

OBEDIENCE AND LOVE

From the words of the Savior (John 14:) He says that if you LOVE, then you OBEY. Later in the chapter, He says, in essence, that if you OBEY, then you LOVE. Logically then, they are equivalent. However, If I say that you must OBEY to be SAVED, it has a very different feel than if I say that you must LOVE to be SAVED. The most important commandment that we must obey to be right with God is to love God with all our heart, might, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as our self. On these hang all the law and the prophets. It seems the Lord has a different definition for obedience. It seems the Lord's obedience is drenched in love. You obey out of a deep desire to totally please and to show love to Him who lovingly gives the commandments and gave His Son. All this He does because He loves us and wants us back with Him and to be like Him, that we may have a fullness of joy.

In Noah Webster's definitions of obedience, he says:

OBE'DIENCE, *noun* [French from Latin *obedientia*.] Compliance with a command, prohibition or known law and rule of duty prescribed; the performance of what is required or enjoined by authority, or the abstaining from what is prohibited, in compliance with the command or prohibition. To constitute obedience, the act or forbearance to act must be in submission to authority; the command must be known to the person, and his compliance must be in consequence of it, or it is not obedience. *Obedience* is not synonymous with *obsequiousness*; the latter often implying meanness or servility, and obedience being merely a proper submission to authority. That which duty requires implies dignity of conduct rather than servility. Obedience may be *voluntary* or *involuntary*. **Voluntary obedience alone can be acceptable to God.**

Government must compel the *obedience* of individuals; otherwise who will seek its protection or fear its vengeance? *Ames*.

From the Scriptures:

Rom. 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Heb. 5:8-9 Though he were a Son, yet **learned he obedience by the things which he suffered**; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

D&C 105:3-6 But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them; And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom; And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself. **And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer.**

D&C 89:18-21 And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings (Word of Wisdom), walking in obedience to [ALL] the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones; And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures; And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint. And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them. Amen.

D&C 130:18-21 Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and **obedience** than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come. There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated— And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by **obedience** to that law upon which it is predicated.

D&C 138:4 That through his atonement, and by **obedience** to the principles of the gospel, mankind might be saved.

Articles of Faith:3 We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by **obedience** to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.

From these scriptures, one gets the idea that there is a need for a new definition for obedience compliant with the Lord's intent that brings us salvation. This is to lovingly do all things whatsoever the Lord our God shall command with a deep desire to be fully compliant with His will as Christ did. We know that we can totally trust Him to only ask us to do that which will be in our

eternal best interest. He loves us with an infinite love, and is doing and has done everything, except to take away our agency, to help us find our way back to our eternal home clothed with glory and a beautiful resurrected body – receiving there a fullness of joy and of all that the Father hath.

Obedience bathed in love feels equivalent to **love bathed in obedience**. Then we take on the attributes of godliness – the divine nature:

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: (2 Peter 1:1-10)

Perhaps this is why Mormon pled with us thus:

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail— But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen. (Moroni 7:46-48)

Obedying the law of love and obedience will celestialize

your family. What wife would not be willing to totally obey and love her husband in righteousness as he loved and obeyed the Lord? He would love her purely with all the attributes of the divine nature. Then, as parents bring up their children in light and truth (D&C 93:36-42), the children will obey them in love. Said Paul, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. (Eph. 6:1) This is a Zion family.

Similarly, will the Lord redeem Israel in the last days as prophesied by Moses. His last sermon to Israel before they were led into the promised land by Joshua told of their cursings and blessings accordingly as they loved and obeyed the Lord or not.

And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call *them* to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If *any* of thine be driven out unto the outmost *parts* of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And **the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.** And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. (Deuteronomy 30:1-8)

This is the Zion society that will meet the Lord at His coming – lovingly obedient and obediently loving, that there be no poor among them, and that they all be PURE IN HEART, because they truly love the Lord with all their hearts, might, mind and strength and their neighbors as themselves. Voluntary obedience only is acceptable to God. We obey because we love, and we love because we obey. Any coercion does not work in celestial realms. Hence, herein is a fullness of JOY as we are filled with the pure love of Christ.