

Obedience - cont.

obey God, not our lusts (1 Peter 1:14).
Obeying our lusts leads to trouble.

Some Obey Other Men

In the book of Romans, we learn that some people, the Jews especially, obeyed their doctrines and traditions and disobeyed God's plan of salvation (Romans 9:31,32; 10:2-3,16,21). Many of the Jews cared more for their nation (John 11:48) than for obedience to Jesus Christ (Hebrews 5:9). Some obeyed the Law of Moses instead of the Law of Christ.

We must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:28). Obeying man often leads to trouble (Acts 5:36-37).

God Wants "Obedience of Faith"

Obedience to unrighteousness, one's own conscience, lusts, or other men all lead to trouble. But, the obedience of faith leads to freedom from sin (Romans 6:18). The book of Romans, written to the saints at Rome, begins and ends with a faithful obedience to God. Friend, who is your master? Who will you obey today? Have a faith in Jesus Christ that obeys him.

- Chris Reeves -

- Thought of the Week -

In Greek mythology, Narcissus (Narkissos) was a beautiful young man who fell in love with his own reflection in the water and stared at it so long that he died and turned into a flower. A narcissistic person, then, is one who thinks about himself only and not others. In the New Testament, one Christian was named Narcissus in Romans 16:11, but this Christian was "in the Lord". This Christian did not focus on himself, but on serving the Lord. So, I am going to think of others this week, not myself only.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

In last week's article, I wrote about how obedience to God is what life is all about. Yet, many today will not obey the voice of the Lord, they will not obey the truth of the gospel, they will not obey Jesus Christ, and they will not obey their parents. Let's take a look now about the specific kind of obedience that God wants in our life and let's turn to the Apostle Paul to find out what that obedience is.

Obedience in the Book of Romans

A good place to turn learn about the proper kind of obedience that God wants is the book of Romans. Paul begins and ends the book of Romans with the subject of obedience to God . Consider what he wrote:

through whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake (Romans 1:5)

and

but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith (Romans 16:26)

Did you notice in both of these verses that Paul wrote about "obedience of faith"? This expression serves as a bookend for the entire epistle. All that Paul writes about concerning justification by faith in Romans falls within the bookends of "obedience of faith." This expression means an obedience that comes from faith. When a person has true faith in Christ, he or she will obey Christ's words.

There are different kinds of obedience discussed in Romans as we will see, but God is looking for an "obedience of faith." So, the question you have to ask yourself is this: Who do I obey? Who is my master? What kind of obedience is possible for me?

Some Obey Unrighteousness

In the book of Romans, we learn that some people in sin choose to disobey truth and obey unrighteousness (Romans 2:8). These people ignore truth and follow after what is wrong and unjust (Romans 1:29; 1 Jn. 5:17). They are hindered from obedience to truth by their sinful lifestyle (Galatians 5:7). And, they will receive the wrath of God (Romans 1:18) and the vengeance of God (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

Obeying unrighteousness leads to trouble and a downward spiral out of con-

trol. You don't want to go down the path of obeying unrighteousness.

Some Obey Their Conscience

In the book of Romans, we learn that some people (the Gentiles), before Christ, followed their conscience and were "*a law unto themselves*" (Romans 2:14-15). Later in the book, Paul wrote about how the Jews and Gentiles following their conscience caused them to "esteem" things differently (Romans 14:5).

However, obeying one's conscience may lead one to do wrong (Acts 23:1; 26:9; Hebrews 10:22). One's conscience is a good guide so far as it is guided by God's word. Obeying one's conscience alone can often lead to trouble. You don't want to obey your conscience alone without God's word.

Some Obey Their Lusts

In the book Romans, we learn that some people obey their desires, cravings, and lusts when they arise within (Romans 6:12,16; 7:5). These people will often follow their sexual immorality, anger, jealousy, greed, etc.

When it comes to desires, we must