of Israel would repent And turn to the Lord God would bless them He would raise up a judge And they would have victory over their enemies And they would dwell for a period of time In peace and in prosperity But then they would turn their backs on the Lord They would forget the Lord And the Lord would allow the enemies to come in And they were under the oppression of the enemies And then they would cry unto the Lord The Lord would raise up a deliverer And they would go out and they would seek the Lord And God would defeat their enemies And then they would be prosperous And they would forget God And it's just a cycle over and over and over again And you think How is it that people can't read history And learn from history For the scripture says Righteousness exalts

a nation But sin is a reproach to any people How is it that in the United States We can't realize that we are strong Not because we are a democratic nation Or not because we have a free enterprise system We are strong because we were a nation That was dedicated to God And we had even within the whole framework Our trusting God And with that God blessed our nation And he made our nation strong But now we have those fools Who are trying to turn our nation away from God Man fulfilling his own desires Man sovereign And the only inevitable result and consequence Will be disaster I was interested in a report From one of the major think tanks in Washington A think tank which usually is very liberal In its conclusions and all It's one of the liberal think tanks But they in making a three year

study Determined that religion was extremely important For the survival of a democracy And so it was interesting to me That these fellows who are in the think tank business Of analyzing trends and so forth Have come to this conclusion I'm not a think tanker at all But I could have told them that a long time ago Something I've been declaring for a long time Because I read the Bible And it's obvious, it's right here in

the scriptures These guys didn't have to spend several million dollars Of government grant money to come up with these conclusions All they had to do was read the Bible And they could have found out these very same things Righteousness exalts a nation But sin is a reproach to any people The strength of a nation Lies in the faith of the people That faith and trust in God We'll

return next time With more of our verse by verse venture Through the Bible As Pastor Chuck Smith concludes his study of The Book of Leviticus And we do hope you'll make plans to join us But right now, I'd like to remind you That if you missed any part of today's message Or perhaps you'd like to order a copy For that special friend or loved one You can do so by simply contacting One of our customer service representatives And they'd be more than happy to assist you With the ordering details Simply call 1-800-272-WORD And phone orders can be taken Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Box 8000 Costa Mesa, California 92628 And be sure to include the call letters Of this station with your correspondence And now, on behalf of The Word for Today We'd like to thank all of you Who share in supporting this ministry With your prayers and financial support And be sure to join us again next time As Pastor Chuck Smith Continues his verse-by-verse study Through the book of Leviticus That's right here On the next edition of The Word for Today And now, once again Here's Pastor Chuck Smith May the Lord be with you and bless And keep you in His love May He watch over you And give you a beautiful week A week that is devoted to The consciousness and awareness Of His goodness Giving thanks to the Lord For He is good And His mercy endures forever God bless you In Jesus' name The Word for Today Is it just me Or does everyone want to bless their mom For the entire month of May Rather than only on Mother's Day I want to bless my mom so much I can't help it Here's what I did I found these great books Written by Kay Smith Pastor Chuck's wife went online Ordered them and had them shipped Directly to my mom She called me as soon as she got them And let me tell you She hasn't stopped talking about how Kay's books Have helped her to be a better mom If you want to bless your mom Just don't send her flowers and candy this year Why not give her Kay Smith's books Pleasing God, Reflecting God And Kay's Bible study in the book of Philippians For more information Visit [thewordfortoday.org](http://thewordfortoday.org) And simply click to order and ship Or you can call 1-800-272-WORD That's 800-272-9673 Your mom's going to love it This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today In Costa Mesa, California

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