

Obeying God's Commands Lead to Eternal Life

John 12:37-50

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I. Introduction/Biblical Background

Obedience to the commandments brings freedom, personal growth, protection from danger and many other blessings. Ultimately our obedience will lead to eternal life in the presence of the heavenly Father. Jesus said it this way to the rich young ruler, "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17). The two greatest commands are to love God and our neighbor. If we believe that love is essential to salvation, then we must believe that obedience is essential for salvation or eternal life. Christians must act in obedience to the commands of God. Do what He says. Actively resist sin. Put our minds on holy things. Read and study the Bible. Thank God for His blessings. PRAY!!! Humble, obedient and thankful people will inherit eternal life.

II. The Lesson

1. **vv.37-41.**

In this passage, John quoted two sections from Isaiah, Chapters 53:5 and 6:1-3. The prophet was expressing his disbelief at the blindness and deafness of the people. God's words had been delivered to the people, but they did not heed them. They also ignored the Lord's mighty arm by which He had done wonderful miracles. Throughout his Gospel, John told us of many signs that Jesus performed that cause us to believe in Him (John 2:11, 4:54, 6:14). Jesus revealed Himself to them through the many signs and through His teaching. John declared that these words of Isaiah were being fulfilled, 700 years later when the Messiah came and said these wonderful words and did these great deeds.

The second quotation described the vision of the glory of Jehovah. Here, Isaiah was sent to the people to warn them to exercise faith or there will come a day when they will not be able to. If faith is not used, it will be lost. In other word if mankind does not

listen to and accept the truth of the Scripture, then the Lord will harden their hearts to the truth so that they cannot receive or understand the word. John emphasized that unbelief was because God acted in judgment upon those who refused to see His truth and turn to Him. If people genuinely seek God, they will come to believe Him. Isaiah was referring to Jesus when he spoke this because he saw the future and spoke of the Messiah's glory.

2. **vv. 42-43.**

The second group of people believed in Jesus but did not confess it aloud because they were afraid of the Pharisees who would have put them out of the synagogue. To be a believer in Jerusalem during this time was difficult. Jesus' enemies were prominent Pharisees, influential in the city's synagogue. Our unbelief in the face of evidence is often a result of our own desires and insecurities. We crave the affections of men more than the affection of God. This is the heart of our problems and the reason why God has to intervene before we can freely choose Him.

3. **vv. 44-46.**

As His time drew near, and Jesus approached His glorification, He cried out in desperation in His final public sermon to warn the followers of the judgment to come if they did not believe in Him. Jesus emphasized the theme of all His previous preaching in John. It included a reminder of His teaching, a challenge, a warning to those who decided against Him and a promise who decided for Him. The goal was for the believers to see the Father and come to the Father through Jesus. Scripture verifies that God had sent Jesus: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life", (John 3:16). Jesus only did what His Father told Him; therefore, we can know what God is like by studying the life and words of Jesus. Also, Jesus emphasized His unity with God the Father. To believe in Jesus was to put faith in Him who sent Jesus, even more than it was to put faith in Jesus Himself. Jesus stressed His own truthfulness and the need man had to follow Jesus or else live in darkness.

4. **vv. 47-50.**

Under the New Covenant, man has a choice, to either receive the teachings of Jesus and be born again to spend eternity in heaven or to reject them and be cast into

hell. Jesus came first to save, not to judge or condemn. He will judge later at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) and at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11). In the last Judgment, the Great White Throne, those who do not accept Christ will be judged, condemned and eternally separated from God. The word that the people have heard would be their judge. A man can not be blamed for not knowing. However, if he knows the right and does the wrong, his condemnation is all the more serious.

Therefore, every wise thing that we have heard, and every opportunity we have had to know the truth will, in the end, be a witness against us. Jesus is the Father's agent. Jesus assured them that He was not speaking on His own authority. He spoke the very words of God the Father who had told Him what to say and how to say it (V. 49). The people should have received Him with the same honor they would have received the Father. The theme of eternal life is emphasized throughout John's Gospel. God has commanded eternal life, an absolute for all who have been born again.

5. **V. 50.**

Verse 50 invites us to enter that life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. Conclusion

Jesus continues to offer His gift of salvation even to those who reject or disobey the word. His followers must be intentional about being obedient and living as ambassadors of the love and grace for Christ, even among those who still choose to be disobedient. God is patient and wants all people to come to repentance. If we know Jesus and the Father and are obedient, then we are saved, and we received eternal life through the words of Christ because they are the very words of God: "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63).