

CHAPTER SIX

HOW TO OBEY GOD

A. SHOW GOD YOU LOVE HIM

Walking with God includes the element of obedience to God. God is not a harsh taskmaster, nor a short-fused judge. He is a loving Father. If we know God loves us and that He has our best interest in mind, we can easily trust and obey Him.

1. Why should we obey God?

a. Acts 5:29

With so many voices clamoring for our attention and allegiance, why should we obey God? _____

b. 1 John 4:8

What does this verse tell us about God? _____

If God is love, how does that help us obey Him? _____

c. 1 John 4:18

How does the first part of this verse make it easy to obey God? _____

2. How do we show God that we love Him?

a. John 14:15

What did Jesus say was the real test of true love for God? _____

b. John 14:21,23,24

According to verse 21, who really loves God? _____

Can you love God and not obey Him? _____

If you don't obey God, what are you saying to Him? _____

3. Is it really possible to obey God?

a. 1 John 5:3

Are God's commandments too hard to obey? _____

b. Philippians 2:13

Who helps us obey? _____

c. Philippians 4:13

Is there anything we can't do with Christ's help? _____

As we seek to please God, He works in us both the desire to want His will and the ability to do His will.

4. What commandments are we to obey?

In the Old Testament, the children of Israel were instructed to obey the Ten Commandments as well as other laws laid down by God. Under the New Testament God has summarized all of His laws into **two** commandments based on the new commandment of love. What do the Scriptures teach concerning this new commandment of love?

a. John 13:34,35

What is this new commandment? _____

b. Matthew 22:36-40

All the Law and prophets of the Old Testament can be summarized into what two commandments? _____

c. Romans 13:8-10

Under the New Testament, how are we to fulfill the law? _____

d. John 15:12,17

Jesus reiterated this commandment because it is so radically opposed to our selfish nature and our religious thinking. What is His commandment? _____

e. James 2:8

In John's gospel, Jesus called "the law of love" a new commandment. In James' epistle, what is "the law of love" called? _____

f. 1 John 3:16-23

How are we to love? (vv. 16-18.) _____

If our heart (or conscience) begins to condemn us, what is the first thing we need to check up on? (vv. 19-23.) _____

If we walk in love, will our heart (or conscience) condemn us? (vv. 19-21.) _____

If we have a clear heart (or conscience) before God, what are we promised? (vv. 21,22.) _____

g. Mark 11:25,26; Matthew 18:21-35

According to the above-listed passages, what is the biggest hindrance to obeying God's new commandment? _____

5. What are the benefits of obedience?

a. James 1:22-25

What is a person doing who hears the Word but does not obey it? _____

What is a person promised who hears the Word and obeys it? _____

b. John 15:10

What are we promised if we obey God's commandments? _____

c. Luke 6:46-49

Can you truly call Jesus your Lord and not obey His Word? _____

Let's compare the obedient
and the disobedient hearer.

	Obedient	Disobedient
Who heard the Word?		
Who obeyed the Word?		
Who faced the flood and storm?		
Whose house wasn't shaken?		
Whose house fell apart?		

What is the only difference between a Christian who stands strong and endures storms and a Christian who falls apart in the midst of storms? _____

6. What are the practical ways to obey God?

As new Christians there are several areas of obedience that will be of great help to our spiritual growth. Keep in mind that obedience to God is not intended to put us back under some system of "good works" or under the law in order to obtain God's favor. God loves us in spite of us sometimes missing the mark.

Actually, obeying God is for our benefit, not God's. When we obey the Word of God, we are actually blessing ourselves. God is not up in heaven shaking His head and saying, "Tsk, tsk," when we are disobedient; rather, He is grieved because He knows the troubles we will face if we continue to disobey the guidelines He has written in the Bible which are intended for our well-being.

a. Obedience in seeking God first

Matthew 6:33

What are we to seek first? _____

What is the promised result? _____

How does seeking God first and obeying God relate? _____

b. Obedience in separation from the love of the world

1 John 2:15-17

What are we told not to love? _____

What does "the world" consist of? _____

What is the destiny for "the world"? _____

What is the destiny for those who love God and do His will? _____

c. Obedience in forgetting the past

The enemy will oftentimes try to trip you up in your walk with God by reminding you of your past. If your past is full of sin and failure, then Satan will try to use that as a "ball and chain" of condemnation to keep you from moving forward.

If your past is full of success, Satan may also try to remind you of what you have "given up" in an attempt to keep you looking back at the so-called "good old time" instead of looking ahead to the high calling of God for your life.

Philippians 3:13,14

What are we supposed to forget? _____

2 Corinthians 5:17

What happened to your old life? _____

Luke 9:62

Where did God say not to look? _____

Galatians 2:20

What happened to the "old" you? _____

Acts 19:18,19

What did these Christians do with the paraphernalia and reminders of their past life of sin? _____

d. Obedience in attending a good church

Hebrews 10:24,25

Relationships with other Christians are vital. What is God telling us not to neglect? ____

Acts 2:42,46,47

This passage describes the first Christian church. What are some of the characteristics you should look for in a church? _____

1 Corinthians 15:33

Good friends and companions are important. As a new Christian, it is important that you make new friends who share your enthusiasm and love for Christ.

What does this verse say will happen if a person spends most of his or her time with ungodly people? _____

Where can you meet good Christian friends? _____

e. Obedience in water baptism

Water baptism is an outward demonstration of the inward work that God has done in you. Water baptism is an act of obedience in which you publicly declare to the world that your old life is dead and buried and your new life is now identified with Christ. Many people have been baptized as infants, or even as children, before they really made their own personal decision for Christ. The scriptural precedent for water baptism shows that this act of faith should take place **after** a person has confessed Jesus as his or her Lord.

Acts 8:12

Who was baptized? _____

When were they baptized? _____

Acts 8:36-38

What is the prerequisite for baptism? _____

What was the eunuch baptized in? _____

Acts 18:8

What follows believing in Jesus? _____

f. Obedience in telling others about Jesus

On one hand, obedience to God involves separating yourself from the love of the world and ungodly companions. On the other hand, obedience to God involves going into the world to share Christ with those who do not know Him. You can be in this world and friendly to unsaved people, yet not be of the same spirit as the world. In fact, Jesus has instructed us to go into the world to tell others of His great love and forgiveness.

Mark 16:15

What is the last command Jesus gave before He was taken up into heaven? _____

Matthew 28:19,20

Who is with us when we tell others of Jesus? _____

Acts 1:8

Who helps us witness of Christ? _____

In a legal sense, what is a "witness"? _____

What is the best thing you could possibly tell anyone? _____

B. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Make a quality decision to change your thinking or behavior so that it lines up with God's Word. Are there areas of your life that you need to bring into obedience to God? _____

What are the area(s) where you need to make changes? _____

What are you going to do to obey God? _____

C. GROUP EXERCISE

How do we walk in love?

Look up the following passages and discuss ways you can begin to practice these things with the people with whom you come into contact every day. You might want to assign one or two passages to different people to study and memorize. Ask those people, then, to lead the group discussion relating to their passages.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Philippians 2:1-4

Romans 12:10-18

Colossians 3:12-17

Matthew 5:43-48

John 4:7-11

Galatians 5:13-15