OBEDIENCE

Psalm 119:57-60

3/22/99

Intro: "The Christian life is a life of principled, conscientious obedience to God's will as revealed in the Bible" A.N. Martin

The Bible gives many examples of the disastrous consequences of disobedience.
Here are two:

"The man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord" (I Kings 13:1-32)
"The foolish man which built his house upon the sand" (Mt.7:26)

Psalm 119:57-60 reveals what real obedience is all about:

To be obedient you need...

I. A <u>Personal</u> <u>Relationship</u> with God (as your only Master) (v.57a)

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II. A <u>Purposeful</u> <u>Resolution</u> to obey God's word (v.57b)

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III. A <u>Prayerful</u> <u>Reliance</u> on God's grace & mercy (v.58)

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IV. A <u>Pondering</u> <u>Reflection</u> on God's ways vs your ways (v.59)

A. Obey <u>exactly</u>

B. Obey <u>completely</u>

To be obedient you need...

V. A <u>Punctual</u> <u>Response</u> to God's commands (v.60)

A. Obey without <u>delay</u>

B. Obey without <u>excuse</u>

Conclusion:

May God give us: An <u>ear</u> to <u>hear</u> God's will (Mt.13:9)
A <u>heart</u> to <u>want</u> God's will (Rom.6:17)
A <u>will</u> to <u>do</u> God's will (Jn.7:17; James 1:22-25)

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Examples of the high cost of disobedience to God:

- Nadab & Abihu – strange fire (Lev.10:1-f)
- Achan – Joshua 6:18; 7:1-f;
- Moses – Num.20:10
- Eli's Sons Hophni & Phineas
- Lot's wife – Gen.19:26
- Uzzah – touched the ark (II Sam.6:6)

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Observations to Think About:

A. Both men <u>heard</u> the same message

Tragedy! This man heard what the prophets and righteous men of old desired to hear (Mt. 13:17). What a privilege he had, but what an abuse of privilege! Week after week, year after year, he heard but didn't heed.

SEE: James 1:22-25
No blessing is promised to those who <u>know</u> God's will, but to those who <u>do</u> it! (v. 21) (obviously one must know it to do it, but many know it but do not do it)

One who <u>knows</u> the Word but does <u>not obey</u> it is like: a man who is lost while holding a map in his hand; a man who knows what is wrong with his health but odes nothing about it.

"Hearing" is important. You must hear accurately - <u>not selectively</u>, but with a desire to obey

"Hearing" does not profit if it is not mixed with faith (Heb. 4:2)
Some people find a certain security in merely <u>hearing</u> and <u>acknowledging</u> the Word. Until the <u>will</u> is involved mere Bible knowledge is not something to take refuge in, but rather it is something to tremble at; because you are more accountable for the more God teaches you.

Those who <u>know</u> God's will yet do <u>not do</u> it will face a more strict evaluation on Judgment Day than those who did not know!

"To whomsoever much is given, much is required!"

B. Both men built a house

--From external appearance both homes would appear to be the same.

(the difference is what is underneath; the bottom line is that which could not be seen).

Some people have a facade that will crumble when the storm comes.

"Both builders have confidence their houses will stand; but one man's confidence is int he Lord and the other man's is in himself" (MacArthur p. 482)

"There is one who is pure in his own eyes, yet is not washed from his filthiness": (Prov. 30:12)

While both built houses, they both chose different foundations.

The most important part of a building is its foundation! It may not be so attractive or aesthetic; it most often is hidden and no one sees it. Yet it is the most vital part of any structure.

C. One man built the hard way, and one the easy way

Everyone is building on either sand or rock. There are no other alternatives.

Just as everyone is either on the wide road or the narrow (v. 13-14), just as everyone is either bearing good fruit or bad (v. 17-20), so everyone is either foolish or wise!

"Which built his house" - Luke describes an added detail of the building process: *"He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep and laid the foundation on a rock."*

The builder who built on sand no doubt had a house that "looked" just as good as the other. However, he failed where quality counted most; it was too much effort (work) to drill into rock [NOTE: Obedience often takes great effort, great self-denial; it's often not easy, nor is it always "fun"]

You can't cut corners in the Christian life.

Quick and easy, hassle free, no trouble "Christian" living is what the fool is after.

It's easier to know what is right than to do what is right. ILLUS: Spiritual obesity - fat and lazy Christians who know everything but do nothing. Arm-chair quarterbacks - have all the answers but have never played the game.

D. Both men faced the same storm

A false profession will last until Judgment comes.

Sometimes this judgment is in the form of the trials of life (cp. Mt. 13:4-9) Many people have professed faith in Christ, only to deny their faith when life becomes spiritually costly and difficult.

But the judgment illustrated here probably refers to the final judgment before God. . . the Lord is illustrating one main point: <u>profession will ultimately be tested before God</u> (Wiersbe, p. 31)

God is impartial and will judge all men fairly and equally.

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" "Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men."

E. The wise man's house remained <u>firm</u> when he needed it most

"If ye know these things happy are ye if ye <u>do</u> them!"

Those who obey Christ do <u>not</u> crumble when:
--pressures come
--tragedies strike
--trials, temptations, and tribulations approach

We tend to think "for complicated problems you need complicated answers" -- not true!

Having a strong foundation for your life, family, ministry, business, etc., is a matter of <u>simple</u> <u>obedience</u>.

F. The foolish man's house <u>fell</u> when he <u>needed it most</u>

The <u>fall</u> of the wicked is demonstrated throughout Scripture:

Psalm 36:12 - *"There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise."*

Prov. 6:15 - *"Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy."*

Prov. 11:5 - *"The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness."*
Jer. 6:15 - *"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD."*
I Thes. 5:2, 3 - *"For when they shall say peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them. . ."*

G. The fool's house fell when it was <u>too late</u> to build <u>another</u> one

"Great was the fall of it" - the loss was great because there was no more time to build another. Once you're dead you do not get another chance.

The fool will end up with absolutely nothing!

Be prepared for the future!

--The end of the wise man = stability and security.

--The end of the foolish man = instability (like the chaff - Ps. 1:3ff) and destruction

NOTE: Christ views the end of the lost as destruction (v. 13), fire (v. 19), separation (v. 23), and decimation (v. 27).

H. All that matters is the final score (what endures and triumphs in the end)

In due time the reality of your walk (Christian life) will be tested and revealed!

There is a storm coming that will try every man's work - for the Christian, this is the Judgment Seat of Christ (I Cor. 3) for the unsaved this is the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

Many claim to be too busy to obey God: "Don't have the time. . ." When we look at eternity, we don't have time NOT to obey!

Some people are "time wise and eternity foolish" ILLUS: A man dropped two pennies on the floor of a department store as he took out his billfold to make a purchase. He stopped to hunt the two cents and left his wallet lying on the counter. When he arose, the wallet containing $50 was gone! How unwise he was!

Not nearly as unwise, however, as those who worry about the insignificant foolishness of this world and forget about the eternity to soon follow.

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Conclusion:

May God give us:

An ear to hear God's will (Mt.13:9)

Matthew 13:19

When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

A heart to want God's will (Rom.6:17)

Romans 6:17

But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

A will to do God's will (Jn.7:17; James 1:22-25)

John 7:17

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

James 1:22-25

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. [23] For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: [24] For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. [25] But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.