



The Blessings of Obedience

“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (I John 3:22).

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“And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him” (I John 3:24).

“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. 23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us” (I John 3:22-24).

Obedience is merely one of those words to many, but a reality to only a few. It is one of the qualities that people like to talk about in relation to others but rarely apply it to themselves. Some frown at it thinking that it is humiliating or makes them lose their distinctiveness, identity, status. They think it makes them inferior to the people they obey. Such thinking fails to recognise and appropriate the many benefits of obedience. This scripture explains what it means to obey and the commandments we should obey. Sandwiched between these are the blessings of obedience. Let consider each in turn.

What does it mean to obey? Our text answers this question:

- 1) “We keep his commandments” (vs 22). There would be no point God giving us commandments if they were not supposed to be kept. Divine provision of grace does not eliminate the requirement to keep God commandments but rather empowers us to do so.
- 2) “We ... do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (vs 22). How do we know the things that are pleasing in the sight of God? A good starting point is healthy relationship with God. Just like friends intuitively know what would please their friends, a person that knows God and maintain healthy relationship with Him will know what pleases Him. The second step is a good knowledge of the Word of God. God details in His word what pleases Him. Finally, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit as He will

guide us according the word, will and things that pleases God.

What are the commandments to keep? This scripture outlines the following.

- 1) “Believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ” (vs 23). This is not just a mere mental acknowledgment that has no impact on life. True believe transforms life and empowers one to live in a manner acceptable to God.
- 2) “Love one another” (vs 23). The scripture makes it clear that love is the fulfilment of the law because every law is fulfilled through genuine demonstration of love.

Our text enumerates the benefits of obedience including:

- 1) Open heavens to answered prayer “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because...” (vs 22). How powerful our lives would be if only we discovered the secret of obedience. Whether with respect to God or humanity a life of obedience attracts favour. How would you like all your prayers to be answered instantly? Well, here you have the secret. If we crucify the flesh and obey in all points, God will cause us to operate at a higher level of spirituality.
- 2) Abiding divine presence “He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him” (vs 24). In the presence of God, there is protection and provision.
- 3) Assurance by the Holy Spirit “And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us” (vs 24). This assurance begins with the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The peace of mind we get from divine assurance enables the serenity that facilitates progress.