

# Action and Obedience

by Duncan Campbell

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*Duncan Campbell's sermon emphasizes the critical role of action and obedience in fulfilling God's needs and receiving His blessings.*

**Duration:** 43:11

**Scripture:** Matthew 21:1, John 3:21

**Topics:** "Obedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of obeying God rather than human authority. He encourages the audience to reflect on their own lives and identify any areas where they may be bound by worldly influences. The speaker also highlights the need for watchmen and laborers in God's kingdom, urging the listeners to be willing vessels for God's work. He concludes by urging the audience to stand for truth, righteousness, purity, and power in a troubled world, echoing the sentiment of 'no surrender' in the face of opposition.

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## Transcript

Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 21, we shall read a few verses, beginning at verse 1. Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 21, reading a few verses. And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethpage, unto the Mount of Olives, Then sent Jesus to disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her. Loose them, and bring them unto me.

And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold, by king cometh unto thee, meet, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt, the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set them thereon.

May God add his blessing to that short reading from his word. The version that is on my heart this evening is that of a message on action and obedience. Action and obedience.

Action in dealing with all in my life and in your life that stands now contrary to the will of God. And that means God leading me to deal with sin, and obedience to the voice that speaks from heaven, and oh, may heaven's voice be heard in this meeting beyond the voice of mere man. So I take you to that passage just read, And the disciples went, and did what Jesus had commanded them.

This is a story in the life of Christ that to me speaks of a need, and how that need was met by the action and by the obedience of two disciples. How often obedience has opened at our conventions and at other conventions the floodgates of heaven, bringing down upon the gathering the blessing of Almighty God. My prayer is that obedience on my part and upon your part may open the floodgates of glory and flood us with a sense of God that brings conviction, a consciousness that brings the confidence in the God that can deal with sin and with everything in my life and in your life that is contrary to the will of God.

Now let me say first of all that we must ever regard obedience as a fundamental condition for blessing, something, a truth that must never be disregarded. Further, let me say this, that there is no moral virtue in obedience unless there is a recognition of a higher authority in the one who dictates and calls me to obedience. I want you very clearly to understand that obedience presupposes an unreserved yielding to the claims of Jesus Christ.

I want to underline that because blessing will depend upon the measure that I'm prepared to listen to the voice that speaks from heaven and obey that voice. You recall when the great apostle Paul found himself prostrating the presence of God on that Damascus road, what did he pray? What was his reaction to the revelation that came to him? How did he respond to the conviction that something attached to him that could only be explained on the basis of the supernatural? How did he react? Did he say, I wonder if I ought to make a decision? No, that was not his immediate reaction. He cried, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? I want to ask now, are we there this evening? Have we come to this convention meeting with a consuming desire to meet with God? If not, our coming is just the laughingstock of devils.

Oh, I said that before. I suppose I shall say it again. Have we come to this meeting tonight with purpose and with intention to listen to the voice that Paul of Tarsus listened to? You recognize this? That in that supreme moment he recognized the condition and bowed before the authority that spoke from heaven.

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Mighty blessing will come to men and women in this meeting. A tower will be let loose that will shake the very trembling gates of hell. If with purpose and with intention we get to the place that Paul got.

Lord, I recognize your Lordship. I recognize your supremacy. You are the Almighty One, and I bow in contrition, in repentance, in humility before your voice now speaking.

You remember that it is said of Abraham that he obeyed and received an inheritor. You remember that of the disciples it is said they obeyed God rather than man, and went out to turn the world upside down. You see, through obedience their life became, would I say, a walking incarnation of spiritual energy.

And as they moved out to the villages, to the streets, why a tower was let loose in them and through them. The core of hell itself had trembled as men and women were swept into the kingdom. I often quote words that I read some little time ago with reference to Socrates.

Men of Athens, try this great philosophy. I hold you in highest esteem and reverence, but I will obey God rather than you. Tell me, friends, are we going to obey God this evening? Let me say again that blessing will depend on how we react to the voice that speaks from heaven.

Now, this is a very suggestive passage. Now, I want to direct your attention, and it must be brief, to three thoughts suggestive. First of all, the passage speaks of a need.

It also speaks of how that need was met, and what was involved in the obedience that met the need. First of all, the need itself. The Lord hath a need.

Now, here is an expression of need that must be a cause of wonder, that the God who created the universe and threw worlds into space should ever express a need. It was not the wealth of the world at his disposal, and yet here we have the Lord of glory, the creator of worlds, the sustainer of the universe, giving expression to a need. And I want to say that expression of need hath gone ringing down the corridors of time, and I believe that as angels and archangels gaze over the battlements of glory, they whisper, our God hath a need.

And I venture to say as they look upon this gathering, they are wondering if God's need is going to be met. Well, my friend, that depends upon you. It depends upon me.

God's need, what is he needing? There is a very arresting word in the prophecy of Isaiah, I looked and there was none at all. And I wondered that there was none to oppose. There you have a cry, a need, that has at its very heart a sense of urgency.

God looking for a man to stand in the gap. I cannot take time to deal with the gaps, but there are gaps today. And there are gaps that only you and me, in the providence of God, can meet, and stand for God within them.

It is interesting to note that among the gifts mentioned in Corinthian, references made to the gift of health. God said he looked for a man that would help him stand in the gap. He couldn't find him.

But I believe that I am speaking to some here this evening. You may not have the gift of a preacher. You may not have the elephant of a prophet.

You may not know the gift that leads you to be a good organizer. But my brother, my sister, you can know the gift of health, to stand for God in the place of prayer, to stand for God in the fear of which, to stand true to the promises of God and stand upon this health. He looked for a man to stand in the gap, stand for truth, stand for righteousness, stand for purity, stand for power, stand for all that the Church of Jesus Christ ought to stand for in this day and generation, in a world that is rocked in a sea of trouble, for men that will stand and stand for God in the gap.

And cry with the young men of Jericho, no surrender, no surrender. Have we been surrendering? Have we been lowering our standards to worldly conformity? Have we been courting the world, the flesh and the devil? And tonight God from heaven is saying, I want you to stand for truth. I want you to stand for godliness.

Are you standing for godliness? I want you to stand for holiness. I want you to stand by the side of him who came to destroy the works of the devil. Oh, tell me, friend, are the works of the devil being destroyed in your life and in mine? I believe that God is looking for such men.

Well, might heaven cry at this moment. Well, may heaven cry to the faith mission convention in Edinburgh. Give me men to match my mountain.

Give me men to match my plain. Men with empires in their purpose, men with era in their brain. Give me men to plead for nations like Elijah on his knees, who in hour of deathlike stillness waits to catch that heavenly breeze.

Give me men of faith and vision, stripped of every earthly gain, till across our harsh valley dark will roll God's clouds of rain. God is seeking that man. Will you be that man tonight? Will you say now where you're sitting? Oh, my dear people, let's get down to reality.

We're listening to a sermon. Oh, may God enable us to listen to God. Get out of the field of sentiment.

Get into the realm of reality. God is here, and I'm here to do business with God. I'm not here to play at conventions.

I'm not here to play at making decisions. I'm here to meet with God. I'm here to have sin dealt with.

I'm here to honor the crown rights of our Redeemer. My dear people, are we there? Some of us are tired of ordinary things. May God get us into the realm of the extraordinary.

I wonder, will you be just that man? And because you have met with God, because sin has been dealt with, because the spirit of repentance has gripped your soul, and you desire above everything else to be right with God, why you will leave this convention? As I already said of walking incarnations, oh, there is no energy that will shake again the trembling gates of the caverns of death. My dear people, are we there? Henry Ward Richard, that great American preacher, was once asked, what is the secret of your wonderful ministry? How is it that you have experienced almost perpetual revival? What is his answer? Did he say, my teaching did it? Did he say, my organization did it? Did he say, the denomination to which I belong did it? He looked his questioner in the face and said, brother, I've excellent reflectors in the pure. I've excellent reflectors in the pure.

That's greater than preaching. That's greater than human organization. Men and women going from this convention to reflect Jesus, to reflect Jesus, to reflect Jesus.

Oh, my brother, my sister, tell me, is that your desire? Is that your consuming ambition? Is that your supreme aspiration? Then I say, action, action, and obedience, and then anything you have. My, it would be wonderful. My, it would mash up over the wood.

Magic. And perhaps we'll be here till midnight. Amen.

Now, that takes me to my next thought. How was the need met? He expressed a need. How was it met? Well, I must be true to the word of God and declare that, first of all, it was met by the sovereignty and the full knowledge of God.

God knew that an ark was there. Jesus said, you'll find the ark there. You'll find the ark there.

There's a coat there. And Jesus knew the day, and Jesus knew the hour. Don't belittle the full knowledge and the sovereignty of God in the affairs of man.

He knew, I often think of the words of Grover, every man's life, a plan of God. My brother, my sister, in the full knowledge of God, God has a plan for you. If I didn't believe that, I wouldn't stand in this pulpit.

God has a plan for you. But listen, it all depends on your reaction when God puts his plan into your hands. It comes to my mind just now, a story I didn't intend telling you, but I feel I ought to.

It refers to the great Dr. Zalmer, the leader of the destruction of 1843, when he led that great church out of the wilderness into a life of usefulness for God. Dr. Zalmer is visiting in the north of Scotland. On this

occasion, they spend the night in a certain hotel.

After supper, the proprietor of the hotel came to him and said, Dr. Zalmer, will you conduct family worship? That was their custom. Dr. Zalmer took the book and read the portion, fell on his knees for the hour. The proprietor is right from the get-go.

Just as he touched the floor, according to his own diary, as he touched the floor, a voice spoke to him and said, speak to the proprietor, speak to the proprietor, it's unsafe. He had family worship. He was a good man.

There can be a good man unsafe. Natural goodness is in Christian virtue. But another voice spoke to the ear of Zalmer's soul that said, Zalmer, the moment isn't opportune, they're very busy tonight.

There's a number of guests in and others are coming, they're busy. And he listened to the voice of the tempter and went to his bed. At midnight he heard a stir in the house.

On coming down to breakfast he was told that the proprietor had died. He tells her that he went back to his room. No breakfast for him that morning.

And he knelt by the bedside and he tells her that the pillow was wet with his tears as he cried. My God, the moment was opportune that I missed it. I missed it.

I believe that that was God's moment. I believe that that was God's time. I believe that the Spirit of God was moving.

But disobedience on the part of this great man kept back the word that might have meant salvation to the proprietor. Oh, tonight, my friend, if God has a plan, if God has a program, if God brought you to this meeting tonight to have a word with you from heaven, I beg of you, in the interest of your immortal soul and in the interest of men and women that you will touch tomorrow and the next day, men that you may influence for good and for God, music, and you may help the devil to jam. Be serious, my dear people.

You dare not turn a deaf ear. Oh, you dare not. How very solemn, oh, how very solemn are the words found in the book of Ezekiel, son of man, I have set thee a watchman to the house of Israel.

If thou dost not seek to warn the wicked, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity. But his blood I will require at your hand. God needs watchmen.

God cries for laborers. God sees that soul that you could influence, but you disobey, and that influence may pass that soul and pass that soul forever. My dear people, God needs you.

God needs you. The Lord hath a need for the talisman on this occasion. I am not for a moment suggesting that need must ever be the motivating principle.

I'm not suggesting that. I believe that the glory of God, the crown right of our Redeemer must ever be the motivating power that drives me to do something at home or abroad. But on this occasion, it's obvious that there was a need.

And if there was a need, and there was a need, he expressed it. He expressed it. The Lord hath a need.

Then I would say tonight that that claim must ever be regarded as paramount, supreme, beyond everything else. Listen friends, he hath a need in your village. Listen, he hath a need in your home.

He hath a need in the ranks of the faith mission, in the ranks of the mission in Canada, South Africa, France. All the need in the dark places of the earth, in the regions beyond. God hath a need.

Now I want to say, because it is made heavenly upon my heart, that that need is paramount. And you disregard it at the peril of your immortal soul, and the peril of the immortal souls of others. That's in your home.

That's in your home. Just enough, oh just enough, yes, but that little insignificant animal is servitable. Have you got that? Is servitable.

And I believe that the hand of God is now touching someone. And someone is saying, well I can't be a prophet, I can't be a preacher, but I'm building myself to be a helper, just to be a helper. Oh, I can help someone, and someone will be in the glory because I got the gift of help.

My own mother, oh she loved to go to the prayer meeting, but oh she could help. And she could help to make the key of the prayer union annual meeting. And she could help by speaking a word for Jesus.

She could help by falling on her knee. You know the night that God saved me, Mary Graham and Jesse Mallett were conducting a mission. When I came home that night, Mother was on her knee.

Oh, she could help. She could help God. I say it reverently.

She could help God to touch that son, and God did it. God did it. Oh, can I be of service? Can I be of service now? Can I leave this meeting animated by the conviction that I must help? Well my friend, if you can serve, if you can be of service, be it in the home, in the village, in the church, in the mission, or across the seas among those dying in darkness, then I say that should be your honor, that should be your sincere, that should determine your action and your obedience.

My time is almost gone. What was involved in their obedience? First of all, a recognition of the fact that what was, what was to meet the need must be loosed. Now this is important.

I wish I had an outfit elsewhere. It must be loosed. Tell me, brother, tell me, sister, what in your life is binding you? Is biting you now? There's a very arresting word in the book of Job.

Are the constellations of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee? Tell me, friend, do you live to think lightly of the constellations of God? Isn't it a wonder that you're saved? Were it not for the mercy of God, you might be doomed and damned forever, keeping company with damned souls and damned spirits in hell. But your fear of this convention has saved. So do you think lightly of the constellations of God? Do you think lightly of the fact that God has given you an opportunity to serve him? That God has chosen you to be a witness, an ambassador in an alien land? God has placed that honor upon you.

Are the constellations of God, are they light in your eyes? Ah, but there's a double-barrel question here that I want to touch. Is there any secret thing with thee? Someone has said that the greatest hindrance to revival is not loose living, but secret faith. Is there any secret thing with thee? I want you to take that.

It's important. Oh, how many of us are bound, bound by secret faith? A minister, a prominent minister, at a conference in Oxford some years ago, came to my room and said this, and there was tears streaming from his eyes, I'm living in constant fear that I'll be found out. I may be speaking to someone, and you're living in constant fear that you'll be found out.

Is there any secret thing with thee? My brother, my sister, draggy for the life, for God needs you. Oh, God needs you. God waits to be gracious.

I love that passage that I used to speak from frequently, but unfortunately it got into one of my books, the sermons, and I'm somewhat bound about giving it again. But you remember the message that I gave once, some of you will, at this convention. But it says, He that doeth truth cometh to the light.

I remember the morning that God gives that verse to me. He that doeth truth cometh to the light. He will live no longer under any self-created delusion.

He will stand and face truth with unqualified honesty. If there's sin in the camp, am I bound? Am I settled? Oh, I needn't mention this sin, that sin, or the other sin, since you know the sin that is biting you. Is there any secret thing with thee? Oh, my brother, you're going to see it tonight.

I'm persuaded. I'm persuaded. You're going to meet the need tonight.

I'm fully persuaded. Ah, but there was another thing involved in the obedience, the recognition of the Lordship of Christ. These are wonderful words.

Oh, listen to this. The Lord, the Lord, the Lord of glory, the Lord who conquered death and hell on Calvary, the Lord who cried, it is finished, as the sounds of heralds point back to the caverns of death, be seated, be seated. Not Lord, but the need.

Are you prepared to recognize his Lordship? Are you prepared to say tonight, Lord of my life, I crown thee now. Thine will the glory be, away from man, away from error, his crown right, his crown right. And I bow in reverence, in humility, and my God in repentance.

Perhaps you'll give expression to the longing of your heart in the words that I now quote. Will you listen to them? Now abdicate my vain self-will, the sceptre, Lord, is thine. Now reign and whisper, by spirit fill this yielded heart of mine.

Thus sanctify, may I possess, the cadence of true holiness. You see, the need was met by action and by obedience. And your need, oh, your need will be met by action.

Are you going to act tonight, you young people, are you going to act? Are you going to bow before his authority? Are you going to heal beneath his sovereignty? Are you going to say, now abdicate my vain desire, the sceptre, the sceptre, oh my God, the sceptre, Lord, is thine. And I make that surrender now. I make it now.

We are going tonight.

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