Obadience

When you are playing and your mother calls you to come help set the table, obeying immediately can be difficult. Delay often comes when we do not believe it is important to respond right away. However, realize that your parents probably have information that you do not. If you knew all the facts, you would understand why your immediate obedience is important. Maybe visitors are arriving soon. Your prompt obedience would enable your family to be prepared to welcome the guests. Perhaps your family is trying to arrive at church on time. Your swift obedience in being ready to go helps meet your parents’ goal of being punctual for church. When you are called by your authority, respond immediately. Obey without hesitation, even when you do not understand the reasons behind the instructions.

The Immediate Response of the Fishermen

Eagerly yielding to God’s Word rather than following my own will
Obedience Overview

What is Obedience?

Read aloud, study, and discuss what obedience means and how it applies to life.

The operational definition of obedience is “eagerly yielding to God’s Word rather than following my own will.” God is our ultimate Authority, and He reveals His will to us through His Word. His way is perfect (Psalm 18:30), so why would we choose any other way? We mistakenly think that our joy is found in getting what pleases us rather than in pursuing what pleases God.

We naturally think that our way is best, but our hearts can lead us astray. Jeremiah 17:9 tells us, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” When we find that God’s Word differs from what we want, we demonstrate faith by choosing God’s way, not ours. What God leads us to do is greater than anything we would naturally choose! “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

The opposite of obedience is willfulness. A willful person stubbornly insists on having his way. He may pout or delay or do a job half-heartedly. He may offer excuses or “better” suggestions rather than simply obeying. He feels he has a right to be his own boss because he “knows best.” The Bible says that rejecting God’s Word is foolish and continuing to resist leads to a disastrous end. (See Matthew 7:26–27; Romans 13:1–2.) Disobedience is sin. The most severe consequence of rebelling against the Lord is the broken fellowship that results. When this happens, repentance and a return to obedience is the key to restoring the relationship.

God has ordained many authorities in our lives: parents, teachers, pastors, employers, governors, and others. These positions of authority should be honored. One of the clear instructions of God’s Word is to honor and obey your parents. (See Ephesians 6:1–3.) Loving parents give safe boundaries and wise instructions so that children are spared from dangers they may not foresee. A mother will call out to her son, “Stop!” if he is about to run into the path of a moving vehicle. If the son obeys immediately, he is saved the pain and possible death that his mother foresaw. A father may warn his daughter to beware of unwise friends. If she heeds his warning, she may be protected from damaging consequences. God specifically chose your parents to be the ones to protect, direct, correct, and care for you. When you trust that God knows best, you will be able to eagerly obey the instructions of those who are responsible for you.
Obedience in Scripture

Read aloud and discuss each verse, question, and concept.

Proverbs 2:1–6 says, “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” What a privilege to study the rich truths of God’s Word, hide them in your heart, and apply them to daily life! These truths are priceless treasures, far above the value and beauty of rubies and diamonds. As you dig deeper into God’s Word, see Who He is, and allow Him to work in you, your life will be a radiant expression of His love. He will be glorified as His character is seen in you.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD

We see God’s worthiness of obedience, Jesus’ example of obedience, and the Holy Spirit’s empowering for obedience in the following ways:

• God’s directions are deserving of obedience because they are perfect, right, pure, true, and righteous. (See Psalm 19:7–9.)

• God is worthy of all respect and reverence. (See Revelation 4:11.)

• All authority is ordained by God. (See Romans 13:1.)

• Jesus purposed to remain under His earthly parents’ authority even though He was eager to begin His ministry. (See Luke 2:49–51.)

• Jesus glorified His Father by completing all He was expected to do. (See John 17:4.)

• The Holy Spirit is our divine Helper as we seek to live according to God’s Word. (See Ezekiel 36:26–27.)

• The Holy Spirit empowers us to carry out Christ’s command that we disciple all nations. (See Acts 1:8.)

OBEDIENCE IN MY LIFE

Now let’s examine some ways God wants us to live out obedience daily.

• What motivates me to read my Bible and memorize Scripture regularly? (See II Timothy 3:16–17.)

• Am I yielding to sin or righteousness? What brings freedom from sin? (See Romans 6:16–18.)

• According to God’s Word, how can I know the way to true prosperity and success? (See Joshua 1:8.)

• Do I obey only when my parents are present, or am I obedient to their wishes and directions when they are absent? (See Philippians 2:12.)

• Besides my parents, who are the authorities God has placed over me? (See I Peter 2:13–14.)

• When I am tempted to disobey, do I rely on God’s strength to choose His will instead? (See I Peter 4:1–2.)

• What is the secret to receiving the grace and power to obey my heavenly Father as well as my earthly authorities? (See I Peter 5:5–7.)

OBEDIENCE KEY VERSE

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” II CORINTHIANS 10:5

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**Bible Story**

**THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OF THE FISHERMEN**

As Jesus began his earthly ministry, He traveled throughout Galilee preaching the Gospel. After being rejected in His hometown of Nazareth, Jesus journeyed north to Capernaum. There Jesus preached with power and authority, casting out unclean spirits and healing the sick. His fame grew and, although people implored Jesus not to depart, He continued traveling from city to city. One morning as Jesus taught near the Sea of Galilee, large crowds gathered, pushing in closer and closer to hear His words. Jesus noticed two fishing vessels which were anchored near the shore. Simon Peter and the other men had been fishing all night in the two boats. Since Simon and the others were fishermen by trade, their livelihood depended on a successful night’s catch. Sadly, the empty nets indicated that the long night’s toil had yielded no fish. As the fishermen were cleaning their fishing nets and preparing to go home, Jesus entered into Simon’s boat and surprised the men with a strange request! Would Simon do as he was asked, or would he explain why Jesus’ instructions made no sense? Would the fishermen act immediately or offer to come back later, after they had rested? What might happen if the weary men responded by promptly obeying Jesus’ unusual instructions?

**BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS**

*Read Luke 5:1–11 together and discuss the following questions:*

1. **Why did Jesus get into Simon’s boat, and what did He ask him to do? Did Simon obey?** *(See Luke 5:3.)*
   - How have your parents asked you to help them today? Did you obey immediately?

   - When was a time that you were asked to do something you did not understand? Did you obey right away?

3. **Did Simon obey instantly, or did he wait until he had rested?** *(See Luke 5:5.)*
   - When your parents give you an instruction, what are some activities that you need to stop doing so that you can obey instantly?

   - Why is it important to obey instantly? How can your obedience affect others in a positive way?

5. **How did Simon react when he saw the huge catch of fish and realized that Jesus’ power was responsible?** *(See Luke 5:8–9.)*
   - When we obey the Word of the Lord, He promises to bless us. How have you seen God bless your obedience? How have you seen Him withhold blessing when you disobeyed?

6. **What did Jesus tell Simon that his new job would be?** *(See Luke 5:10.)*
   - Have you been given the same job as Simon? *(See Matthew 28:19–20.)* In what ways are you learning to be a “fisher of men”?

7. **What was Simon’s immediate response to Jesus after this miraculous event?** *(See Luke 5:11.)*
   - Have you responded to what God has asked you to do? If not, what is keeping you from immediately following Him? *(See John 10:27–28.)*
Memory Verse
II CORINTHIANS 10:5

Play the game together to help the children commit II Corinthians 10:5 to memory. In the section “Doers of the Word,” have the children record how they will apply the verse to their lives.

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

II CORINTHIANS 10:5

MEMORY VERSE GAME

Category Stand-ups

Call out a category. Some examples of categories might be “everyone who is wearing white,” or “everyone who likes cereal,” or “everyone who has a younger brother.” When the category is called, those who fit the description stand up and say the verse together. Continue to play until the verse is memorized and everyone can say the verse without looking at it.

DOERS OF THE WORD

In the blank below, write how this verse could be applied in your life, e.g., “recall a verse when I think thoughts that I shouldn’t,” or “recognize when I am believing a lie,” or “desire to do Your will more than my own.”

“Dear Lord, I yield to You and am willing to apply this verse. Help me to _______________________________.

I ask that You would develop obedience in my life. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

When the Lord gives you an opportunity to apply this verse, write it in your journal to later recall God’s working in your life.
INTRODUCTION

Enjoy meditating on and thinking about the words of the obedience key verse and definition as you fill in the crossword puzzle below. *Italicized* words fit horizontally and *underlined* words fit vertically. One word is already done for you.

**II Corinthians 10:5**

“Casting down *imagination*, and *every high thing* that *exalteth* itself against the *knowledge* of God, and *bringing* into *captivity* *every thought* to the obedience of *Christ*.”

**Obedience**

*Eagerly yielding* to God’s *Word* rather than following *my own will*
Craft
A HEART TO OBEY

INTRODUCTION
During this character study we are asking the Lord to develop obedience in our lives. What a privilege to respond to the work He is doing to change us into the image of His Son! How can you obey cheerfully, immediately, completely, generously, and carefully? Today we are going to talk about the “key” that will unlock these five attitudes of a truly obedient heart.

Supplies:
- Heart, lock, and key templates from page 32
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- 12” ribbon

Instructions
Give each child a copy of the heart, lock, and key templates. Fold the “doors” of the heart closed so that the colored side is on the outside. Tape the lock in the middle of the heart to only one door so that the heart can still open and close. Color and cut them out. Punch a hole in the upper part of the heart and the key and tie them together with ribbon. Have the children write the five attitudes of an obedient heart inside their paper hearts. As the children write the words, explain what each adverb means. Ask the children to give examples of what these obedient responses would look like in their everyday lives.

Cheerfully – Always keep a good attitude.
Immediately – Obey without delay.
Completely – Do all that is expected.
Generously – Do more than is expected.
Carefully – Don’t obey a wrong command.

Suggested symbols that the children may want to draw inside their hearts are as follows: a smiley face for “cheerfully,” a clock for “immediately,” 100% for “completely,” an arrow pointing above and beyond for “generously,” and a Bible for “carefully.”

God knows what is best for you. He is all-knowing, loving, and trustworthy. In His Word God reveals His good and perfect will for you. As you trust God to direct you through your authorities, you can eagerly respond. You will obey cheerfully because you are grateful for God’s direction. You will obey immediately because you want His best now. You will obey completely because your whole heart is in it. You will obey generously because you have adopted your authority’s desire as your own. You will obey carefully because you know that God is the highest Authority! Trusting God will unlock the five heart attitudes of obedience.
“And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake” (Luke 5:5–6).
Hymn History

“Trust and Obey”

Sing “Trust and Obey” and read about a man’s testimony of obedience which inspired the hymn writer, John H. Sammis.

A crowded testimony meeting was part of the revival held by Dwight L. Moody in Brockton, Massachusetts. Suddenly, a young man stood up. Earnestly he confessed, “I am not quite sure, but I am going to trust, and I am going to obey!” The simple words of faith struck the soul of songleader Pastor Daniel Towner. Quickly he jotted down the sentence. Afterward, Pastor Towner wrote a letter to his friend, Pastor John H. Sammis, giving a quick report of the young man’s testimony and the stirring words he had said.

As soon as Pastor Sammis read his friend’s letter, he realized the testimony was perfect for a hymn. First came the refrain:

*Trust and obey for there’s no other way  
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

Following the refrain, the verses quickly came. Pastor Sammis’ hymn expounded on trust and obedience:

*Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet,  
Or we’ll walk by His side in the way;  
What He says we will do, where He sends we will go  
Never fear, only trust and obey.*

Completed, Pastor Sammis mailed the song to Pastor Towner. Pastor Towner soon composed the melody, and “Trust and Obey” became a hymn that would inspire and exhort millions of Christians through the years.

Pastor Sammis lived from 1846–1919. He was born in New York, and at age 23 moved to Indiana. He became a successful businessman and was an active Christian layman. Pastor Sammis felt the call to full-time ministry. He graduated from seminary in 1881 at the age of 35, and afterward pastored churches throughout the Midwest. Later, Pastor Sammis served as a professor at Los Angeles Bible Institute until his death in 1919.

His friend, Pastor Towner, joyfully led music at many of Dwight L. Moody’s revival meetings. In 1893, Pastor Towner became the first director of the Moody Bible Institute Music Department. In his lifetime, he composed over 2,000 hymns. He was leading singing in a revival when suddenly, without warning, Pastor Towner passed from this life into eternity. Both he and his friend, Pastor Sammis, were still in ministry when God called them Home.

The hymn reminds us that obedience is the outflow of our trust in God. As we trust Him, we can more readily obey Him. Satan may tempt us to think negatively about obeying our authorities. He may whisper, “If you obey God, you’ll have to stop doing what makes you happy.” However, the truth about obedience is the joyful fruit it yields. Indeed:

*But we never can prove the delights of His love  
Until all on the altar we lay;  
For the favor He shows and the joy He bestows,  
Are for them who will trust and obey.*
Hymn Sheet Music

Trust and Obey

John H. Sammis (1846–1919)
Daniel B. Towner (1850–1919)

When we walk with the Lord In the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
When we do His good will He abides with us still,
While we do His good will He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.

Not a shadow can rise, Not a cloud in the skies,
Not a doubt nor a fear, Not a sigh nor a tear,
Not a doubt nor a fear, Not a sigh nor a tear,
Not a doubt nor a fear, Not a sigh nor a tear,
Can a bide while we trust and obey.

But we never can prove
Not a burden we bear,
Not a sorrow we share,
Not a burden we bear,
But is blest if we trust and obey.

And the joy He bestows
For the favor He shows
And the joy He bestows
For the favor He shows
Are for them who will trust and obey.

What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
Trust and obey For there's no other way.

In fellowship sweet
We will sit at His feet, Or we'll walk by His side in the way;
In fellowship sweet
We will sit at His feet, Or we'll walk by His side in the way;
Trust and obey For there's no other way.

He will a bide with us, still,
He will a bide with us, still,
He will a bide with us, still,
He will a bide with us, still,
Can a bide while we trust and obey.

And the joy He bestows
And the joy He bestows
And the joy He bestows
And the joy He bestows
Are for them who will trust and obey.

What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
What He says we will do, Where He sends we will go
Trust and obey For there's no other way.

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Word Search Answer Key

TH I N G
D
F O L L O W I N G
N
K N O W L E D G E
Y
A
C A P T I V I T Y
E
I
G
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C A S T I N G
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D
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N
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E A G E R L Y
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Recommended Resources

- 2018 Biblical Character Illustrated Calendar
- Hymns for the Family CDs
  (“Trust and Obey” is sung to piano accompaniment on Volume 3.)
- The Power for True Success
- Character Cards
- Character Cards Memory Game
- Character Sketches, Volumes 1–3
- Achieving True Success
- How to Make an Appeal
- Absolute Surrender
  by Andrew Murray
- Children’s songs: A Collection of Children’s Institute Classics (CD)
- “The Rewards of Honoring Your Parents” (Message by Jon Ainbinder, available at embassymedia.com.)

To view these resources and many more, visit us at: store.iblp.org

Hymn History Bibliography

