

Obedience.– Sunday 28th June, 2015

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do..”
Hebrews 4:12-13

Beloved in The Lord,

Faith has a twin sister and her name is obedience. Faith and obedience go together. If we have faith in God, then we naturally must obey Him. Last Sunday we reflected upon the truth that God views things from a much higher perspective than we do. Our view is very limited, very narrow, whereas God sees the whole picture all of the time. God is not limited in anyway - He knows all things and He sees all things. There is absolutely nothing at all that God does not know.

We also saw that God is always motivated by love in all things that He does, because He is love. He also always operates perfectly and in Truth because He is Truth. With God there is no change - He is always the same. God does not vacillate between ideas and opinions. God does not change His mind. His Word never changes.

It is written: ***“The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.” (Isaiah 40:8)***

These Words are extremely important: "God's Word stands forever!"

Peter also spells out this truth: ***“All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off,²⁵ But the word of the Lord endures forever.” 1.Peter 1:24-25***

Also Jesus spoke about this:

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35)

So you see we have this truth stated over and over again all throughout the Scriptures. The Word of God abides forever and it doesn't change.

This leads us to our foundation text for today where we are clearly told that God's Word will be our judge. When we stand before Almighty God and give an account for our lives, then the standard by which we will be judged is The Bible. Let us consider our text once more:

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His

***sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do..”
(Hebrews 4:12-13)***

Where the translation says with whom we have to do - the idea is to whom we must give account. We must be absolutely clear about this. Judgement Day is coming. We will have to give God an account for our lives. We will answer for what we have and haven't done according to the Light of His Word. This is a serious matter.

So many people live totally oblivious to the fact that we will face judgement. So few bear this in mind and they live their lives as if there are no eternal consequences. That is foolish to say the least.

It is important that we understand that if we are Christians, then the judgement that we will face is very different to the judgement of the lost. Our judgement will not be to decide our eternal destiny, because anyone who has repented of their sin and trusted Jesus as their personal Saviour is sealed forever as a child of God and will spend eternity with Jesus in His Kingdom. If we are in Jesus our destination is certain. Our judgement will be a judgement of rewards. It will show us what we have earned in Heaven and will decide what our place in God's Kingdom will be. Paul writes about it this way:

“⁹ For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. ¹⁴ If any man’s work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” 1.Cor.3:9-15

This is a totally alien concept to so many Christians. So many Christians have no idea because this is rarely taught in the modern Church of today. So few people take God's Word seriously, and so few take any responsibility for their lives and actions.

The fact of the matter is that we will give an account, and those works that have been of gold and silver and precious jewels will receive a reward. Those works that have been of wood or hay or straw will be burned up in the fire and we will suffer loss. What sort of loss? I believe the realisation that we have wasted God's resources and have not been as fruitful as we could have been. We will see that we have wasted a lot of time and energy and resources on fruitless and worthless things.

In order that our works would be of the sort that bear fruit and that receive a reward in Heaven, we need to live in daily obedience to God and His Word. Everything that is done in obedience to Him in the spirit of love, that brings glory and honour to His name, that has been prompted and empowered by His Holy Spirit, will be a work of gold and silver and precious jewels.

This is why it is so important that our lives are fully in tune with God and His purposes. Why we need to be continually walking in the Spirit. God orders us to walk in obedience to Him and He gives us His Holy Spirit to enable us to do so.

If we rely upon our own strength and wisdom then we will not get far and we will quickly stray off the path. On the other hand, if we are constantly relying upon Him, walking in the Spirit, walking in His wisdom then we will live in obedience to God our Heavenly Father.

This is not so easy to do, as our old sin nature is constantly trying to gain ascendancy in our life. Our old sin nature rebels against God and His Word. We must constantly be suppressing this old Adamic nature and allowing Christ to live through us by His Holy Spirit.

This is why Paul writes in his letter to the Romans:

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

“Romans 12:1-2

In order for us to live in obedience to God we need to know what His will for us is. In order for us to even know what His will for us is, we need to surrender our lives to Him. We need to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, that is holy and pleasing to Him.

While we want to be in control, we want to be captain of our life, we cannot know and cannot fulfil God's perfect will for us. We must first surrender to Him. We must give the control to Him.

I know from bitter experience in my own life that things that I have done outside of God's will, things that I have done in disobedience to Him, have always had negative consequences. God has an unchanging principle that says that we reap what we sow. If we sow in disobedience we will reap bad consequences. Of course the opposite is also true. If we sow in obedience we will reap blessing.

I said last Sunday, that we need to settle the matter of God's sovereignty once and for all in our minds. We need to decide that we believe the truth that God is absolutely Sovereign. He does what He wants, when He wants, and He does not need to tell us or seek our permission to do so. He is God.

The safest, most secure place we can be in life is in Him. The best place is when all is surrendered to Him in obedience and in faith. If we really truly believe that God is love, then it shouldn't be hard to surrender all to Him. It should not be hard to obey Him. If we believe Romans 8:28 which states:

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”, then it shouldn't be hard to obey Him.

Living in obedience in all things we can never ever lose. May we make a commitment in our hearts today to live in faith and obedience, and in so doing we will bear much fruit for His kingdom and reap rich rewards in Heaven. May God help us.

Amen

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.