

25 Obedience for the Spiritual Area of Life

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Obedience for the Spiritual Area

To be a Christ as Life worshipper is to be taken up with Him in Spirit, awed by His presence, overjoyed by His righteousness and gracious acceptance, bound by His immeasurable greatness, and freed by His everlasting love. It is giving to Him one's self and all that one knows of honor, adoration, allegiance, obedience, and exaltation.

When indwelt believers gather together to worship God, it may be said that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For together, their praise can be maximized; their appreciation of God deepened through sharing His wonderful works through the act of worship; and their hearts challenged to fuller occupation with Him, by the speaking of His Spirit through each Body member as each grow in Christ. When an individual Body member understands Christ as Life, he can make use of his choices to release the Spirit within himself to do the worshipping of God. Obedience in worship is critical; for when individual parts are inhibited and restrained in the practice of worship, it hinders the gathering of the Saints as a whole.

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:23-25).

The Holy Scriptures exhort us to not forsake the assembly of the Saints. As we gather, we are to confess our hope without hesitation, fear, or the restraint of being inhibited. When we deny the attacks of the enemy in worship, we begin to stimulate one another to love and good deeds while we worship. One of the most encouraging ways to lift fellow Bridal members up before the Lord is through the act of “observational worship.” Some members are free enough to praise God with their hearts, hands, feet, and songs. Other more inhibited members begin to follow suit; thus, encouraging one another to love each Body part of Christ as a whole. This cannot be done without the willful choice of obedience.

Even though it appears to be ministering from Body member to Body member, it fulfills a greater commission of exalting our Husband and Savior. As each is drawing near to Abba Father in corporate worship of Him, we fulfill a mandate given to the Church to magnify and exalt His name together.

“O magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together” (Psalm 34:3).

Obedience in the physical area of life, as in using your body to magnify and exalt His holy name, is the starting place of *obedience*. The New Testament is replete with instances of indwelt believers meeting together to break bread; to remember and worship the Lord; to hear Him speak or sing from the inside of each Body member; and to give Him praise for placing the Holy Spirit within each Body member to inherit the eternal ability to worship in Spirit and Truth. Each indwelt believer's true worship of God in concert with other believers (whether with their faces to the ground in silent awe; or lifting hearts, faces, and hands to Him in praise) ought never to be forsaken by any! To do so would be robbing God of His rightful and deserving place as God. It also weakens the Body of Christ and promotes impoverishment of each individual soul. Obedience in worship is the place where the Body of Christ regenerates the soul for daily living.

Here are a few questions we might ask ourselves:

1. What importance am I now giving to the act of corporate worship of God and His holy name?
2. When I miss worshipping with others, what does it cost me spiritually?
3. When in corporate worship, do I allow my body, soul, and spirit to draw near to Him-- to enter in and be taken up with God by way of the indwelling Spirit within me?
4. How do I participate with others in their worship?
5. What do I believe God is saying to me about corporate worship in my life?
6. What do I plan to do about my lack of obedience in worship?

"Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. 'They will be Mine,' says the LORD of hosts, 'on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him'" (Malachi 3:16-17).

Obedience starts with a proper fear of the Lord; not the kind that paralyzes, but rather the type that confesses awe before the Lord. In this fear of God, we are commanded to speak to one another in order for the Lord to give attention and hear the worship and adoration of His people. Through this appropriation of fear, God shouts His possession of His children before all of heaven. Thus, He receives the glory of His chosen ones. The action of our God is that He will spare us, just as we would spare our own children when they honor us as parents.

We need to take personal responsibility of our own prejudices against active worship as we gather as a Body. As we take the time to separate Church relationships (those we don't get along with) from the act of corporate worship, we can then begin to heal in those very relationships. For those with whom we worship become the vessel God uses to promote love and encouragement with one another.

The Holy Spirit is always ready to convict the acts of fearing man in worship. The Spirit will lead us to repentance with kindness for such displaced fears. Keep in mind that it is the Spirit who does the worship through each individual worshipper. Worship is an act of Christ in us that springs up in corporate worship.

One of the greatest blessings of obedience in corporate worship is the ministry of reconciliation. It is next to impossible to worship with a fellow Body member to whom we're not reconciled.

Worship promotes healing of earthly relationships. This is why many seek forgiveness from others after they spend quality time in corporate worship.

As for those stubborn at heart--those who refuse to loosen up in worship and instead, keep their focus on those around them--well, their phony acts of worship must be tolerated until the Spirit brings them to freedom in Christ Jesus.

NEXT: *Fruit for the Spiritual Area of Life*

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