

39 Obedience For The Social Area of Life

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Obedience for the Social Area

Being obedient in the social area of life starts with the believer's citizenship in Heaven and this is why we eagerly await for Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:20). All our earthly social behavior and activities should replicate this citizenship and our allegiance to Christ. The proof of this is in our position of being seated at the right hand of God in Christ.

Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him-- a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:1-11)

This passage is one of the clearest in the Scriptures regarding our Heavenly position and just how it should be affecting our earthly living/relationships. Here are the points of Truth:

1. We have been raised up with Christ and seated at the Father's right hand.
2. We are called to seek the things in our Heavenly citizenship.
3. We are to set our minds on the things we see in Heaven and avoid setting our minds on the things we see, hear and experience here on earth.
4. He reminds of our co-death, burial, resurrection and ascension with Him.
5. Our lives are hidden with Christ IN God.
6. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then the believer will be revealed with Him.
7. We are called to consider the members of our earthly bodies dead to the lusts of the flesh, which amounts to idolatry to Him.
8. The warning: It is because of these earthly things that the wrath of God will come to the people of DISOBEDIENCE, who set their affections on earthly things and relationships.
9. The mandate: To put all earthly things aside that pertain to our social lives.

10. We are told not to lie, lay aside all evil practices.
11. Put on the new self (life in Christ), which provides renewal of our minds – a renewal that shows no distinctions in human relationships.
12. Why? Christ is all and in all regarding those who are in Him.

This must never be forgotten. Yet the blunt reality is we live in a darkened world filled with social depravity. This depravity does have a marking effect on us if we choose to set our minds on it. There are three views of life for the believer:

1. Hanging on the Cross = self-focused on the pain of dying daily.
2. Tomb dwelling = sitting in despair and darkness feeling sorry for yourself.
3. Seated in Heaven = looking at life from the position of being seated at the right hand of God.

As I disciple others, these are the three worldviews I determine to isolate, the goal being obvious – to have the believer view life from their Heavenly citizenship. Because we are called to submit for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to those given to govern over us, the challenge of viewing life through our citizenship in Heaven becomes our greatest challenge (Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13-14). How does a believer find a balance?

The balance is found in submitting to God first and then to man. If an earthly authority requires of us to violate the ordinances of God, we do not submit – we obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). If the governed authority does not ask us to violate God's mandates for daily living, we submit with an attitude of joy and peace. Let it be said that a responsible citizen of Heaven is not rebellious, self-willed, and disobedient. The believer is to be law-abiding, obedient, and peace loving (1 Tim. 3:3), but at the same time is deeply committed to the Life, Character and Holiness of Christ from within, whom the believer belongs and ultimately serves.

In order to stand faithful to God through Christ, as opposed to the ordinances of man, will certainly have its price tag. The one who arrogantly stands for their "rights" as a citizen of Heaven against the laws of man has misused the Scriptural mandates – for the flesh is never to be an instrument for obeying God. Other costs may include giving up one's position, family, friends, or freedom in order to submit and honor God. Continuous history rings with the words and examples of those who paid such a price with their lives.

Indwelt believers should not be acquainted with the "Christian acts of terrorism" endeavoring to force governing institutions to give in to the demands of a minority, or with protest marches and demonstrations to prove and stand immovable in their "rights" as citizens of Heaven – which is a common practice today. Believers should be the example of demonstrating the balance between obeying God first and then man. Self-proclaimed "Christians" give the Body of Christ a bad name by demanding their "rights" of Heaven on an earth that is depraved and soon to be dealt with by our Lord. Not all but most of the persecution in the Church today is simply self-imposed! Close examination reveals that the cause being championed by these self-righteous Christians are earthly, natural and oftentimes demonic.

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, and demonic. James 3:14-15)

There is more damage done under the banner of “Christendom” than not. Even if these groups won’t admit it, they are buying into the doctrines of the “reconstructionist” or “kingdom now” cult people – believing that this earth is to be reconstructed for God’s Kingdom in its present state. The fact is, God is going to burn this earth and all those who insulted the Bride of His Son. A new earth awaits us, which will be more than any of us could possibly dream to have.

Responsible citizenship has its head on straight, its heart completely yielded to Christ from within (2 Chronicles 16:9), and its purpose to live sensibly, righteously and full of Christ in the present age (Titus 2:12).

Questions to ask ourselves and those we disciple:

1. How do you see yourself as a responsible citizen of Heaven?
2. How do you see yourself as a responsible missionary of this world?
3. What ways are you quick obey man’s laws in order to honor God?
4. How do you perceive the balance between obeying man and obeying God in your life?
5. Where do you personally struggle the most in regard to man’s ordinances?
6. What ways do you plan to commit yourself, concerning your life in this world?

KEY SCRIPTURES:

It is always a good idea to wash with the Word after processing questions like the above. Here are a few that may assist in this washing process: Exodus 22:28; Daniel 3:10-12; Daniel 6:4-5; Daniel 6:10-12; Matt. 17:24-27; Mark 12:15-17; Acts 5:29; Acts 16:37-39; Acts 23:4-5; Acts 26:1-3; Rom. 13:1-7; Titus 2:11-12; Heb. 13:17; & 1 Peter 2:13-15.

Discipleship Points:

When discipling others we should consider the following ideas:

1. Gather data from the disciples childhood regarding their willingness to obey law enforcement and civil authority.
2. How did the disciple respond to parental authority growing up?
3. What was their parents attitudes toward government and those in leadership positions?
4. What areas of Godship have been formed as a result of parental rebellion?
5. What are their present attitudes toward governing authorities?
6. Many adults form their attitudes and reactions toward leaders in the church as a result of second generational rebellion – do you find this in their lives?
7. Lead the disciple into repentance with all data found regarding rebellion against authority.
8. Make sure that the disciple understands that identity in Christ is the only solution and balance to submitting to man and God.