

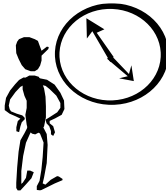
THE BATTLE CREEK BULLETIN

Inside this issue:

<i>Obedience to God</i>	1
<i>The United Church of Christ is Not of Christ</i>	6
Duty Rosters	7
Announcements & For the Record	8



Time of Assembly



Every other Sunday:

Bible Study	9:00 a.m.
Worship	10:00 a.m.

OR

Bible Study	4:00 p.m.
Worship	5:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study	7:00 p. m.
-------------	------------

Obedience to God

By Paul Southern, 1952

The subject of obedience is an important theme that should engage the thought of every responsible person. Rebellion against constituted authority seems to be a trait inherent with mankind. On every hand, we witness infractions of constitutional, statutory, and social laws. Hence, it is not surprising to find persons who transgress the laws of God.

The Bible contains some very definite commands relating to man and his obedience to divine authority. In fact, it teaches that salvation from sin in this world, and eternal happiness in the world to come to depend upon man's obedience to God.

In the Bible, the word obedience is used most often in the sense of subjection to the will of God -- i.e., faithfully doing His commandments. Many things are done in the modern religious world under the guise of obedience. There are many admixtures with vain wisdom and philosophy. There are many deviations and substitutes. With an open Bible and an honest heart, let us examine the subject to see just what obedience to God means:

The Negative Approach

We approach the subject first from a negative standpoint. Harkening to the voice of Satan certainly is not obedience to God. Adam and Eve listened to Satanic perversions and were banished from the garden of Eden. *"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did*

eat" ([Genesis 3:4-6](#)). Immediately their eyes were opened and they began to feel their guilt and shame. And since sin seeks concealment, they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons, and then tried to hide from God amongst the trees of the garden ([Genesis 3:7,8](#)).

Obedience to God does not mean simply listening to the voice of the people. King Saul was once commanded to destroy the Amalekites, including Agag the king, "*both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass*" ([I Samuel 15:3](#)). But Saul kept Agag alive, and the choice sheep and oxen. He tried to excuse himself on the ground that the people demanded it. Samuel said unto him: "*Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, He hath also rejected thee from being king*" ([I Samuel 15:23](#)).

But Saul insisted that the people saved the chief of the devoted things to sacrifice unto Jehovah God. At this point, Samuel reminded Saul that obedience to God means more than mere sacrifice. "*Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and terephim*" ([I Samuel 15:21-23](#)).

Paul teaches that the same principle applies to New Testament work and worship, "*And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing*" ([I Corinthians 13:3](#)). Furthermore, no man loves the Lord unless he is submissive to the divine will, for "*If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments*" ([John 14:15](#)).

A wicked falsehood has come down through the ages, The ancients had a proverb: "Vox populi, vox Dei," i.e., "the voice of the people (is) the voice of God." There is not a word of truth in the statement. The voice of the people built the golden calf at the foot of Mount Sinai. While Moses was in the mount receiving the tablets of stone, "*the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods which shall go before us.*" From their jewelry, a calf was built. "*And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt-offerings, and brought peace-offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play*" ([Exodus 32:1-6](#)). Thus the voice of the people was diametrically opposed to the voice of Jehovah.

In like manner, the voice of the people crucified the Son of God. Pilate asked the question: "*What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ?*" The multitudes replied, "*Let Him be crucified*" ([Matthew 27:22](#)). The voice of the people has given America the damnable liquor traffic, the evils of divorce, and the wicked devices of gambling. Yea, more; the voice of the people has given some cities in the United States their "red light" districts, where men and women barter their souls for a mess of licentious pottage. In view of these facts, we are forced to admit that the multitude is usually wrong. God is

right and cannot be wrong; hence we must submit to His authority.

Following one's conscience is not necessarily obeying God. Conscience is a creature of education and serves as a judge instead of a guide. At one time Paul persecuted the church by *"breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord"* that he might bring them bound to Jerusalem ([Acts 9:1,2](#)). In this persecution, he was conscientious, for we hear him say: *"Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day"* ([Acts 23:1](#)). And again; *"Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and men always"* ([Acts 24:16](#)). Unfortunately, Paul's conscience was directly opposed to the Will of God. The mother of Xerxes sacrificed one hundred slaves upon the altar every time her son won a victory in battle. In this cruel activity, she obeyed her conscience but no sane person would affirm that she obeyed Almighty God.

It should also be observed that obedience is more than a mere calling on the name of the Lord. *"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven"* ([Matthew 7:21](#)). In their pain and anguish many troubled souls will say in that last great day; *"Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by Thy name, and by Thy name cast out demons, and by Thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity"* ([Matthew 7:22, 23](#)).

Following one's feelings is not obedience to God. *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; But the end thereof are the ways of death"* ([Proverbs 14:12](#)). Paul said, *"I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And this I also did in Jerusalem: And I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them"* ([Acts 26:9, 10](#)). No intelligent person can question that Paul did wrong in following his feelings. It is dangerous for anyone to depend upon his feelings in religious matters. Jeremiah said: *"O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"* ([Jeremiah 10:23](#)).

The Positive Approach

Thus we have observed that the grace of God with respect to salvation has been abused by theological perversions. We are aware of the fact that after all is said and done we are sinners saved by grace. No man merits salvation on the strength of his own goodness alone. But there are certain conditions that must be met before we become the recipients of divine grace. The same grace that sacrificed Jesus on Calvary's cross for the sins of the world also stipulates certain conditions as prerequisites to salvation. *"The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and*

godly in this present world" ([Titus 2:11-14](#)).

In His message to this generation, God says that obedience to the gospel stands between the alien sinner and salvation. *"But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness"* ([Romans 6:17,18](#)).

Obedience to God evidently involves doing the will of God. Jesus said: *"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven"* ([Matthew 7:21](#)). When the apostles were forbidden to preach in the name of Jesus they said: *"We must obey God rather than men"* ([Acts 5:29](#)).

Obedience in the New Testament sense means hearkening to the voice of truth. *"Sanctify them in the truth: Thy word is truth"* ([John 17:17](#)). Peter said, *"Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently; having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth"* ([1 Peter 1:22, 23](#)).

In a study of obedience to God, it should be remembered that Jesus is the spokesman to this age. *"God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son"* ([Hebrews 1:1, 2](#)). God declared the authority of Christ to this dispensation when He said: *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him"* ([Matthew 17:5](#)). We do not look to Moses or Elijah for the plan of salvation today, but to the Lord Jesus Christ and His Spirit-guided apostles.

In his second sermon, Peter quoted from Moses the following statement: *"A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people"* ([Acts 3:22, 23](#)). Therefore, we must look *"unto Jesus the Author and Perfector of our faith"* ([Hebrews 12:2](#)). The attitude of the penitent should be, *"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"* ([Acts 9:6](#)). In answer to the question, Jesus says to all the world, *"keep My commandments."* We are thankful that His commandments are not grievous, for they are lined with love and filled with sympathy. Therefore, let every soul who has not obeyed the gospel ponder well the following statements of Holy Writ:

Plan of Salvation

In the first place, obedience involves faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God ([Hebrews 11:6](#)). One must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, ([Acts 16:31](#)) for *"except ye believe that I am He, ye shall die in your sins"* ([John 8:24](#)). But the faith that saves must be coupled with obedience. *"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision*

availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love" (Galatians 5:6). "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). The church in Jerusalem increased in direct ratio to the number of persons who obeyed the gospel.

On Pentecost obedience to the word saved about 3,000 Jews from their sins, and the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved ([Acts 2:37-47](#)). With faith in their hearts toward Jesus Christ, they cried out and said: "*Brethren, what shall we do?*" Peter answered: "*Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" Thus he bound repentance with faith and baptism as a condition of pardon. In this way, he echoed the mind of the Master who said: "*that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem*" ([Luke 24:47](#)).

But before penitent believers were baptized in New Testament times, they professed their faith in Christ. From Paul we learn that "*with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*" ([Rom. 10:10](#)) He further says that God highly exalted Jesus, "*and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*" ([Philippians 2:9-11](#)).

Such a penitent believer who has confessed his faith in Christ goes down into the waters of baptism fully prepared to put off the old man and put on the new. "*We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life*" ([Romans 6:4](#)). We know that baptism is essential, for Jesus said: "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*" ([Mark 16:16](#)). "*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ*" ([Galatians 3:27](#)).

On man's part, sanctification is a matter of faithful obedience to God's word. When Paul preached in Corinth on his second missionary tour, "*many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized*" ([Acts 18:8](#)). Later the apostle wrote them two letters and addressed them as "*sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints*" ([1 Corinthians 1:2](#)).

Every blessing promised to man is predicated upon obedience to God. No responsible person can be saved without obedience. "*Unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation*" ([Romans 2:8](#)). On the other hand, God will bless those who keep His commandments. "*Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city*" ([Revelation 22:14](#)).

The United Church of Christ is Not of Christ

By Kent Heaton

The prophet Jeremiah wrote, "*But thou shall say unto them, This is a nation that obeys not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receives correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth*" ([Jeremiah 7:28](#)). The news unfolds daily how a nation once built upon the fundamental teachings of the Bible refuses to obey the voice of the Almighty. The correction given through the hand of God has gone unnoticed and truth no longer remains in the land. The United States of America is no longer a nation under God but under the god of men. A clear example of this is how more and more man-made religions bow to the dogma of humanistic teachings by embracing homosexuality as acceptable to Jehovah God. Nothing is further than truth - the real truth.

The United Church of Christ announced recently the acceptance of homosexuality as acceptable before God. This should not come as any surprise to Bible believers for the United Church of Christ is not of Christ but of man. The United Church of Christ was created by man on June 25, 1957, out of a combination of four man-made religions:

1. The Congregational Churches of the English Reformation with Puritan New England roots in America;
2. The Christian Church with American frontier beginnings;
3. The Evangelical Synod of North America, a 19th-century German-American church of the frontier Mississippi Valley; and
4. The Reformed Church in the United States, initially composed of early 18th-century churches in Pennsylvania and neighboring colonies. [www.ucc.org/who/history.htm]

The church Jesus died for and established is found in the Bible as beginning on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem ([Acts 2](#)). The UCC has no relationship with the churches of Christ that establish all truth by the word of God ([1 Peter 4:11](#)). The church of the New Testament stood against homosexuality and practiced the purity of the word of God and rejected the word of man ([Galatians 5:19-21](#); [1 Corinthians 6:9-10](#); [Ephesians 5:5-6](#); [Revelation 21:8,27](#)). The Hebrew writer clearly sets forth God's view of marriage in [Hebrews 13:4](#) - "*Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers (immoral) and adulterers God will judge.*"

The reason the UCC has adopted homosexuality as acceptable is that they do not accept the Bible as the "sole source of divine instruction and that Scripture must be interpreted in today's context" (Article published July 5, 2005, Gainesville Sun, Gainesville, Florida). Jesus said, "*If you love me, keep my commandments*" ([John 14:15](#)). Love is based upon God's will, not the will of man. Homosexuality is immoral and whatever man defines as a "same-sex marriage" is an abomination in the eyes of Jehovah God. The honor of marriage is found in a man and a woman for life ([Romans 7:2-3](#)). The Lord brought a woman to the man in [Genesis 2](#) and said it was very good. No man-made religion will ever change that! What did Jesus say about the United Church of Christ and all churches made by man? "*Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*" ([Matthew 15:13-14](#)). The Psalmist wrote in [Psalm 119:89](#) - "*Forever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven.*" Amen.