

Assurance of Salvation
Part 119

PRACTICAL ("real-life")
OBEDIENCE
– The Nature of Obedience (1)

**"PRACTICAL
OBEDIENCE!"**

= **"DOING"** the obedience,
not just **"TALKING"** about it!

An *infallible* guide
to "assurance
of salvation."

For those who are saved...
Obedience will be *present*,
and it will be *visible*.

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Obedience will be *present*,
and it will be *visible*.

But *Scripture alone*
defines how we are
to apply this guide.

QUESTION

What happens when we invent
our own "definitions"
of what it means to obey God?

ANSWER

We can be fakes and hypocrites,
and ***still think we're saved!***

EXAMPLE:
The religious leaders in Jesus' day

- They invented their own definitions for measuring their spiritual condition.
- **Their definitions weren't from God, and *proved nothing*** (except that they weren't saved).

But Jesus said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in men's eyes, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly prized among men is utterly detestable in God's sight."

Luke 16:15 (NET)

? What is the nature of this "obedience" that guarantees salvation?

1. It involves all of God's commands.
2. It is habitual. ← [TODAY]
3. It is ongoing. ← [NEXT TIME]

1 This obedience involves all of God's commands*

We cannot "pick and choose" which commands we will follow.

* This refers to ALL of the commands that belong to the New Covenant. (Old covenant ceremonial rituals are not part of the New Covenant, and do not apply to us.)

NOT AN OPTION!
THIS DOES NOT WORK FOR OBEDIENCE... NOR FOR THE "FRUIT OF SALVATION."

I'LL TAKE THIS AND SOME OF THESE... BUT DEFINITELY NONE OF THOSE!!



WE CANNOT:

- **Emphasize** some commands and ignore others.
- **Focus** on commands that make us "feel good" about our spiritual condition.

This will almost guarantee that we will reach false conclusions about our salvation.*

*{ ... 96% ...97% ... 98% ... 99% ... maybe not quite 100% }

EXAMPLE #1: The rich young ruler

- He seemed to do well in his obligations toward people.

Now a certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

[Jesus replied] "You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'"

The man replied, "I have wholeheartedly obeyed all these laws since my youth."

Luke 18:18, 20-21 (NET)

- Jesus showed him that he failed in his obligations toward God.

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

But when the man heard this he became very sad, for he was extremely wealthy.

Luke 18:22-23 (NET)

- He also failed to comprehend Jesus' warning in v. 19, that *sin permeates all of human existence*.

Now a certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
 Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone."
Luke 18:18-19 (NET)

Jesus was challenging the man's shallow understanding of what "good" was.
 He did not deny or affirm his own deity... that wasn't the issue at hand.

EXAMPLE #2: Some people who claimed to love God *

* Though no specific individual is named, this probably referred to a number of people in the church John was writing to.

- He/they ignored some of Scripture's commands about love toward *people*.

If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar.
 For anyone who does not *love his brother*, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.
1 John 4:20 (NIV)

EXAMPLE #1: **EXAMPLE #2**

NO	Love God	YES*
YES*	Love neighbor	NO

* (At least they *thought* they did this.)

In reality, if you fail in one aspect of obedience, the rest of your "obedience" is shallow and with little meaning.
YOU ARE STILL GUILTY!

And the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as **guilty** as the person who has broken all of God's laws.
James 2:10 (NLT)

Anyone can make "claims."

- About loving God/neighbor.
- About being saved.

- **Some claims will be MEANINGLESS:** If you compare yourself to "pre-selected" character traits that make you look "good,"... your claim is *deceptive*.
- **Some claims will be FACTUAL:** If you do the will of God as Scripture defines it... your claim is *truthful*.

To have a factual claim, we must...

- **Accept** all that Scripture says about:
 - The fruit of righteousness
 - Obligations
 - Religious duties
 - Etc.
- **Evaluate** our response to every obligation in Scripture regarding:
 - God
 - Neighbor
 - Self

Only then...

- Can we know for sure if our conduct demonstrates a genuine godliness –

A day-to-day practical obedience!

But does this mean "sinless perfection"? NO!

- The obedience *will be there*, but it will be *imperfect* in its expression.
- **This brings us to the next point...**

2

For the follower of Jesus, **This obedience is habitual.**

- It characterizes his day-to-day life.
- **It does not mean:** He *is* "100% sinless perfect."
 - That will not happen until we are in Jesus' presence.
- **It does mean:** He *wants to be* 100% perfect.
 - He strives for perfection.
 - When he sins, he repents and returns to his pursuit of perfection.

A "factual follower" knows ...

IT'S A FACT THAT I'M FOLLOWING JESUS!

I CAN SEE IT'S TRUE!

- **He won't be sinless...** but his life will be characterized by *habitual* obedience.

(He will be "righteous," though not "sinless.")

There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.
Eccles. 7:20 (NIV)

A "factual follower" knows ...

IT'S A FACT THAT I'M FOLLOWING JESUS!

I CAN SEE IT'S TRUE!

- **Sin cannot be his lifestyle...** and it *won't* be his lifestyle.

No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he *cannot go on sinning*, because he has been born of God.

1 John 3:9 (NIV)

EXAMPLES?

- **All the godly people in Scripture!**
 - They were eager to be holy and godly.
 - They were also sinners.
 - Sometimes they committed serious sin, and suffered the consequences of it.

When we look at their sins...

- **We CAN'T say:**
 - It was *never* done knowingly; for sometimes it was.
 - It was *never* done willingly; for sometimes it was.

- **But we CAN say:**

★ They did not sin *habitually*. ★

When we look at their lives...

- **Their purpose in life:** was to *always* obey.
 - Even though they didn't meet that goal 100%.
- **Their practice in life:** was to *habitually* obey.
 - This they did.

Their goal...

- **LONG-TERM:** Sinless perfection, like the Father.

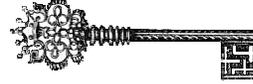
Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
Matthew 5:48 (NIV)

- **DAY-TO-DAY:** The "perfection" of spiritual maturity.

...[praying] earnestly for you, asking God to make you strong and perfect, fully confident of the whole will of God.

Col. 4:12 (NLT)

The KEY to defining your life:



It's not the individual acts that define a person as righteous or wicked, but the ongoing character.

AT THE PRESENT TIME: All people are inconsistent.

- **RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE:** They will do sinful things, *but not habitually*.
- **WICKED PEOPLE:** They will do righteous things, *but not habitually*.

God defines what "righteous" is, as well as what "sin" is... and he takes into account the motives that hide behind the actions.

IN THE FUTURE:

This inconsistent living will come to an end.

- The day is coming when a person's ongoing character will be made permanent.

Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy."

Rev. 22:11 (NIV)

3

The obedience that characterizes a saved person is ongoing.

- We'll look at this next time.
- But for now ...

YOUR MISSION:

Evaluate your obedience.

- **Are you willing to accept and follow all of God's commands?**
 - Or do you "pick and choose" which ones you would like to follow?
- **Is your obedience habitual?**
 - Does it characterize your way of life...
 - Or do you prefer sinful values and conduct (sinful as the Bible defines it)?

Credits (1)

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