

The Blessings of Those Who Love God: Obedience

John 14:23-24

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me. NKJV

Often obedience becomes the battle for the wills. In raising children, parents often make a mistake of forcing children just so they can say they have won or that they can have a sense of dominance over the children. God is not insecure. He knows that He is supreme and that His will is supreme. The major reason that God gives us commands then is not to have a so called battle of the wills. But God loves us and His commands are always for the good of those commanded.

John 15:9-11 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. NKJV

Isa 48:17 People of Israel, I am the holy Lord God, the one who rescues you. For your own good, I teach you, and I lead you along the right path. CEV

Deut 10:12-13 "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you except to listen carefully to all he says to you, and to obey for your own good the commandments I am giving you today, and to love him, and to worship him with all your hearts and souls? TLB

Some times on Moody Radio they have a little clip where a stranger comes to the door of a home to tell a mother that her child is playing in the street and he thinks she should do something about. But the mother responds by acknowledging that sure enough the child is playing in the street and then closes the door. But the persistent stranger once again opens the door to more forcefully make his appeal. But the mother responds that they never have stifled the actions of junior and seems sure that this will produce a proper child. But the stranger says that children ought not play in the street, that it is not safe. But the mother goes into a rage about how it is narrow minded people like him that she is protecting her little boy from. She thinks it is very narrow thinking to be avoided.

Now the little clip does that much better than I can describe. But you get the idea. Some how we have gotten the idea that the commands of God are quite arbitrary, that God whimsically makes His laws for capricious and frivolous reasons. Once we have concluded that we feel free to break His commands and feel that only fools would bother trying to live a life pleasing to God.

But the text this morning shows that this is not so. That the reason we tell our children to not play in the street is not so that we can control them but for their good. So let us look at it from God's perspective.

I. Love is connected to obedience

- A. God loves us
 - 1.
 - B. Our love for Him is proven by our obedience
 - 1. Deut 10:12-13 "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good? NKJV
 - 2. John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; NKJV
 - 3. John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments NKJV
 - 4. 1 John 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. NKV
 - C. If we fail to obey, Jesus says quite sternly that we do not love Him.
 - 1. This goes back to the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer.
 - a. Rom 5:5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. NKJV
 - 2. The believer has the Holy Spirit in them and cannot continue in sin.
 - a. 1 John 3:9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. NKJV
 - 3. God who begins to work in us will continue to work.
 - a. Phil 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; NKJV
 - b. The conclusion then is that if there is no demonstration of the work of God in our lives then we are not His children.
- II. The blessings of loving God is seen in the result of obedience.
- A. There are natural consequences for disobedience.
 - 1. Some years ago I was asked to visit a man who had lived all his life in rejection of God and God's claims on his life.

2. He was the true prodical for he had wasted his life all on himself.
 3. He had alienated his wife and children but none of that touched him.
 4. He had ruined not only is life but he had abused his body till all that was left was a diseased shell of a man.
 5. When I came into his life he was suicidal and had given up all hope.
 6. I will never forget the questions he asked me.
 - a. He wanted to know why God was doing this to him.
 - b. His thought was that God was getting even with him.
 - c. Isn't strange that a man who lived his life hardly ever taking God into consideration was now blaming God for the way things and ended up.
 7. If I step out in front of an on coming car, I don't think I should blame God for ending up in the hospital or worse.
 8. Alcapone died of venereal disease, not as a judgment from God but from the life he chose to live.
- B. There are "God consequences" for disobedience.
1. Adam and Eve
 2. Cain
 3. Nadab and Abihu; Lev 10
 4. Achan; Josh 7
 5. David with Bathsheba; 2 Sam 11
 6. David numbering the people; 2 Sam 24
 7. Israel
 8. Judah
 9. But some will say, "But that was in the Old Testament, God doesn't do that in the New Testament.
 - a. Somehow people think the Bible has two Gods, one of the OT and one of the NT
 - (1) But the God of the OT is that of the New
 - (2) It is true that we live under grace and not under the law.
 - (3) Under law not a one of us would be accepted before God.

(4) But under grace God uses discipline to bring His wayward children back to Himself.

(a) Heb 12:5-8

(b) My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. NKJV

b. But if we harden our hearts and will not repent, God just might take us out of here.

(1) 1 Cor 11:29-32 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. NKJV

C. But for those who obey there are blessings, both here and in eternity.

1. Lessons from Deut

a. Deut 4:40 You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time." NKJV

b. Deut 5:16 that it may be well with you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. NKJV

c. Deut 5:29 Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! NKJV

d. Deut 5:33 You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess. NKJV

e. Deut 6:3 Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that

it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you — 'a land flowing with milk and honey.' NKJV

- f. Deut 6:18 And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, NKJV
 - g. Deut 12:28 Observe and obey all these words which I command you, that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God. NKJV
2. John 10:10 I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. NKJV
 3. There is a natural benefit for those who keep God's commands.

Max Jukes lived in New York. He did not believe in Christ or in Christian training. He refused to take his children to church, even when they asked to go. He has had 1,026 descendants; 300 were sent to prison for an average term of thirteen years; 190 were public prostitutes; 680 were admitted alcoholics. His family, thus far, has cost the state in excess of \$420,000. They made no contribution to society.

Jonathan Edwards lived in the same state, at the same time as Jukes. He loved the Lord and saw that his children were in church every Sunday, as he served the Lord to the best of his ability. He has had 929 descendants, and of these 430 were ministers; 86 became university professors; 13 became university presidents; 75 authored good books; 7 were elected to the United States Congress. One was vice president of his nation. His family never cost the state one cent but has contributed immeasurably to the life of plenty in this land today. --James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988) p. 195.

Remember the word says "that it may be well with you and your children."

There are blessings for those who love God. Obedience is one of those blessings for it rescues us from so many dangers.