

# *The Sunday Reader*

Vol. 10 No. 20

*Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine...*

May 15, 2005

## LEARNING OBEDIENCE

Obedience to God is a requirement – not an option. Obedience to God is expressed in different ways in the New Testament. Paul speaks of those who do not obey the truth; “but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath,...” (Romans 2:8) In 2 Thessalonians 1:8 he speaks of those who do not obey the gospel. In both places he tells us that such people will suffer God’s wrath and vengeance.

Obedying the gospel, the truth, is the same as obeying Christ. One cannot be saved without obeying Christ. “Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,...” (Heb 5:8-9) It is only by obeying the truth of Christ or the gospel of Christ that one purifies his soul. (1 Pet. 1:22)

Scripture also require a Christian to obey in other relationships of life. Christians are to obey the laws of civil government. (Rom. 13:1-7) They are also to obey their religious leaders, the elders. (Heb. 13:17) In each of these cases obedience to God takes precedence over them if there should be a conflict between what God demands and what man requires. (Acts 5:29)

In view of the seriousness of the subject each of us should search the Scriptures to see what is involved in obedience, especially in obedience to God. Remember we cannot go to heaven without obeying Christ.

Jesus provides us with the perfect example of obedience. He never disobeyed His Father. (John 8:29) He learned or experienced obedience in His total submission to His Father in heaven. (Heb. 5:8-9) Though His suffering and continual obedience His Father He became the perfect pioneer and provider of salvation to all who obey Him. (cf. Heb. 2:10)

The obedience required by our Father in heaven is like the obedience of Jesus. It is **IMMEDIATE** obedience. About three thousand souls rendered such obedience on Pentecost after hearing the gospel for the first time.

(Acts 2:41) Likewise, the Philippian jailor and his family were baptized at a most inconvenient time and place upon hearing the gospel. (Acts 16:33) These are wonderful examples to us of those who refused to put off doing what God wanted them to do,

Both examples of immediate obedience cited above are also examples of **OBEDIENCE WITHOUT QUESTION**. The people did not ask why or what if. They simply did what God commanded them to do. (Acts 2:37-38; 41)

God requires **EXACT** obedience. Exact obedience in doing exactly what God commands without addition, subtraction or substitution. Both Old and New Testaments stress this type of obedience. (Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18-19)

Too many in our time want to do something other than what God says and then claim to have obeyed God! This is not a new sin. (cf. 1 Sam. 15:13-31)

God also expects His children to render **CONTINUING** obedience unto Him. When one becomes a Christian by being baptized for remission of sins he or she is raised to “walk in newness of life.” (Rom. 6:4) Baptism is not the stopping place of one’s obedience to Christ. One who is raised with Christ in baptism is to seek the things that are above, set his or her mind on things above and live in obedience to Christ. (Col. 3:1)

Last but not least, we need to learn to render **LOVING** obedience to God. God does not want His children simply to go through the motions of doing His will. He expects, even demands, that we obey Him from the heart. (Rom. 6:17-18) Jesus tells us that we are to love God with all our hearts, souls and minds. (Matt. 22:36-40) Paul informs us that the greatest service and the greatest sacrifices we may offer are useless if not given in love. (1 Cor. 13:3) Paul equates keeping God’s commandments with a faith that works by love. (1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:6)

To Be Continued

D.R.C.

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## Hope:

"...Such is the fate of all who forget God. The **hope** of the godless comes to nothing" **(Job 8:13)** .. "...But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their **hope** and confidence." **(Jer 17:7)** .. "...And His name will be the **hope** of all the world" **(Mat 12:21)** .. "...Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. They give us **hope** and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises." **(Rom 15:4)** ..  
"...Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And because God raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory, your faith and **hope** can be placed confidently in God." **(1 Pet 1:21)** ..

### Upcoming Assignments:

#### **Building Cleaning 05/16 – 05/22**

Auditorium/Foyer: Chancellor  
Classrooms/Baths/Halls: G. Collier

#### **Prepare Lord's Supper May 22**

Jennifer Bacon

#### **Making Communion Bread for May**

Debbie Mowbray

**Note** – Please send news items via email for inclusion in ***The Sunday Reader*** to: [newsrockdale@aol.com](mailto:newsrockdale@aol.com)

## The Information Box

- **Group 3** meets tonight after services
- **Remember in Prayer:**
  - Margaret Wade, Ed Pickett, Ruth Poss
- **Out of Town:** Gary & Connie Collier
- **After Morning Services** the Deacons will meet with the women who do not have representation in the Men's meeting immediately after morning services
- The **Tuesday morning Bible class** meets at 10:30am – Everyone is welcome!
- The **Ladies Bible Class** meets at 7:30pm every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month. See Jane Holland for meeting place.
- The **"Bible-Dial-A-Message"** number is 770-929-3242. Give it a try, and tell your friends!

### Today's Sermons:

A.M. – **Paul's Decision Structure**

P.M. – **Spirit-led Decision Structure vs Decisions Guided by the mind of the Flesh**

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**770-929-3242**

#### Schedule of Services

##### Sunday Morning:

Bible Study - 9:30  
Worship - - - 10:30

##### Sunday Evening:

Worship - - - 5:30

##### Wednesday Evening:

Bible Study - 7:30

#### Elders:

Forrest Bacon - 770-918-1932  
Wendell Holland - 770-761-6987

#### Deacons:

Gary Collier - 770-483-6017  
Andy Dobbs - 770-922-3707  
Marshall Irvin - 770-483-5745

#### Evangelist:

Derek Chancellor  
770-860-8430