

God Demands Obedience

Introduction

1. God has always demanded obedience to His Words **Genesis 2: 16-17; Genesis 3:1-13**

The following story (or parable) was written by Joe Neil Clayton several years ago. I want to read the story and then make application.

Suppose a very generous and prosperous Banker sent an advertisement to all the citizens of his town, stating that everyone appearing in his Bank between 10 and 11 AM the following Monday, with the ad in his/her hand, would freely receive \$100,000. What sort of response could the President of the Bank expect?

We might think that the word of this fantastic opportunity would have reached everyone in town before dark, that everyone would tell his neighbor about it, and that everyone would covet one of the ads. We could expect that the following Monday, everyone who had heard and understood the ad would appear at the precise time, ad in hand, to claim his money. But, let us view the results.

The President of the Bank resolves to fulfil his promise to all who comply, knowing that his vault is swollen with freshly printed bills. At 9:30 AM, he looks out to see a few people rushing down the street to be there early, but not the horde he had expected. At 10:00 the doors are opened to admit the crowd. Some 300 are served during the first few moments, but then the river of claimants becomes a stream and the stream becomes a trickle. The number of respondents to the ad comes way short of the number of ads distributed!

At precisely 11:00 AM the door is shut and locked--after which a number of people come, pounding on the door, surprised that the door is shut, even though it is long after 11:00. When the President counts the cash he has left, he is astonished to discover that only a minority of the citizens of the town have claimed the gift. Puzzled by this poor response, he hires a research company to learn the reason for it.

Some just didn't believe the ad! They thought the banker was just promoting a hoax, or they did not believe the Bank's assets would be sufficient, or that the banker would be so generous.

Some didn't come because they heard that the local dime store was giving away shiny new dimes at the same hour! Besides, a dime in the hand is better than \$100,000 vaguely promised by a Bank.

Some still came to claim the reward, offering excuses for not responding at the appropriate time: Some said, "I didn't hear the news." Surely, a sympathetic President of the Bank would not deny their claim. Some said, "I didn't understand the ad." Someone had explained to them that the Banker did not really mean what he said, and had persuaded him to accept his own version of the ad. Some said, "I didn't think it was important to bring the ad with me." A friend had scolded him for thinking that he must carry the ad to the Bank--appearing in person was much more important. Some said, "I sent my mother (wife, husband, child) to get the reward." They thought they were "represented" by a dutiful family member. Some said, "I took your ad to another bank, and they promised to collect the \$100,000 from you for me, and add another \$50,000 to it." I learned too late that the rival bank could not collect the money for me, and that it was also bankrupt.

The Bank President reviewed his offer, and concluded that he was not obligated to accept their excuses. His ad stated the conditions in plainly understandable language. Those who did not meet the conditions could be denied, because they had believed perversions of his plan. He was not obligated to honor these perversions. He concluded that he had done all he could to fulfil his gracious offer to the public!

(Story by: Joe Neil Clayton)

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Does this story remind us of another?

1. Suppose the Lord said (and he did)

Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

☺ God expects ALL to come by the Gospel.

A. The GOSPEL is saving good news.

1 Cor 15:1-3 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you-- unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

B. Baptism is essential to salvation.

1 Pet 3:20-21 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: (KJV)

- 1) **We must understand that Repentance precedes it.**
Acts 2:38, 17:30-31
- 2) **Confession of faith is essential.**

Rom 10:9-10 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

2. What values accrue from the promised salvation?**A. Happiness in our freedom from guilt and sin.****B. Eternal Life.****John 3:16**

- 1) **This is certainly better than any money we can gain in this world!**

3. Christ has the assets to save everyone.

1 John 2:2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

4. He has caused all to hear the good news.**A. The Apostles proclaimed it.****Ephesians 3:8-11**

Col 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

5. God has always demanded obedience to His Word - Obey His Will today before you are caught naked before Him at Judgment! WHY?

God Expects Results from His Letter

1. UNIVERSAL RESPONSE!, but only a FEW do.

Luke 13:22-30

2. What excuses do people offer? The same as in our story!

A. Some don't believe it, and treat it as a hoax. It was the same in Jesus's day.

John 12:37-38 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

John 8:46 "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?"

SEE CHART

B. Some want to claim the reward, in spite of disobedience.

1) "I never heard the truth." (NO EXCUSE)

II Th 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who **do not know God**, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2) "I didn't understand." (Meaning, "I had someone who helped me misunderstand.")

Eph 3:3-4 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

Eph 5:17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

- 3) **"Someone told me that baptism (or, total repentance) was unimportant." Acts 2:38, 22:16; Galatians 3:26-27**
- 4) **"I was the son of a godly mother/father (or, married to a faithful wife/husband)."**

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that **each one** may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Rom 14:12 So then **each of us** shall give account of himself to God.

- 5) **"I judged the value of Christianity by those who claimed to be Christians, and rejected it in favor of other Gods, who promised me a similar reward."**

Matt 4:8-10 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! **For it is written**, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

- 6) **"I demand that you accept counter-conditions, and allow me to give equal service to another Lord."**

Matt 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Conclusion

1. God has the right to condemn the disobedient.

Rom 2:8-9 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness-- indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil...

SEE CHART - "Receiving Eternal Life"

2. We must believe these truths regarding the condemnation of the disobedient as strongly as we do the promise to reward the righteous.

3. God's first principle is to obey Him. He has delivered unto us directions leading to eternal life. Excuses will not be excepted - "Now is the day of salvation!"

Won't you come and claim your reward this morning? Your soul is much more precious than any amount of money - eternity with God is awaiting you if you will obey Him now!

Invitation

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Richard Thetford, 2006 - based on a sermon by Joe Neil Clayton (A LIKELY STORY, 1996, Dumas, TX)