

# Revival Is Obedience

by Del Fehsenfeld Jr.

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*Revival is achieved through the obedience of God's people to His Word and promptings.*

**Duration:** 55:51

**Scripture:** Exodus 40:16, Isaiah 1:19, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Revival"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker poses the question of how we would spend our last three days, three hours, and fifty and a half minutes if we knew Jesus was returning. He emphasizes the urgency of this hypothetical situation, urging listeners to repent, seek forgiveness, and surrender every area of their lives to God. The speaker also highlights the importance of instant obedience to God's voice, recounting how disobedience can lead to a breakdown in communication with God. The sermon concludes with a reminder that building our lives on Jesus, the true rock, is the key to being wise and prepared for His return.

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## Transcript

I know my reputation precedes me, but I have a flight to catch tonight. And I do plan on being through here at 8 o'clock. So we've got to move quickly.

That's California time, by the way. Exodus 40, if you will. Turning your Bibles to Exodus, the 40th chapter.

By the way, in our crusades in the States, we have a prayer room similar to that which has been established here to your left, through this side door, and I'm sure you can reach it through any of the exits around the hallway. There's nothing extraordinary about that place of prayer. It's just a room with empty chairs where we can go to meet with God any time that God speaks.

And I want to ask you, if you would, tonight, during this next period of time, to respond to the prompting of God's Spirit as He speaks to your heart. It may be that God will speak to you before I even finish praying. I don't know why we let the God of heaven wait once He has called.

If God speaks to your heart during the prayer, if He speaks to your heart midway into the message, you say, but, Dal, we're not used to that. We're used to waiting for a stand-up, formal, come-forward invitation down in the States that's usually accompanied with 30 verses of Just As I Am. I want to suggest to you that there will probably be no formal invitation.

The invitation is open starting now. Any time that God's Spirit speaks to you throughout the entire service, I would invite you there in the balcony here on the main floor to leave your seat and go and just do business with God. When you get there in one of those empty chairs, bow before God and say, God, I've come because I heard what You said.

And I've come to agree with You. And I want to do business with You in my heart. I want to obey You.

And whenever you have finished that business with God, then feel free to leave that prayer room and come back and be seated and let God speak to you some more. I can only think of one thing that's better than sitting in a place like this where God is at work, God speaking to you individually about a specific area of your life, you getting to get up and go and meet with the Creator of life Himself personally, than if God would speak to you two or three times in the same service and you get to go and meet with Him several times personally in that place of prayer. So I want to encourage you, whether you're a part of the conference or a part of this church, whenever God speaks, please feel the freedom just to leave your seat and go and meet with the Lord there.

Why don't we stand together and open our hearts in a word of prayer. And while you stand in the presence of God, would you just open your heart and whisper this prayer to God? If you mean it, say, Lord, speak to me tonight. Whether you speak to anyone else in this auditorium or not, I've come not to hear from man, but to hear from God.

God, speak to me personally, specifically. And I promise you, whatever you say, I will obey. Will you tell God that in your heart right now? Father, we wait not to hear from man, but from you.

And we ask in the name of Jesus that your Spirit will move upon this place and upon our hearts. Speak to us, Lord. And whatever you say, by your grace, we will obey.

I pray in Jesus' name, amen. Thank you. You can be seated.

We've talked a lot about the glory of God filling the church. That's revival. The glory of God departed Israel in the book of Ezekiel.

We in the New Testament are looking for the outpouring of the manifest presence, the glow of God's glory in the church in revival that will bring about a spiritual awakening in our land. Here in Exodus 40, I would call your attention to verse 16. Thus did Moses, according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he.

You will find that statement or its equivalent 16 times in just two chapters here in the book of Exodus. That's significant because of what you read in verse 34. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory, the glow of God himself, the manifest presence of the living God filled the tabernacle.

When did that happen? Sixteen times so that we wouldn't miss it. He made it clear. The glow of God, the visitation of God's manifest presence on the scene arrived when God's people had done all that the Lord had commanded them.

Over in 2 Corinthians 10, following a verse that's familiar to most of us, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, not tangible. We don't fight against the devil whom we can see and box with him with boxing gloves or use guns or knives or grenades or whatever because our enemy is not seen. The weapons of our warfare are not tangible, carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting

down imaginations and reasonings and philosophies and a way of thinking that exalts itself above the way that God thinks and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Jesus Christ as Lord.

But there's a verse that follows that familiar scripture in the sixth verse and it answers an often asked question in revival. Why is there no fear of God in the eyes of most people in our land? In fact, why is there no fear of God among my children? We're raising a generation today that does not even know God. Why is there no fear of God in the church? Why is it that people can pick and choose as if obedience and the truth of God's Word is a cafeteria line from which they can pick and choose whatever they will please and ignore the rest? Why is there no fear of God before our eyes? Why is sin so rampant in our land, in our churches, in our homes, in our hearts? Why doesn't God do something? I mean, why doesn't God judge the wicked? Why doesn't He exalt righteousness and honor and bless those who have a heart after Him? Why doesn't God do something? And the scripture makes this statement, God speaking, I have in a readiness to will to revenge or judge all disobedience when your obedience has been completed.

And I'll tell you that passage got a hold of me one day. Here I was praying for all the abortionists and the Hollywood crowd and the corruption in Washington and in our state houses and I'm praying for all the sin and media and humanism in our academic institutions and I'm seeing this tidal wave of sin come over our nation and a generation being raised up that does not even know God and all of a sudden I'm crying out, God, why don't you do something? Why don't you revenge this disobedience, this sin that is out of control? Why? And God answered, because your obedience has not been fulfilled. I'm ready, God says.

Dear friend, will you listen to me tonight? God does not judge a nation simply because of the wickedness of the ungodly. God judges nations because of the sin, the pride, the selfishness, the materialism, the bitterness, the gossip, the disobedience of His own children. And God says, when judgment begins in My house, when My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek My faith and turn from their wicked way, then, God said, I'll hear from heaven, I'll forgive your sin and I'll heal your land.

When does the glory of God visit a church? When our obedience is completed. When does the glory of God visit a church? When we have done all that the Lord has commanded us. You say, why won't my husband get right with God? Dear lady, it may be because you have not fulfilled your obedience in taking your proper place according to the Word of God, with a quiet and a meek spirit as a godly and virtuous wife in that home.

Why won't my wife submit? Why won't she honor and reverence me as the leader in this family? Dear sir, it may well be because your obedience is not complete. You've not taken your proper place in that marriage. Why won't my children stop rebelling? And why won't they obey? And why won't our nation stop murdering babies and parading perverse lifestyles in the media and down Main Street and promoting wicked living? I believe it's because we as God's people have not obeyed what God says.

And God says, I will fill the temple with my glory. I will revenge and judge disobedience and put a stop to this tidal wave of sin when our obedience as His children is complete. Some of us say, why is it so difficult? For me to read the Bible and understand what it means.

Why is it so hard for me to find the will of God in my life? Why is it that somebody else can open the Word of God and it just seems to come alive? And it's so real and it's so living and it's so practical and it's so applicable to their lives. And I read it and it's just dry. Jesus answers that question in John 7, verse 17.

He says, if any man will do his will, he shall then know of the doctrine. You see, we've got it in reverse. We're trying to know and then obey.

God, you explain it to me. You make me understand it. You let me figure the whole thing out and then I'll decide whether I'm going to obey.

And God says, whether you understand it or not, if I said it in my word, you obey and eventually you will understand as you do what I tell you to do. Let me make a statement and then try to explain it. Conviction without commitment produces confusion.

Conviction without commitment produces confusion. What do you mean, Del? You sit in a service, in a conference, in a Sunday morning service when your pastor is preaching. The Holy Spirit of God grips your heart over an area of disobedience in your life, some unresolved conflict, an area of your conscience that is not clear, a truth that's not obeyed, an area of your life that is not surrendered.

He puts His finger on that area of your life and you know that you ought to obey, but you don't. You've had the conviction of the Holy Spirit, but you did not obey, therefore there was no commitment. Do you remember what Paul said? He said, I'm convinced, I'm persuaded that God is able to keep that which I commit.

Dear friend, it's not what you and I can do in keeping the commitment, it's what He can do, but He does not release His resurrection power to fulfill and to complete that commitment until it's made. Until we activate our will to do what God says. And sitting and taking notes and amening the preacher and singing songs and getting excited and getting worked up into a neat feeling in a conference will not carry you through the rest of this week when you leave.

The only thing that's going to take you into continuous revival is obedience moment by moment to the prompting of the Holy Spirit of God in your life. And so, so many Christians are disillusioned, they're confused. You say, I don't understand this.

I make a commitment to God in some area and it seems like all hell breaks loose in that area of my life. I feel like the devil and all of his forces are just bombarding me in that one area where I've made a commitment. Dear friend, that's exactly what's happening.

That's a part of the process of spiritual growth. God is wanting to become your life. He's wanting you to exchange your life with His through your obedience, step by step, moment by moment, hand in hand with Him.

James makes a statement that grips my heart when he says that we are to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. You say, I like these neat conferences. I get so many notes.

I can teach Sunday school when I get home and I can preach these messages all these guys have preached and I can just hardly wait. And I've got my notebooks filled and the shelves flooded with all kinds of information. Dear friend, James says that we are to be doers, not collectors.

Doers! Our problem in the church today isn't that we need somebody to stand up and preach to us and tell us what's wrong with us. If we're a child of God, we're indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. He's been prompting.

He's been convicting. He's been showing us what's wrong with us. Our problem isn't that we need more orthodoxy.

The church is drowning in orthodoxy. The 20th century church is dying for a lack of orthopraxy. We need to start doing something about what God's Word says.

Not just taking notes. Not just filling our heads. Not just intellectually and verbally affirming what the preacher says, but activating our will and stepping out in faith and putting feet to our prayers and our heart and our commitment and listen to what James says.

Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only. But the verse doesn't stop there. It says, deceiving your own selves.

I know of nothing that will destroy you as a believer in your fellowship with God and your walk with God. I know of nothing that will deaden your conscience and destroy your capacity for spiritual growth quicker than to be exposed to the truth of God's Word and not obey it. It would be better for you not to watch Christian television, not to read Christian periodicals, not even to attend church as often as wrong as that in and of itself would be.

It would be better for you to do that and not be exposed to the truth than that you should hear the truth of God's Word and be convicted by the Holy Spirit of God and know what you ought to do and not do it. Because when you hear but don't obey, it deadens, it blinds, it destroys, and ultimately it deceives you into believing what A.W. Tozer said. The curse of the 20th century church.

A.W. Tozer said the curse of the 20th century church is that we believe that because we know something, we automatically have it. We think that because we heard the preacher say it and we took notes, it's automatically in our life. We think that because we know about salvation, we're saved.

And because we know about repentance, we've repented. And because we know about brokenness, we're broken. And because we know about the exchanged and crucified and spirit-filled life, we're exchanged and spirit-filled.

And we think that because we know about humility, we're humble. And because we know about transparent honesty, we're transparently honest. But nothing could be farther from the truth.

You know why? Because between this and this and the life is a long distance and most of the time this is being stopped up by one of these. A stiff neck. Pride in my heart and my life that refuses to allow me to bend, to bow in agreement with God.

And James said you will deceive yourself. You will deceive yourself and you will grow in a state of spiritual deadness for the rest of your life having heard the truth but not having obeyed it, having not put it into your life, having not cooperated with the Spirit through obedience and faith. You will deceive yourself into believing that you are actually more spiritual than you really are, that it's everybody else that needs to get revived when the greatest need is the fellow you shaved this morning because you haven't been obeying what God's Word says.

Jesus said, why do you call me Lord? Lord, but will not obey me. Why do you say you love me? Proof of your love is that you obey me. Another way of spelling love is O-B-E-Y.

Have you loved Jesus today with more than your head and your mouth? What have you obeyed in God's Word today? Who did you share Christ with over the noontime meal? Whose soul have you pled with God in brokenness for during the hours of the afternoon? Whose life have you reproduced in and brought closer to Jesus in their walk with Him? What sacrificial gift in the name of Christ have you given in your obedience today? Jesus said, what are you doing calling me Lord when you won't obey me? Why do you think you love me? The proof of your love is that you obey me, that you do what I tell you to do. You know, over in Matthew, you can cut that out of the video, fellas. Over in Matthew, the seventh chapter, in what we often refer to as the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus ends that discourse with a story that's familiar to all of us because we've sung the songs that go with it.

The wise man built his house upon the rock. You say, that's me, Brother Dow, I'm a wise man. I'm a Christian.

I've invited the rock Christ Jesus into my life, and I'm building my life on the rock. And the foolish man builds his house on the sand. You say, that's not me.

Brother, I'm committed. I'm in this conference. I'm in business with God.

I'm here to figure out what I can do to reach all the other sorry backslidden believers. Wait a minute. You know what Jesus said? He said the wise man is the man who builds his house on the rock.

You say, Dow, I've done that. I've built my life on Jesus. That's not the rock, folks.

Not in this passage. It's not. Go back and read it again.

You know what Jesus says the rock is? He that heareth my words and doeth them. I will liken him unto a man who builds his house on the rock. The rains pour down and the floods arise and the winds howl, but his house stands firm.

Why? It's built on obedience to the lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of his word. The foolish man is the man, Jesus said, who hears what I say, takes notes, comes to church, tips God in the offering plate, would never rebel, would never resist, gets excited about all of the good things that God is doing, but the foolish man, Jesus said, is the man who hears what I say, and even though he doesn't resist and rebel, and even though he takes notes and even goes home and preaches and teaches the same lesson, the foolish man is the man who hears but will not obey what I say. Can't you hear the pain of the heart of God with his own people in the Old Testament when he cried? You come, you sit, you listen, but you will not do.

You will not obey me. You will not do what I tell you to do. No wonder the Old Testament prophets said, rend your hearts and not your garments.

You're going through all the motions trying to convince yourself that you've got it all down, but God wants a broken heart that is fully surrendered and a will that is committed to obey instantaneously whatever God says at the moment he speaks. To whom much is given, much will be required, God says. Let's make this practical.

A moment ago, the ushers graciously passed out paper. If you don't have a sheet of paper or something to write on, if you'll raise your hand, I'm sure they'll find a handful and come back your way. Would everybody just get out a piece of paper and something to write with? If you don't have something to write with, if you'll

just check with your neighbor, somebody may have an extra pen or a pencil.

I don't want this to be ambiguous. I don't want us to go out of this building tonight wondering, what in the world is that preacher talking about? Let's make it practical. Let me turn you to Isaiah, the first chapter.

Isaiah, the first chapter, verse 19. Notice what he says, Isaiah 119, If you be willing and obedient, then you shall eat of the good of the land. But if you refuse and rebel, you know, you can rebel by simply not doing what God says.

That's a choice of your will to go your own way, to do your own thing. And if you refuse or rebel, God's word says you shall perish by the sword, for the mouth of Jehovah God has spoken it. That Hebrew phrase means what God has just said, He will never ever change His mind about.

What did He just say? He said if you be willing and obedient, you'll have God's blessing and God's best. But if you disobey, if you resist, if you refuse, if you rebel, if you neglect, if you don't obey, you'll perish by the sword, for the mouth of Jehovah God has spoken it. Now notice that verse 19, it doesn't say if you be willing, you'll be blessed.

God's still working in some of our lives just to get us to the cross and to death, so that we are willing. But many of us here tonight have been to the cross, and we're willing, we're broken, we're surrendered, we're available, we're resting, we're waiting. But I want you to know that He didn't say if you be willing, He said if you be willing and obedient.

Obedient. It doesn't say if you're willing to meet with God for an hour every morning in your holy hour. It doesn't say if you're willing to have family devotions, if you're willing to love your mate, if you're willing to reestablish biblical priorities on a daily basis in your life, if you're willing to give sacrificially and in faith, if you're willing to get out of your seat and go to the prayer room any time God speaks to you, then you'll be blessed.

No, it doesn't say if you be willing, it says if you be willing and obedient. Willing and obedient. Would you write at the top of that sheet of paper that you've got there in your hands, willing but not yet obedient.

Willing but not yet obedient. And I want to ask you in the next two minutes as I stand silently here at this microphone to listen to the voice of God and to construct as specific a list as you can of the areas of your life that you are willing but not yet obedient. You say, I'm going to go and clear my conscience with that person.

I really need to seek forgiveness. You're willing but you haven't yet obeyed. I'm willing to confess that sin.

I'm willing to go to that prayer room and meet with God. I'm willing to give a testimony if the floor were open for such a thing. I'm willing but you haven't obeyed.

I'm willing to give my tithes and offerings and even sacrificially and invest substantially in eternal things. I'm willing to read my Bible on a consistent basis and hide God's Word in my heart. I'm willing, Brother Dale, to do all of those things.

I'm willing to get baptized now that I've been saved. I'm willing to join a good local church and get involved with the rest of the body and fellowshiping and ministering one to another. But you haven't done it yet.

You're still not a member. You still haven't joined. You still haven't gotten baptized.

I'm willing to witness to that boss, that next door neighbor, and tell them about Jesus. But you haven't done it yet. In the next two minutes I want to ask you to make a specific list of everything God prompts you of in your life that you're willing to do.

You're not fighting God. You're not resisting God. You really are willing to do it.

You just haven't done it. You haven't taken the time yet to activate your will and obey. So I'm going to be quiet and I'm going to ask you for the next two minutes to listen to the voice of God and make a list of every specific thing in your life that you can think of.

Maybe activities or habits that need to be overcome. Maybe thin problems that need to be resolved. Conflicts with you and another person.

Bitterness in your heart that needs to be removed. It may be in a relationship with your family or a family member. It may be in the area of giving or sharing.

Whatever it is, make a list right now in the next two minutes of everything you can think of that you are willing to do but not yet obedient. Would you do that right now? A truth that needs to be obeyed. A promise that needs to be claimed.

A sin that needs to be confessed. A burden that needs to be lifted in prayer. But you haven't prayed yet.

You're willing to, you just haven't done it yet. God's Word says, He that hath this hope, speaking of the soon return of Christ, in him purifieth himself, even as he, Jesus, is pure. Now Scripture says no man knows the hour or the day when Christ will return.

But let's just hypothesize for a moment and see what God evokes from within our heart. What if I, as I stood here tonight, all of a sudden this ceiling were to open and an angel were to descend and he were to hover over my head and he were to say, I just came from the throne room of heaven. God sent me here to tell you that at 12 o'clock midnight, this Wednesday night, Jesus is going to return.

You have three days, three hours, 53 minutes. That's all you've got left on this planet. 12 o'clock midnight, you're going to be standing with all of eternity in front of you and all of earth behind you.

Jesus is going to come back at midnight on Wednesday night. What if an angel told us that? Some of you look like you're getting happy. You wish I'd park here a while.

Say, I tell you, I can't think of a thought that would be greater than to think that I only have three days, three hours, and 52 minutes left on this planet. Glory to God. Get out of this place.

Go see Jesus face to face. What a thrilling thought. But not all of us look so happy.

Some of us actually look like we've just seen a ghost. Panic on our face. If I can read some of our faces, here's what's going on on the inside.

Not three days. Not three days and three hours. Come on, Del, don't talk like that.

Jesus can't come back at Wednesday night at midnight. I'm not ready. I've got a lost kid that I've got to win.

I've got a husband that's an alcoholic, hasn't come to Jesus. I've got a mom and a dad that are going to die lost and spend a Christless eternity in a devil's hell. I've got kids, friends at school that I've never even told once about Christ.

And three days isn't enough time. There are prayers that I should have prayed that certainly haven't been answered because I haven't prayed and I haven't tithed. I've been stealing from God, hoping that once I made a big bundle, I could kind of make it all up.

Don't tell me He's coming back in three days. I'm not ready. Amos said, prepare to meet thy God.

John said, he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself. You see what's happening? The mere thought that Jesus could return in three days, three hours, and fifty and a half minutes. The clock is ticking time, it's running out.

I want to ask you a question. How would you spend these last three days and three hours and fifty and a half minutes? How would you spend them? You know, some of us would never go to bed. We'd be calling, we'd be knocking on doors, we'd be on our face before God weeping and pleading and fasting and praying.

We'd be making up what we'd stolen from God. We'd be clearing our conscience and seeking forgiveness. We would be broken before God, getting our sin accounts caught up to date.

We'd be surrendering every area of our life we could think of. We'd be doing everything we could to get right with God and make sure we're ready to meet Him face to face. I was in a crusade down in Titusville, Florida.

God gripped the heart of a church one day. In reality, when they faced the soon return of Jesus and a fellow got up out of his seat in the middle of the service, walked out to the parking lot, into the glove box of his car, got his checkbook, came back inside, sat down and wrote a check and said, Pastor, I was going to buy a Ferrari this week. I've robbed God and handed him a check for multiple thousands.

I was in Houston, Texas not long ago. A businessman went home, got out all of his tax returns, added up all the money that he had ever made since he had gone to work, added up all the money he had ever given to the Lord and found out that he had cheated and stolen from God. And he came back to church the next night and handed the pastor a check for \$22,000.

He wasn't ready to meet God. People who got desperate, we were in a revival in Lynchburg and when God broke loose in that place, one of the student couples who had witnessed for years to different people but had never had the power of God on their life, sought permission to cut school for three days and they drove a thousand miles into Ohio, went back to witness to all 13 of those lost relatives one more time and when they returned to school, they came with the glorious, almost unbelievable news that every one of those 13 people had given their heart to Jesus. And on the way back to school, their car broke down, they climbed a barbed wire fence to go up and get some help from a farmer family and before they left that farmhouse, that man and his wife said to Jesus, Dear friend, what would you need to do if you knew that Jesus would return at 12 o'clock midnight Wednesday night? Three days, three hours, 48 and a half minutes are left.

If you knew that Jesus would return at 12 o'clock midnight, what are the things that you would be busy doing in the next three days and three hours? I want you to add to that list, willing but not yet obedient.

Everything that God brings to your attention, everything you can think of that you would do if you knew for a fact that Jesus was going to return at 12 o'clock midnight, just add it to that list right now. These are the things I would need to do.

The baptized I'd need to get caught up in, and the people that I would need to witness to, and the areas of truth that I would need to obey, and the people I would need to forgive, and others that I would need to seek forgiveness from. These are the prayers that I would pray. These are the people for whom I would pray.

I want you to make a list. I'll be still here so you can listen to the voice of God for the next minute. If you knew that Jesus would return in three days, three hours, and 47 and a half minutes, what are the things that you would need to do in order to be ready to meet Him face to face? Will you add that to your list there in the next 60 seconds? Understanding of what obedience is.

By the way, Charles Finney said that revival is nothing more than a fresh, new beginning of obedience in the life of God's people. We're looking for a feeling. We're looking for an experience.

And God is looking for obedience. A fresh, new beginning of obedience. Not a fresh, new beginning of preaching and teaching and singing and talking and taking notes and attending church.

But a fresh, new beginning of obedience. That's what revival is. I know some of you have not been called to preach, but you'd love to do it anyway, so I'm going to give you a chance to do it tonight, alright? I'm going to ask one of the twins to help me with the overhead, and I want to give you three points of a very simple little message that will stick in your mind when you leave this place and will carry you through the rest of your Christian pilgrimage, Lord willing.

You ready? Here it is. Revival is obedience. Will you write that down? Revival is obedience in all of its simplicity.

Revival is just a fresh, new beginning of obedience to whatever God has said in my heart and my life. Revival is obedience. Now here's how we're going to preach this message.

Every time my hands come out, you have the answer to that question or the statement that's left unsaid. I want you to say it out loud as vociferously and energetically as you can, alright? And if it's not loud enough, this is my volume control over here. I'll just turn it up a little bit, and we'll try again.

You ready? Here we go. Let's preach point number one of this sermon. Revival is obedience.

Very good. Now, we need to define obedience, so let's do that. Revival is obedience, and obedience is doing exactly what I'm told to do.

Doing exactly what I'm told to do. Second part of that definition, when I'm told to do it. And if you are not told by the commander when to do it, then it's doing it instantly.

There in parentheses. Doing exactly what I'm told to do, when I'm told to do it, or instantly, with the right heart attitude. Obedience.

Doing exactly what I'm told to do, when I'm told to do it, with the right heart attitude. Now let's see if we can preach the first two points of this message. You ready? Here we go.

Revival is obedience, and obedience is doing exactly what I'm told to do, when I'm told to do it, with the right heart attitude. Now, third point of this message. Obedience brings blessing.

Deuteronomy 11. God said, Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse. A blessing if you will obey the commandments of the Lord your God.

A curse if you disobey and depart out of the way which I have commanded you this day. What is the bottom line of what God said to His people before they went into Canaan? Obedience brings blessing, but disobedience brings conflict. What kind of conflict, Dale? Guilt, worry, doubt, shame, unbelief, fear, all kinds of tormentors, frustrations and fears within your life are the end result of disobedience to God's way of thinking and God's way of living in your life.

Do you know, folks, that every single time we obey God, without exception, every time we obey, whether it's a big thing or a little tiny thing, every time we obey God, God uses that as an opportunity to bring blessing into our life. Because obedience brings, I caught you there, didn't I? Obedience brings, but disobedience, wait a minute, not only does every little step and big step of obedience bring God's blessing on my life, but every single time I think my own thoughts, go my own way, make my own decisions, exercise my own will contrary to His will, no matter how big or small, disobedience brings conflict. Now go back to that definition for a moment.

Obedience is doing. Do you see that? It's not thinking, it's not writing notes, it's not singing songs or teaching lessons or preaching sermons. Obedience is action.

It's activating the will. It's doing, it's doing, it's doing exactly what God tells me to do. Not doing one thing more or one thing less.

You remember Professor Nadab and Dr. Abihu back in the Old Testament? God gave them explicit instructions about that sacrifice and the altar and that He would send the fire. Those boys got tired of waiting on God. And I'll tell you, part of the church in America has gotten tired of waiting on God, and as a result, like Nadab and Abihu, in the energy of the flesh, they've crawled out of their tents and out of their seminaries, and they've struck up strange fire on the altar.

And God, when He sent the fire, consumed not only the sacrifice, but also Nadab and Abihu. Why? Because God has cursed the arm and the energy of the flesh. That which is done in the flesh, apart from the extraordinary power of the supernatural God, has been cursed by God.

And so, they did more than God required, and as a result, they were cursed. Do you remember Saul? Obedience is not only doing exactly what I'm told to do, exactly nothing more, but it's also doing nothing less. God told Saul in 1 Samuel 15, He said, Saul, I want you to go down and utterly destroy all of the Amalekites, and I want you to burn up all of the refuse, take nothing for spoil.

And you start reading in 1 Samuel 15, and it looks like Saul's going to do exactly what God said. He goes down there and he wipes out all the Amalekites, except one, King Agag. Why did he take King Agag? Because it was the custom in that day that when a conquering king conquered another nation, they always took the conquered king, put him on an ox cart, and rode him through the capital city of the conquering king, so that everybody could come into the streets and laud and applaud and praise their great king as a military strategist.

You see, Saul was consumed with himself and pride. Will you put this down? At the root of all disobedience in my life is pride. The arrogance of heart that causes me to believe that my way is as good as God's way.

My will is just as good as God's will. My thoughts are as good as God's thoughts. And at the root of all disobedience in my life is pride.

Pride, pride, pride. And notice who's right smack in the middle of the spelling of that word, P-R-I. That's the problem.

It's no longer Christ, but me. It's I, and that's our problem. We've got I trouble.

The pride of our hearts deceiving us has caused us to go our own way and do our own thing in disobedience before God. You see, obedience is doing exactly what God tells me to do. It's doing it instantly.

Do you see that word instantly? Have you ever noticed in the New Testament, when God inspired the record of His Son speaking to people, stretch forth your hand, take up your bed and walk, come forth out of the grave. How many times you find recorded one of these three words, straightway, forthwith, immediately? There's no accident the Spirit of God inspired that record. Why? Because obedience is doing exactly what I'm told, instantly.

The moment that God speaks to me. Somebody has said that the longer it takes you to obey God, the farther away from God you're really living in reality anyway. Pastors say to me, Del, why in revivals are the most spiritual, tender-hearted, sensitive people in my church the first to always obey? That's simple.

They're the closest to God. They're the first to hear Him. And pride has been dealt with in their life and they're just available to obey whatever God says.

You see, obedience is doing exactly what I'm told to do, instantly. Instantly. That's why in our crusades we have a prayer room that's open all through the service.

The moment God speaks, you say, but Del, I can't do that. I can't get up out of my seat. I've seen people doing that here tonight.

That disrupts the service and we're more conservative than that. Go on and disrupt the service. Let God be God in the church.

When are we going to learn to obey and stop being so full of our formal traditions that we die in our pews? Isn't it time that Jesus and a little of His life come into the church? Folks, it's time that Jesus be Lord of His church and that the Spirit of God be able to hijack a service anytime He wants to. Sometimes I can't finish preaching a service. I can't get through the message because God has so overwhelmed the hearts of people they're all gone or they're headed for the prayer room or God says that's it.

It's over. No more. If you say another word, you'll mess up what I've already said to the people.

When are we going to learn to obey? You say, well, we just can't do that, Del. We just can't disrupt the service. Let me ask you a question.

For those of you in America, if you were sitting here in this auditorium and an usher walked down the aisle, he passed a note to you and it said, President George Bush is on the phone, line two, wants to talk with you. Or those of you here in Canada, Prime Minister Mulroney, is that how you pronounce it? That's not bad for an American, is it? Prime Minister Mulroney is on the phone and he wants to talk with you, line two. What would you do? You know what we'd do? We'd take out that card and we'd write a note back to the usher.

It says, tell the Prime Minister or the President I'm busy. I'll call him back later. Right? Wrong.

You know what we'd do? We would intentionally stumble over everything in sight, make as much racket as we could, call as much attention to ourselves as we could, and say, The President, the Prime Minister's on the phone. He wants to talk to me. I'm going to meet with the President or the Prime Minister right now.

But you let the Prime Minister or President's boss call and we get embarrassed to even answer. We just sit at service like this and God's Spirit speaks to our heart, God Almighty speaks to us, and we say later I'm busy. Not now.

Not here. Not with all these people, God. You may be the Prime Minister's boss, the President's boss.

You may be the creator of life. You may hold my very next breath in your hand, but God, don't you understand? I can't get up in the middle of their service and go to that prayer room. If I did, everybody would see me.

What's that? Hello? What is that? The number one enemy of your soul. The one thing that will destroy and deaden and kill your relationship to God quicker than almost anything else is in pride not to obey God when He speaks to you. The moment God speaks, the instant God convicts, that moment you need to move from that place and go and agree with God in brokenness before Him.

And folks, if we can't learn to obey God at church, how in the world do we think we're going to obey Him out there in the laboratory of life as high schoolers and college students right smack in the middle of the devil's playground and out there in the factory assembly lines and in the offices where other people who are aloft have no understanding of what we're doing. God said judgment must begin in the house of the Lord and I am convinced with all of my heart that the need of the church at this hour is not for more preaching. It's not for more doctrine.

It's for obedience to what God has already said. And I tell you, if we would just learn to obey, if we would just obey one third of what most of us in this auditorium already know, we'd be in the throes of one of the greatest revivals of God the 20th century has ever seen in North America. It's about our hearts and prayer.

I've not finished this message, but God has. And He's already spoken. You say, I don't know where to begin.

I don't know what specifics to start with. Dear friend, look at that list that's staring you in the face on your lap. Every single thing on that list is just another evidence of disobedience in your life.

And obedience is doing. Doing. Not taking notes, singing songs, preaching sermons.

Obedience is doing exactly what God says. Instantly. With the right heart attitude.

Oh, how long has it been since you went to church and obeyed the voice of God? How long has it been since you met with the Lord? God's waiting on the front porch of heaven, looking at your list and waiting to see if you will go home disobedient, or if you will go home having obeyed all that the Lord has said. And when they obeyed all that God had said, His glory filled the tabernacle. Why doesn't God revenge that which is wrong? Because our obedience is not yet complete.

The greatest expression of love? Obedience. The wise man? Obedient. Let's no longer deceive ourselves, but obey what God says.

Let me ask the organist or pianist to play quietly a verse of Have thine own way, Lord. Have thine own way. As they play that song, with others who have already gone to meet God, God's waiting for you.

A fresh new beginning of obedience. It may be somebody in this place that you've been bitter towards, critical of, analyzed and scrutinized, condemned or judged, wronged or offended, given a bad report of, and you need to go to their side in obedience and seek forgiveness for that wrong. It may be some of those things on that list that you've been willing to do, but not yet obeyed.

I would remind you at the root of all disobedience is self and pride. At the root of all obedience is humility. Some of you here in this auditorium are saying, Del, I'm really scared.

God has spoken to so many people around me, but God, He hadn't been speaking to me for weeks. Maybe you're a conference attendee and you say, Del, I've seen God transform the lives of people right here in the last few days. God hadn't spoken to me.

I came dry and I'm leaving cold, so empty and barren. Some of you have been in this church for years. If you were honest, you'd have to say, Del, God, God's not speaking to me.

Why? Why won't God speak to me like He speaks to others? Could I suggest a possibility? Back there when you first met Him, you loved Him, you were sensitive to Him. He spoke, you instantly obeyed. You loved it because you loved Him.

Weeks and months perhaps of instant obedience. Then one day God spoke and you said, Lord, I'm really busy. I'll get back to you here in a minute.

And you did. A few minutes later you got back and you obeyed. But pretty soon the minutes turned to hours.

And it wasn't long and God spoke and you said, God, I'm busy. I'll get back to you. And it was a week later.

You remembered a week later, but, oh, a week of disobedience had gone by. But you obeyed and pretty soon the weeks turned to months. And it wasn't long and God said, Why should I waste my time speaking to him, to her? They're not going to do anything about it anyway.

And God stopped speaking to you. He said, Del, that's where I am. God isn't talking to me anymore.

What do I do? You know what I'd do if I was you? I'd get out of my seat and run as fast as I could to that place of prayer. I'd fall in one of those empty chairs and cry out, Oh God, what have I done? What have I done? The pride, the arrogance of my heart that was more concerned about what everybody else around me thought than what you thought. The pride of my heart that thought my way was as good as your way.

God, I've sinned against you. Forgive me of this wicked pride in my heart. And I promise you, Lord, if you'll start speaking to me once again, whatever you say, I will obey.

God's calling. Go and meet him now. Don't think about it.

Don't write notes. Just get up out of your seat and go. Let's sing a verse while our hearts are bowed and eyes are closed.

Have thine own way, Lord. And as we sing it, think of those words and pray it from your heart to the Holy Spirit. And as you sing those words, if they just fall out of your mouth on the floor before you because you know it's a lie, it's not true.

You don't mean God can have his way. He can't have you. You're not going to obey this moment.

Whatever God has said, then you need to get up out of your seat and head for that place of prayer. Perhaps you need to cross that aisle. If there's something you're not prepared to meet God over, you need to go, maybe to a phone, maybe to someone's home tonight and make it right.

Perhaps to a checkbook to see your pastor and get caught up on your ties that you've stolen from God. Whatever it is God's speaking to you about. As we sing, have thine own way, Lord.

I invite you to get up out of your seat and come on right now. Do business with God. Let him have his way in your heart.

Let's sing it together.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19779.mp3>

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