

THE SPIRIT OF OBEDIENCE

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Samuel 15:18-23**. From Roy H. Enoch (03-19-95).
- B. The Bible consistently challenges us to obedience w/commands and examples of the faithful, but the world urges disobedience.
 - 1. The Bible teaches respect for parents and civil authority.
 - 2. Our permissive world, and selfish men reject the idea.
 - 3. Many think of freedom as a lack of restraint or responsibility.
 - 4. Some even teach that any kind of obedience is legalism.
- C. True obedience is an attitude of loving submission.
 - 1. Obedience to God is based on a loving trust and gratitude (Heb. 11:8).
 - 2. It is motivated by a loving desire to please rather than on man's reasoning and understanding (1Jn. 5:3).
 - 3. It is the opposite to a selfish desire to do as we please (1Sam. 15:23).
- D. Three lessons about obedience that we can learn from King Saul's disobedience.
 - 1. Partial obedience is disobedience.
 - 2. Noble intentions do not substitute for obedience.
 - 3. Obedience is necessary.

I. PARTIAL OBEDIENCE IS DISOBEDIENCE.

- A. See 1Samuel 15:9-11.

Human exceptions were made to God's instructions (v9).

 - 1. Man does not know what will be the effects of the evil God is condemning.
 - 2. God knew the evil the Amalekites had already done and what they would do if left to their ways.
- B. The source of Saul's disobedience was pride: he brought Agag, the Amalekite king back as his war trophy.
- C. The people's motive seems to have been greed.
 - 1. See 1Sam. 15:21.
 - 2. Most of the sacrifices were eaten by those who offered them.
 - 3. It seems that they wanted to feast and party.
- D. God calls their partial obedience, disobedience.
 - 1. Saul had killed all but the king. That was disobedience.
 - 2. The people killed all but the best of the animals. That was disobedience.
- E. Some, like Saul still claim to obey the Lord.
 - 1. When one believes that Jesus is the Son of God and repents of sin, but refuses baptism, he disobeys God.
 - 2. When one obeys the gospel, lives a moral life, but refuses to assemble to worship God as He commands, disobeys God.
 - 3. When one lives a faithful life for many years and then falls away, he disobeys God (Rev. 2:10).

II. NOBLE INTENTIONS DO NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR OBEDIENCE.

- A. See 1Samuel 15:15,21.

Isn't sacrifice to God a worthy aim?

 - 1. Many think they can do anything they want if they say that it is for religion.
 - 2. Samuel teaches that God is not wanting the "thing" sacrificed, but for the heart to be submissive in obedience (1Sam. 15:22).
- B. Many in our society and some in the Lord's church are trying to reach people by giving them what they want as Jay Stephens points out in an article in the March, 1995 *Firm Foundation*.
 - 1. He describes the "seekers" of society who are described by authorities on "church growth" as:

wanting God, but not doctrine; wanting X, but not the church; who wants an entertaining experience that fits his lifestyle.

- a. They are looking for "reality" and not religion, so that they can have everything relative with no absolutes and be socially and politically correct.
 - b. They are looking for friends like themselves, who will accept them like they are w/o changing them.
 - c. They are looking for fun, they want to be excited and entertained.
 - d. They are looking for comfort: for a group that will tell them that they are great like they are, without preaching about sin, and other subjects that makes them uncomfortable.
2. Therefore, many denominations are looking for growth in numbers in attendance rather than in genuine conversions.
- a. Many are urging that people be accepted like they are regardless of their lifestyle.
 - b. Many are urging that "services" focus on activities that are enjoyed rather than "worship" which doesn't entertain.
 - c. The whole effort is to change the church to be like the world rather than changing people to be like X.
 - d. Some advocate fundraising by gambling and entertainment w/instruments of music.
3. We need to accept Jesus' description of those who really seek HIM (Jn. 7:17).
- a. Jesus does not give us the responsibility to please the world but to preach His word to the world.
 - b. Jesus was not after crowds but converts.

III. **SAMUEL EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY OF OBEDIENCE.**

- A. See 1Samuel 15:22-23.
- B. This is the same emphasis that Jesus made in His teaching:
 1. He gave us an example of submission in obedience (Jn. 6:38; Heb. 5:8,9).
 2. He taught that we must be completely obedient (Mt. 7:21,22; Lk. 6:46).
- C. Obedience is necessary in being saved from sin (1Pet. 1:22-25).
- D. Obedience is necessary in staying saved (Phil. 2:5-14).
The spirit and necessity of obedience is shown in Phil. 2:12-16.
- E. Peter called Xians "obedient children" (1Pet. 1:14).

CONCLUSION.

- A. Jesus "learned obedience" and paid the cost of it (Heb. 5:8,9).
- B. We also must learn to pay the cost of obedience.
- C. We have learned this from the OT lessons (Rom. 15:4).
- D. The spirit of obedience is a spirit of trust, love and gratitude.
- E. It does not earn any part of salvation, but is necessary to receive it.