

Obedience *in the Bible*

Unfortunately, it is natural for most to not want to obey any authority. Often, it is a challenge to humble ourselves to submit to a power over us. In many lives a power struggle rages as children do not want to obey parents, employees resist obeying employers or even citizens refuse to obey laws. To some, obedience is no longer a struggle; as they have made up their minds a long time ago not to obey anyone but themselves, and certainly not to let anyone have any rule or reign over them.

Like it or not, all of us have to obey someone or an authority over us for the rest of our lives. If there is not order, there will be anarchy and disorder.

Ever since the Garden of Eden, man has struggled with whom he will obey. Someone pointed out that a main theme of the Bible is government; who will govern whom. Will it be God that rules and reigns in our lives, or will we not even obey Him, and instead be our own master?

No matter what we have convinced ourselves to believe, or what has been drummed into our head, there is a godly command to obey many things. Here is some of what God's Word has to say about obedience:

- All have a command to submit to God's law.
"Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day." Deuteronomy 27:10 Also: Psalm 18:44
- Obedience to His commandments is very important to God.
"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." I Samuel 15:22 The context of this verse is concerning Israel, but it reveals the heart of God concerning obedience to Him.
- Because of Adam and Eve's refusal to obey one of God's commands, all are born as sinners and will have to battle sin's control the rest of their lives.
"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Romans 5:19
- Many of the things in this world obey God. His word mentions that the weather, waves, animals, and the rest of His creation obey Him. It is a shame when we,

who are created in His image, do not obey Him at all times.

“... for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.” Mark 1:27 Also: Matthew 8:27, Mark 4:41

- Whether one admits it or not, he is obeying someone all the time. All are servants to one master, be it the Master of the universe, or master of our own selfish desires.

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” Romans 6:12 Also: Rom. 6:16

- God reminds us throughout the Bible, that life will be a lot easier and more blessed by Him, if we simply obey what He tells us to do.

“A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.” Deut. 11:27-28 Although the context is a command to Israel, the principle applies to the believer today, when he obeys the Lord. Also I Sam. 12:14-15

- All people will have to obey someone in the future. If they do not learn obedience at a younger age, they may have a problem obeying authority in the future. That is one reason why God commands children to submit to the authority of their parents.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.” Ephesians 6:1 Also Colossians 3:20, Prov. 30:17, Exodus 20:12

- Men should obey God. This is part of God’s plan of the hierarchy of leadership.

“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” I Corinthians 11:3

- Wives are to obey their husbands.

“Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” Ephesians 5:24 Also: I Peter 3:1

- We need to obey our employer.

“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:” Colossians 3:22 Also: Titus 2:9

- We are to obey authorities over us. This includes teachers, police, and government. Not obeying the authority over us is disobeying God.

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and

not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” Hebrews 13:7 Also: Titus 3:1
However, when the commands and laws of the government or our authority contradict what God commands us to do; we should always obey God first.

“... We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29

- The local church should obey God’s commands.

“Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ ...” Eph. 5:24

Again, no one wants to obey anyone. It is a very difficult thing to do. God, however, has laid out a hierarchy of leadership that will work. We may not like the order of people that we are to submit to, but it is God’s plan. His plan works. Choosing whom we will obey usually does not.

God’s commands are for our benefit. Father knows best! As Israel told Joshua, after they learned this truth the hard way, so should our heart’s desire be:

“... The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.” Joshua 24:24

“Obedience and respect at home prepare the way for obedience to the employer, and they are joined with other virtues that help assure a prosperous career; crowned with a ripe, honored old age. Disrespect for parents is often the first step in the downward track.”