

Trust & Obey

I. Slide#1 Announce:

A. Pray for: HS Winter Camp & 3rd-6th Grade Winter Camp is this weekend.

1. We are still in need of **3 more scholarships**, camp cost is \$150 per student. *Both r full.*

II. Intro:

A. A man was discussing the fragility of many marriages with his girlfriend and posed the following question, “What if you wake up one morning and **don’t love me anymore?**” She immediately responded, “There’s always **obedience.**”

1. Slide#2 We often think of obedience this way, in the **negative**.

2. **But** obedience to God is always in the **positive** because He is One we can **fully trust**. He is One whom always is **purposeful** in every thing in which He asks of us.

B. Slide#3 Peter T. Forsythe (1848-1921 Scottish theologian) was right when he said, “*The first duty of every soul is to find not its freedom but its Master*”.

1. We seem to always be trying to find our freedom of **choice**, freedom of **will**, freedom to do it **our way**. When we should be **full throttle after** our Master & His choices, His will, His way.

C. Slide#4 Thomas a Kempis shares its seriousness, **Instant obedience** is the only kind of obedience there is; **delayed obedience** is **disobedience**. Whoever strives to **withdraw** from **obedience**, **withdraws** from **Grace**.

D. Moses takes the nation back to Sinai where God’s glory and greatness were revealed, and where the nation trembled at God’s Law.

1. The people were in danger of forgetting the glory and greatness of God.
2. **Moses points out a couple dangers:** Forgetting the Word & Turning to Idols.

E. **Moses gives a clarion cry, a passionate call to obey...based on 3 reasons:** **Because of their past;** because of their **future**; because of the character of their **God**.

III. Slide#5 OBEY BECAUSE YOU LOOK BACK/past (1-24)

A. Stated & implied examples of Israel’s former unbelief.

1. Sexual idolatry at Baal-Peor (3). Numb.25:1-4.
2. The golden calf incident at Mnt Sinai (15-17). Ex.32:1-35.
3. The Rebellion in the wilderness of Zin (where even Moses tripped up) (21). Num.20:2-13

B. Another reason to **keep God’s statutes** was to show their **wisdom & understanding** to the nations (6)

1. Israel’s wisdom, & skill in living, came from **divine revelation**, **not human reasoning**.

- a) **I.e. Imagine if back in that day they understood *germs*?** Yet God clues Israel in to hygiene tips, they didn't know why, were just following orders.
- C. **Slide#6 (4) Held Fast** - cling, cleave, be joined.
 - 1. Same word Moses used for the marriage relationship in Gen.2:24 **leave his father/ mother & be joined to his wife.**
 - a) This is right from *God's vocabulary of tenderness.*
- D. (6) Just obey and the other nations will think you're smart!
 - 1. **Don't be smart be obedient.** And through your **obedience** He will give you **wisdom & understanding.**
- E. (12) **Saw no form** - so of course you **couldn't/shouldn't** try to **replicate/reproduce** Me in phys form!

IV. **Slide#7 OBEY BECAUSE YOU LOOK FORWARD/future (25-31)**

- A. (27) Promised exile for disobedience.
 - 1. **Like when Adam & Eve** (Gen.3:24) & **Cain** (Gen.4:16) were exiled from their special lands.
 - 2. He now anticipated **the future exile** of **Israel** to **Assyria & Judah** to **Babylon.**
- B. Tough Yet Tender - Every conscientious parent recognizes how difficult it is to exercise his God-given **authority** over his children. The delicate balance of being **tough yet tender** is not easy to maintain. **Many parents** intensify a rebellious spirit by being dictatorial and harsh. **Others** yield when their authority is tested. **When a strong-willed child resists**, the pressure to give in for the sake of peace and harmony can become overpowering. I am reminded of the mother who wanted to have the last word but couldn't handle the hassle that resulted whenever she said no to her young son. After an especially trying day, she finally flung up her hands and shouted, "All right, Billy, do whatever you want! Now let me see you disobey THAT!" Our Daily Bread, August 7
 - 1. **Slide#8** Actually, Billy **can't disobey that.** **Because** as Jonathan Edwards said in his great work on "**The Will**", **we choose according to that which we desire most.**
 - 2. **Motives** have a certain **weight** with you, motives **for** and **against.**
 - a) **Reading a book**, for example, are weighed in the balance of your mind; *the motives that outweigh all others, are what you indeed choose to follow.*
 - b) You, being a **rational person**, **will always choose** what seems to you to be the **right** thing, the **wise** thing, the **most advisable** thing to do *at that moment.*
 - c) If you choose **not** to do the right thing, the advisable thing, the thing that you are inclined to do, you would, of course, **be insane.** (You would be **choosing** something that **you did not choose**).

V. **Slide#9 OBEY BECAUSE YOU LOOK UP/God (32-40)**

- A. Slide#10,11 Their loyalty to God should not be based on **fear** but on **gratitude** for *His Great Goodness*.
- B. “Do it...because I said so!” - sound familiar?
1. This approach *isn't* very effective for parents to use with their children & it isn't used by God with His children either.
 - a) God's approach is **relational**. He says, *“I love you, I made you, I've done great things for you, & I care for you every day, so I also know what's best for you.”*¹
- C. So Moses ends his 1st sermon by calling Israel to **obey** simply because of *who God is*.
1. He gives a series of rhetorical questions. God is totally & absolutely unique (32-34).
 - a) No other god **speaks audibly**, w/o man-made form (33, 36)
 - b) No other god **redeemed** a miserable people from slavery & **forged** them into a great and feared nation (34)
 - c) No other god cares enough for people to **discipline & love** them (36-37)
 - d) No other god in fact, even **exists** (35, 39)
 - (1) For these reasons alone, Israel ought to respond with obedience.
- D. Slide#12 Faithful Dog: How we admire the **obedience** a dog shows to its master. Archibald Rutledge wrote that one day he met a man whose dog had just been killed in a forest fire. Heartbroken, the man explained to Rutledge how it happened. Because he worked out-of-doors, he often took his dog with him. That morning, he left the animal in a clearing and gave him a command to stay and watch his lunch bucket while he went into the forest. His faithful friend understood, for that's exactly what he did. Then a fire started in the woods, and soon the blaze spread to the spot where the dog had been left. But he didn't move. He stayed right where he was, in perfect obedience to his master's word. With tearful eyes, the dog's owner said, “I always had to be careful **what** I told him to do, because **I knew he would do it.**” Our Daily Bread, Jan19.
1. **What's the difference in this story between us & God?** He would never give us wrong instructions. Thus, we can **trust** Him.

VI. Slide#13 **POSTSCRIPT/3 cities of refuge (41-43)**

- A. This is an appropriate place for **this list**, as his 1st sermon dealt with the **conquest & settlement** of Transjordan by Israel.
1. **Cities of Refuge** - cities where a person could flee to, if they had committed **manslaughter** (not murder) & wait there till they had a fair trial. [Aimed at curtailing blood revenge]
 2. Joshua will designate 3 more cities of refuge **in** the land of Canaan (totaling 6).
 3. By providing **cities of refuge** God showed Himself to be both **gracious & just**.

¹ Shepherds Notes, Deuteronomy, pg.25.

B. **Slide#14 Wrap up:** Every **negative** precept, for every *Thou shalt not* there are always 2 **positive** principles.

1. **One**, God gives them to **protect** us. **Two**, He gives them to **provide** for us.
2. He's not a cosmic killjoy who wants to take the fun out of life.
 - a) A story of a high school guy who wanted to go swimming with his girlfriend at midnight. The neighbors down the block had a pool, and he knew it. So they ran down there and scaled the fence even though there were **No Trespassing and Do Not Enter** signs. **Just as he hit the diving board, the girl yelled, but it was too late.** There was only a foot of water in the pool. He broke his neck, and he's in therapy to this day. He didn't realize that **the signs on the fence - the precepts - would have protected him.**²

C. **Slide#15 Trust & Obey**

1. When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way.
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will **trust and obey**.
2. **Refrain:**
Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.
3. Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,
But His smile quickly drives it away;
Not a doubt or a fear, not a sigh or a tear,
Can abide while we **trust and obey**.
4. Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share,
But our toil He doth richly repay;
Not a grief or a loss, not a frown or a cross,
But is blessed if we **trust and obey**.
5. But we never can prove the delights of His love
Until all on the altar we lay;
For the favor He shows, for the joy He bestows,
Are for them who will **trust and obey**.
6. Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet,
Or we'll walk by His side in the way;
What He says we will do, where He sends we will go;
Never fear, only **trust and obey**.

² Josh McDowell, New Man, March/April 1995, p. 55