

## **“OBEDIENCE CARRIES HOPE”**

**Pastor Mike Corwin**

**TEXT:** PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

**GOD’S WORD:** GENESIS 5:32 & 6:9-22

### **I – OBEDIENCE:**

When I look at the word “Obedience” two things come to my mind...children and dogs. If you’ve ever owned a dog you know that obedience plays a big part in how wonderful they are as a pet. Are they house broke? Do they not do their business on the living room carpet? Do they stay off the furniture, not jump up on people, and all the other bad behavior they can exhibit? Children I think are even worse than raising a dog! As we raise our children we expect them to be obedient. We expect them to hear us when we speak and do what we tell them to do. Even more important maybe is that they hear us when we tell them what not to do...what the rules of their lives are, and then obey those boundaries.

How about the modern workforce? Do we see any problems with obedience there? Showing up for work sober and not under the influence of any substance. How about showing up for work on time or just plain showing up for work. Just getting a full day’s work out of people would be kind of nice. Thanks to Covid our workforce, which wasn’t the greatest to start with, has gotten even worse. We paid people to stay home and not work and increased various benefits. Now people don’t want to go back to work. Now we’re trying to legalize recreational marijuana so you can be mellow while you’re at home doing nothing!

Unfortunately we are seeing this same problem with the church as we come out of Covid. To start with some people got out of the habit of attending church and just don’t come anymore. God’s children have also become disobedient over God’s call to use their gifts and serve God and the Church. This leaves us unable to run ministries and meet needs.

### **II – NOAH:**

As I look at the story of Noah I see lessons concerning being obedient to God. In Genesis 5:32 you heard read this morning it told us Noah was 500 years old as he had children and God called him. In chapter 7 of the story it tells you that Noah was 600 years old when the flood came. So at the very least Noah was 500 years old when God called him to the task of saving a remnant of creation

on a massive boat. One of the common answers we get when we ask someone to serve on a committee or other ministry in the church is “I’ve done my time.” I have a couple of things to say to this based on the story of Noah. 1) You’re being asked to serve God, not a prison sentence. You should be full of joy for having the opportunity to serve God. To tell me you’ve done your time tells me that you have experience to serve. My other question would be to ask who you mentored to take over for you when you decided you were done. 2) Show me in the Bible where it ever says people get to retire. God told Adam and Eve they would toil till they were dead, not till they turned 65 and qualified for benefits. 3) What would have happened if Noah said No?

Evidently by some of your reasoning, 22 years ago I should have told God no thanks. Told him I had already done my time in a career and I didn’t need another one.

In verse 9 of this morning’s reading it says that Noah “Walked in close fellowship with God.” How could this be possible without obedience? How could this be when we find Jesus, figure we’ve got our ticket to heaven, then sit down and do nothing? One hour a week on Sunday does not qualify as close fellowship with God.

Then we get down to verses 14-16 where it gives us the measurements of the boat that God is telling Noah to construct. This would certainly seem to be an insurmountable task. Then to follow through with gathering all the creatures would certainly cause you to sit back and tell God, “You’ve got to be kidding me!” But Noah was obedient and did as God called him to do.

How often our tasks seem to be insurmountable. We have to have faith that if God has called us to it, he will see us through it. He will equip us and be with us every step of the way to get it accomplished. Someone once said that if your dream/task can be accomplished by your own resources and power then it’s not truly from God.

### **III – JESUS OBEDIENCE:**

I think one of the best examples of obedience in the entire Bible is found in the account of Jesus in the garden. There in Luke 22:39-44 we read:

<sup>39</sup> Then, accompanied by the disciples, Jesus left the upstairs room and went as usual to the Mount of Olives. <sup>40</sup> There he told them, “Pray that you will not give in to temptation.”

<sup>41</sup> He walked away, about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> “Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.” <sup>43</sup> Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. <sup>44</sup> He prayed more

ferently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.

Jesus has finished his last supper with his disciples. He knows what is about to befall him. He knows of the pain and suffering he is about to endure. He finishes his meal and they go to the Mount of Olives so he can pray. His prayer asks God to remove the burden he is about to endure. To take the oncoming suffering away. This tells me that Jesus was human as well as divine. Who, knowing what was coming, would not ask God to save them from it. Matter of fact, it tells us that he was in such agony over it that he sweat great drops of blood as the capillaries under the skin on his head burst from the stress.

But it also tells us how obedient he was. That he told God that he would do whatever he wanted him to do. That he would leave it up to God's will. That he would be obedient. It's this obedience that bought yours and mine freedom from sin and death as we read in the text last week.

#### **IV – TEXT:**

This morning's text continues to point out that Jesus was obedient...

#### **Philippians 2:5-11 (NLT)**

<sup>5</sup>You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

<sup>6</sup>Though he was God,  
he did not think of equality with God  
as something to cling to.

<sup>7</sup>Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;  
he took the humble position of a slave  
and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,

<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself in obedience to God  
and died a criminal's death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor  
and gave him the name above all other names,

<sup>10</sup>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup>and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

So, I can imagine the conversation among the Trinity. Your confirmands would be able to tell you, based on Biblical passages that Jesus was present with God and the Holy Spirit at the very beginning of time. The Christmas story from the Gospel of John tells you that he was there for the Creation.

So it is easy for me to imagine a conversation where God comes to Jesus and explains the master plan he has for all of humanity. A Plan to have Jesus be the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of all humans so they could be made whole, forgiven, and be able to exist for all of eternity with God.

So this passage tells us that Jesus gave up all of his heavenly privileges, gave up being the Prince of Heaven to put on human skin, feelings, and characteristics. He put on humility and selflessness to become human. Born in a stable and living under the rule of human authorities instead of his own.

It says that he did this in “Obedience” to God and died on a cross to bring God’s Kingdom to earth. He made none of it about his will...but the will of God. He answered the call to serve.

Is it any wonder that when he did what he was asked of by his heavenly Father that he was, has been, and will be exalted. That knees bow and tongues declare that he is the Savior and Lord of all.

### **V – CHRIST LIKE:**

According to this Book (Bible) we are supposed to be Christ Like. That means to transform into that existence in this life, not wait until you get to heaven and play the Jesus card there. God gave you this human life to find Jesus and become like him before the last day of your life.

And to be Christ-like includes humbling yourself and being obedient to God. God called Jesus to do what he did and he obeyed. This obedience was the greatest gift to all humankind and enables all to live for all of eternity with God in an existence better than this one.

So my question for you this day is, “ARE YOU BETTER THAN JESUS?” When you are called to serve and don’t obey, that’s exactly what you are saying. You have put yourself and your own comfort, desires, and wills above that of God. O God may I never be that arrogant!

You see, God doesn’t call you to service because he doesn’t have anything else to do. He doesn’t do it because there’s nothing good to watch on the heavenly comedy channel. He does it to save as much of humanity as possible before the end.

We talked last week about how God looks at Evil and wickedness. We came to the conclusion that the world isn’t much better than it was in the time of Noah. While we are waiting for God to get fed up and end our existence again, we are supposed to be building an Ark called the Church of Jesus Christ. Then we are supposed to fill that Ark with souls so they float into heaven.

I pray that we stop coming up with excuses and become obedient to God as he calls us to build this modern day Ark so we don’t have to worry about how long we can tread water.

AMEN