

# OBEDIENCE IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE

This is a principle that runs through both the New Testament and the Old Testament as well. Let's start our study of the topic by looking at Scriptures in the Old Testament.

## 1 Samuel 15:22-23 (NASB)

- (22) And Samuel said,  
“Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,  
As in obeying the voice of the LORD?  
**Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,**  
And to heed than the fat of rams.”
- (23) “For rebellion is as the sin of divination (witchcraft),  
And insubordination is as iniquity (Lawlessness) and idolatry.  
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,  
He has also rejected you from being king.”

This is further explained in the Book of Ezekiel where God elaborates on both obedience and dis-obedience; and on Eternal Life and Death.

## Ezekiel 18:21-30 (NASB)

- (21) “But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die.”
- (22) “All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live.”
- (23) “Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,” declares the LORD God, “rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?”
- (24) “But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity (Lawlessness), and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he has done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed; for them he will die.”
- (25) “Yet you say, ‘The way of the LORD is not right.’ Hear now, O house of Israel! Is My way not right? Is it not your ways that are not right?”
- (26) “When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity (Lawlessness), and dies because of it, for his iniquity (Lawlessness) which he has committed he will die.”
- (27) “Again, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life.”

(28) “Because he considered and turned away for all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.”

(29) “But the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the LORD is not right.’ Are My ways not right, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not right?”

(30) “Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to **his conduct.**” Declares the LORD God. **“Repent and turn away from all your transgressions,** so that iniquity (Lawlessness) may not become a stumbling block to you.”

(31) “Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed, **and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!** For why will you die, O house of Israel?”

(32) “For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies,” declares the LORD God. **“Therefore, repent and live!”**

**Ezekiel 33:17** (NASB)

(17) “Yet your fellow citizens say, ‘The way if the LORD is not right’, **when it is their own way that is not right.**”

**Mark 12:28-34** (NASB)

(28) And one of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, “What commandment is the foremost of all?”

(29) **Jesus answered, “The foremost is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD;** (Deut. 6:4)

(30) **AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.’**” (Deut. 6:5)

(31) **“The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’**(Lev. 19:18) There is no other commandment greater than these.”

(32) And the scribe said to Him, “Right, Teacher, You have truly stated the **HE IS ONE; AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM;**

(33) **AND TO LOVE HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO LOVE ONE’S NEIGHBOR AS HIMSELF, is much more than ALL burnt offerings and sacrifices.**” (1Sam. 15:22, Hos. 6:6, Mic. 6:6-8)

(34) And when Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him. **“You are not far from the kingdom of God.”** And after that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions.

Some will try and say; “That was before The Church Age (and Grace) came into existence in the book of Act.” **Good Try!** But you’re still **WRONG!**

A child **cannot** earn their Inheritance! However they can be dis-owned! A child is expected to obey his or her parents but if they do not love their parents enough to be obedient or

at least do their best within the limits of the ability. And if they are not willing to do this out of love for their parents, then they can be dis-inherited and lose the inheritance. The inheritance which would have been their free gift. As a child of God, is not the same true for us? Yet what does Scripture say of those who declare, that obedience to the Almighty is somehow trying to earn your salvation! And therefore is a sin! Most Christians believe and teach that *all you need* is a **do-nothing GRACE - not works!**

**James 2:14** (NASB)

(14) What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no **works**? Can that faith save him?

**James 2: 20** (NASB)

(20) But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without **works** is **useless?**

**James 2: 17** (NASB)

(17) Even so faith, if it has no **works**, is dead, being by itself.

**James 2: 24** (NASB)

(24) You see that a man is **justified** by **works**, and not by faith alone.

**James 2: 26** (NASB)

(26) For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without **works** is dead.

**1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:18** (NASB)

(18) Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good **works**, to be generous and ready to share,

**1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:12** (NASB)

(12) Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your **good deeds** (*works*), as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**Matthew 7:22-23** (NASB)

(22) "Many will say to Me on that day, 'LORD, LORD, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'"

(23) "And then I will declare to them, '**I never knew you, DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.**' (*sinful works*)"

**Revelation 14:12** (KJV)

(12) Here is the patience of the Saints: here *are* they that **keep** the **Commandments of God** (*works*), and the faith of Jesus.

**Revelation 20:12-13** (KJV)

(12) And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their **works**.

(13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their **works**.

**Hosea 6:6** (KJV)

(6) For I desired mercy, and **not** sacrifice; and the **knowledge of God** more than **burnt offerings**.

**Micah 6:6-8** (NASB)

(6) With what shall I come to the LORD  
And bow myself before the God on high?  
Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings,  
With yearling calves?

(7) Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams,  
In ten thousand rivers of oil?  
Shall I present my first-born for my rebellious acts,  
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

(8) He has told you, O man, what is good;  
And what does the LORD **require** of you  
**But to do justice, to love kindness,**  
**And to walk humbly with your God?**

**Ezekiel 33:11-20** (NASB)

(11) "Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the LORD God, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. **TURN BACK, TURN BACK** from you evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?'"

(12) "And you, **SON OF MAN**, say to your fellow citizens, 'The righteousness of a righteous man will not deliver him in the day of his transgression, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he will **not** stumble because of it in the day when he turns from his wickedness; whereas a righteous man will **not** be able to live by his righteousness on the day when he commits sin.'"

(13) "When I say to the righteous **he will surely live**, and he so trusts in his righteousness that he commits iniquity, none of his righteous deed will be remembered; but in that same iniquity of his which he has committed **he will die**."

- (14) “But when I say to the wicked, ‘You will surely die,’ and turns from his sin and practices justice and righteousness,
- (15) *if a* wicked man restores a pledge, pays back what he has taken by robbery, walks by the statutes which ensure life without committing iniquity, he will surely live; he shall not die.”
- (16) “None of his sins that he has committed will be remembered against him. He has practiced justice and righteousness he will surely live.”
- (17) “Yet your fellow citizens say, ‘The way if the LORD is not right’, when it is their own way that is not right.”
- (18) “When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, then he shall die in it.”
- (19) “But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and practices justice and righteousness, he will live by them.”
- (20) “Yet you say, ‘The way of the LORD is not right.’ O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways.”

**Isaiah 5:20 (NASB)**

- (20) Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;...

**Proverbs 17:15 (NASB)**

- (15) He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous,  
Both of them alike are an ABOMINATION to the LORD.

**Malachi 2:17 (NASB)**

- (17) You have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet you say, “How have we wearied Him?” In that you say, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them,”...

In the MIDDLE AGES, Knights honored their King, to whom they had pledged their allegiance. They would often declare that the King’s slightest wish would become their command! They often went to their death without question, when it was in the fulfillment of their pledge to support, defend and honor their King. Many times they gave their lives even though they did not understand or even agree with the mission they had been sent to accomplish. If an earthly King could invoke such “voluntary” Honor and Commitment from his subjects, what should the **KING OF UNIVERSE** expect from those of us who “say” He is the LORD of our life? If His slightest “wish” becomes our “command”, where does that put those things which we have actually been **COMMANDED** by Him “in writing” for us to do, from the very beginning? The question each of us needs to ask ourselves is quite clear, just who “**IS**” on the “**THRONE**” and who “**IS**” the “**LORD**” of our lives? The one who rules or regulates your life is by definition the “**LORD**” of our life and “**on the Throne**”. If we are ruled by our Family, our Pastor, our Denomination, our Desires, or Our Traditions, then we are not ruled by the LORD of Hosts! It stands to reason, that if we have **TRULY** made the **GOD OF CREATION**, the LORD of your lives, then it follows that His slightest “wish” should be OUR COMMAND!

The majority of Christians today have relegated **THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOD** to what the Church calls “**guidelines for living**”. They are also referred to as a “**teacher**” that was to instruct “**the Jews**” prior to the “**Liberating Dispensation**” of the **new** “**Church Age**”. This mis-understanding and mis-interpretations of the words of the Apostles (predominately Paul), by today’s Church has left most of us with the impression that they are desperately trying to distance themselves from **THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD...** lest they be labeled with the dreaded and bitter term of “**Legalist**”. This term has terrified Church Members and Leaders alike, since the Protestant Reformation. It was this period that began to shift the emphasis for salvation from active “**Obedience**” to passive **do- nothing** “**GRACE**”.

**Matthew 7:22-23** (NASB)

- (22) “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘**LORD, LORD, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’”**
- (23) “And then I will declare to them, ‘**I never knew you, DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.**’

Jesus tells them to depart from Him!

He says that He never knew them!

Apparently, it is because they practice Lawlessness!

The obvious question is - What is Lawlessness?

Could it possibly be dis-obedience to  
*The Laws, Commandments, Statutes*  
and *Precepts* of **ALMIGHTY GOD?**

If a person preaches, teaches, believes and behaves as though The **LAWS**, The **COMMANDMENTS**, The **STATUTES** and The **PRECEPTS** of **ALMIGHTY GOD** were done away with, at the beginning of the Church Age. Would they possible fall into this group? Even though they have for most of their lives believed in Jesus and called Him the **LORD** of their life. Yet, on the **DAY OF JUDGMENT** will they, or will they not, be declared by Jesus to be Lawless? Sadly, they never could except that when it came to **ALMIGHTY GOD** and **HIS LAWS, COMMANDMENT, STATUTES** and **PRECEPTS** that it is **truly** as Scripture has said,

**OBEDIENCE IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE!**

**Proverbs 21:3** (NASB)

- (3) To do **righteousness** and **justice**  
Is desired by the **LORD rather than sacrifice.**