

TIME FOR OBEDIENCE AND NO MORE COMPROMISE OR EXCUSES

There is a dangerous and continuing trend among believers - it is one of negotiation, compromise and selfish justification when it comes to God's Truth and Holiness. It is a trend of walking in the flesh rather than the Spirit, of choosing religion above Godly relationship, and cherishing the world's social norms above God's commandments.

For the Lord reminds us He is always to be our first love. He is a jealous God, and when He speaks, we should listen and we should obey. Yet there is a complacency that has crept in - a complacency when we deal with His Word and His instructions for our lives. We have become complacent with His Covenant, His Will and His Kingdom. It seems pride has gone to our heads and our hearts have become filled with rebellion.

Let us remember "Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" and also "1 Corinthians 10: 21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

We have to be reminded God is always the same and He never changes. He is still the Almighty and His Truth forever stands the time. Yet, more than ever, we have become nonchalant when it comes to dealing with God. Have we truly forgotten who He is?

We hold onto immorality and impurity, shrugging it off as if God is no longer a holy and pure God. We sin, commit iniquity and we seek after the world, shrugging it off as if God does not care. We run after greed, money and fame yet we shrug it off as if God is looking the other way. We disobey day after day, yet we shrug it off as if God is no longer interested in our obedience and faithfulness. We live for the flesh, yet we shrug it off as if God is not concerned about us walking completely and utterly in the Spirit. Idolatry remains in the midst of the church - with the Self being exalted - yet we shrug it off forgetting we shall have no other gods except the Lord of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

We need to understand if we truly want to see God move in our lives in power and glory; we need to submit completely and utterly to the will of the Lord. There is no other way and certainly no easy way. We are called to deny the Self, take up the cross and follow the Lord. There is no middle path - just the narrow and wide road. It is about holiness, purity and not compromising.

So often we hide behind grace for our disobedience and lack of holiness, treating grace like a safety net as we continually betray God with our worldly actions, words and thoughts. We need to be reminded of Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 15 If you bite and devour each other, watch out or

you will be destroyed by each other. 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

After all, grace has been given unto us not to keep on sinning but to find the strength in grace not to sin.

Yes, there is a cry from the Lord for believers to again take Him seriously and to fear Him. Yes, fear Him! This is something hardly preached on anymore, yet the beginning of wisdom is to fear God. There is a cry from God for believers to once again seek holiness and purity. There is a cry from God for believers to once again hunger for God and to put the world aside once and for all. There is a cry for obedience - complete and utter obedience and to seek after the perfect will without argument or making excuses.

For sadly, a deep complacency has set into the church like rot - a complacency of disobeying God as if He can be toyed with or be mocked. We continue with our continuous sinful lifestyles and of seeking after one's will and "truth" above the will of God and His Truth. There is a complacency of seeking no longer with earnest, with zeal and passionate fire the Kingdom of God above our interests and ambitions.

Hear the Lord when He cries out for a people who will stop mocking Him and who insists to no longer fear Him. It says in 1 Kings 13: By the word of the Lord a man of God came from Judah to Bethel, as Jeroboam was standing by the altar to make an offering. 2 By the word of the Lord he cried out against the altar: "Altar, altar! This is what the Lord says: 'A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. On you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who make offerings here, and human bones will be burned on you.'" 3 That same day the man of God gave a sign: "This is the sign the Lord has declared: The altar will be split apart and the ashes on it will be poured out." 4 When King Jeroboam heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, he stretched out his hand from the altar and said, "Seize him!" But the hand he stretched out toward the man shriveled up, so that he could not pull it back. 5 Also, the altar was split apart and its ashes poured out according to the sign given by the man of God by the word of the Lord. 6 Then the king said to the man of God, "Intercede with the Lord your God and pray for me that my hand may be restored." So the man of God interceded with the Lord, and the king's hand was restored and became as it was before.

We are thus dealing here without a doubt with a man who follows and seeks after God. You see, God's power and glory is with those who seek and follow the Lord with clean hands and a pure heart, who does not compromise and who does not bow before the world. Mark 16 is a fulfillment of how the servants of old operated: 15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is

baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." 19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

To continue with the tale in 1 Kings 13, we read the following: 11 Now there was a certain old prophet living in Bethel, whose sons came and told him all that the man of God had done there that day. They also told their father what he had said to the king. 12 Their father asked them, "Which way did he go?" And his sons showed him which road the man of God from Judah had taken. 13 So he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." And when they had saddled the donkey for him, he mounted it 14 and rode after the man of God. He found him sitting under an oak tree and asked, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" "I am," he replied. 15 So the prophet said to him, "Come home with me and eat." 16 The man of God said, "I cannot turn back and go with you, nor can I eat bread or drink water with you in this place. 17 I have been told by the word of the Lord: 'You must not eat bread or drink water there or return by the way you came.'" 18 The old prophet answered, "I too am a prophet, as you are. And an angel said to me by the word of the Lord: 'Bring him back with you to your house so that he may eat bread and drink water.'" (But he was lying to him.) 19 So the man of God returned with him and ate and drank in his house. 20 While they were sitting at the table, the word of the Lord came to the old prophet who had brought him back. 21 He cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah, "This is what the Lord says: 'You have defied the word of the Lord and have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you. 22 You came back and ate bread and drank water in the place where he told you not to eat or drink. Therefore your body will not be buried in the tomb of your ancestors.'" "

It did indeed come to pass the God-fearing prophet died shortly afterwards as he left when he was attacked by a lion. Shocking indeed! This prophet of God **DISOBEYED THE LORD ONCE**. But with God there is no such thing as complacency or falling into the trap of becoming familiar with the Lord. Yet, we continue to be complacent and we continue to make excuses and we continue to flirt with the world because we are under the impression God no longer needs to be feared or revered. We throw grace back into the face of God, as if we can manipulate Him and dictate unto Him regarding holiness and purity.

The Holy Scriptures states that if we are obedient, then we shall receive goodness from the Lord, but our disobedience to God will still lead to consequence and adversity. There have been plenty of persons mentioned in the Bible who thought they were a lot

smarter than God and who chose to do things their way over God's ways. Was the prophet's demise an isolated incident? Of course not!

Saul DISOBEYED THE LORD when he did not wait for Samuel (1 Samuel 13), thus failing to wait for the Lord's instruction, and so the Kingdom Of Israel was to be ripped from his grasp.

Jonah disobeyed the Lord because he did not want to go to Nineveh and found himself swallowed by a whale.

The mighty prophet Moses never saw the Promises Land because HE DISOBEYED THE LORD ONCE by striking the rock twice instead of once (Numbers 20). And of of course Aaron, the brother of Moses, mocked God when he build the golden calf after being pressurized by the people.

And we all know what happened to Adam and Eve when they DISOBEYED THE LORD BUT ONCE IN THE GARDEN.

In the story of the birth of John the Baptist, the angel Gabriel appeared before Zechariah to declare to Him he shall be the father of a boy who will prepare the way for Jesus. We read the following in Luke 1:18 Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years." 19 The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. 20 And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

Zechariah did not believe God and he in his own simple way doubted and did argue. He was struck mute until the appointed time.

And then we have David who disobeyed the Lord by committing adultery and numbering the people (1Chronicles 21:1). We shall not even talk about wise Solomon who angered God by marrying woman of different faiths, allowing deception and idolatry into his home.

Indeed, there is a long list of people who have disobeyed the Lord and suffered the consequences.

Yes, the Lord forgives and yes the Lord restores (as he did with Peter following the betrayal), but this does not give us the license not to fear God, not to obey and not to seek Him above all else. The Lord is a jealous God who seeks a people who will serve Him above all else.

Obedience is critical as it says In Deuteronomy 4: Now, Israel, hear the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. 2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.

Verse 2 links up with Revelations 22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. 19 And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

Deuteronomy 4 and Revelations 22 deals with the principle we cannot as His followers wish to add or subtract what is His Truth, what is His Word and what is His Way. Jesus is the Truth, Way and Life and not man, not any church or any denomination. If we truly wish to live in abundance and walk in His power and glory, we need to get serious with God and do as He commands! We need to push aside the world and keep our eyes focused on Him!

Yet in churches God's Truth and His Word is too often being bend and twisted for own gain. Obedience becomes irregular and the fear of the Lord and striving after holiness is seen as being too conservative or outdated.

Indeed, as the Lord also said in Revelations 11 about the end times: Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy.14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. 17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

It is time to seek the Lord above all - certainly above this world and its pleasures. It is time to stop compromising and negotiating on what is true and what is false. It is time we stop arguing with the Lord and do as He commands without delay.

God has never changed and He will never change. He is still the same God of the Old Testament. He is still the all consuming fire as declared in Deuteronomy 4 and Hebrews 12. He still commands our obedience and faithfulness.

Shall we obey and shall we surrender to Him?