

Obedience— An Act of Love

I'm sure I've written on this before, but I thought the significance of obedience was important enough to repeat here. It occurs to me that obedience to God is an exercise in 'want to' as opposed to 'have to.'

The analogy given in church is simple enough. When parents enforce rules and discipline with regard to their children, if the child is to respond out of respect and love, a relationship must exist between parent and child.

If a wholesome relationship does indeed exist, then the child's love for the parent will result in that child wanting to comply. If all one does is obey the rules because of the consequences and punishment associated with disobeying the rules, and then the rules generally get thrown out the window when the rule maker is no longer around.

I guess what I'm saying is that when grounded in love, people want to respond favorably according to the wishes and will of the person who is the object of that love. By our very nature we want to look good in the eyes of someone we're trying to impress.

Jesus says, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching." John 14:23. Examine this use of the term obey. What Christ is saying is the same thing that many a mother and a father believe about their kids. First and foremost, we all know the things that would upset mom and dad. We know this because they spent a lifetime (yours) instilling values and integrity into your character.

You might still do things they wouldn't condone, but you certainly know the difference between the right and wrong of it because of your upbringing. That upbringing, if nurtured in the spirit of love, reveals to all of us the source and nature of the consequences and the resulting discipline. It's love. Y'all know that 'this is going to hurt me more than it's gonna hurt you' thing. Christ is merely reminding us that if you love Him, then obeying His rules, His teachings, which were given to us out of the love of the Father, should come from the heart. Our desire to please should override our mere compliance to the rules. The point is obedience to God has so much more to do with wanting to do the right thing for the right reason, than doing the right thing because it is law.

One is the result of relationship and the other is the result of fear of consequence. Throughout scripture, Jesus constantly refers to the love of the Father. How many of you do what your mother would expect of you and your mother has been dead for many a year? How many of you pass those same expectations along to your kids? Why?

I submit that you do this because of the relationship you had/have with your mother. That's why I'm convinced that the key to understanding obedience to God is establishing, or for many of us re-establishing, a relationship with the Almighty. This is achieved by studying His Word, getting inside of His commandments and examining the life of Jesus Christ, who because of a love thing with His Father, carried out His Father's wishes to the letter.

"I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, but the world must learn that I love the Father and I do exactly what my Father has commanded me." John 14:30-31.

To obey should be an act of love. Our goal should be to understand God's love for us and to simply do our best to return it; act accordingly, so to speak.

May God bless and keep you always. James



My Answer

In response to last month's article:

Dear Ms K,

To help this lady, if words will do it, here goes. This creature probably had other women he was sharing himself with. If not, I know he was taking the Pills. Pills not a pill. If he was sharing himself with other women, they cut him off so he had no other choice but to take it out on his wife. She also needs to cut him off.

Curtis

Dear My Answer,

I would like to know who this monster is so I could shake him up a time or two. How can a man do any woman this way? Maybe he should be caged up with animals but that would be cruelty to the animals.

No Name Please

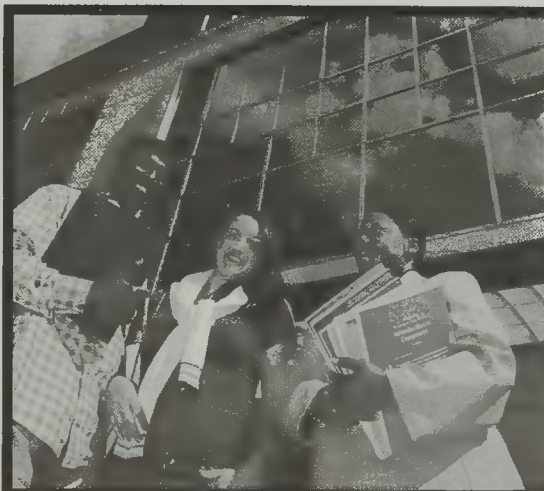
Dear Ms K,

I wish I knew this man. He could walk in my bedroom at anytime. This woman is lucky. A couple of hours are better than a couple of minutes. I think this gentleman is trying to please his wife, but he is over doing it. I don't think this should be an issue in a marriage that can't be solved. With this woman showing a little kindness instead of raising the roof, just might make a difference. It would help your readers if we knew their ages. I'm at an age where an hour pleases me but I would put up with a little longer if it would please my husband. (I'm not married) but every night is much too long. I hope they can work this out because sex I think should never cause separation in a marriage. There are too many other things that cause marriages to fail. I think this man should slow down whether he's taking pills or this is just a stage of life he is going thru. If they love each other I'm sure something can be done. Only the two of them can solve this.

Cathleen
Greensboro, NC

Merry Christmas to everyone from "Ms K, My Answer." Many, many thanks for your responses during the year of 2006. If you didn't respond then we couldn't share our thoughts with others. Maybe some of your problems have helped others who were experiencing the same. I hope some of our answers have solved some of your problems. It has been a very successful year for us. Let's continue to pray for peace throughout the world. We are blessed at all times, but we will be blessed if we give at Christmas to those that are in need.

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