

Wellspring – Life & Teaching of Jesus
(40) Sermon on the Mount – Your kingdom come (Obedience) (Matt 6:10)

“Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matt 6:10)

What is the kingdom?

Last time we saw that the kingdom of God is, quite simple, the rule and reign of God. When we pray “Your kingdom come” we are praying for the visible manifestation of God’s rule and reign here on the earth – his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. We saw that much popular end-time theology has robbed the church of any sense of expectation that this prayer will be answered in the here and now, and relegated it to a future age – one of the greatest deceptions of Satan within the church of our day.

We then saw that living in the kingdom requires a radical change of mind (repentance) and a baptism in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. This change of mind produces a change of lifestyle – and the key to this process of change is a radical commitment to obey the word of God.

Obedience is the currency of the Kingdom

The kingdom of God is expressed through God’s will being done here on earth, as it is in heaven – **starting in my life!** Obedience is the currency of the kingdom.

The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith. The two are opposite sides of the same coin. (A.W. Tozer)

Obedience to God’s word positions us to be blessed by God (*Luke 11:28*). Disobedience on the other hand removes the divine protection from our lives and opens us up to the attack of the evil one.

The cost of obedience is nothing compared with the cost of disobedience. - Anon

In Deut 28 this contrast is laid out very clearly:

Blessings of obedience (Deut 28:1-14)	Curses of disobedience (Deut 28:15-68)
God will exalt you	You will serve your enemies
Blessed in town and country – community	Cursed in both town and country
Many children, productive fields & livestock	Few children, barren fields, infertile livestock
An abundance of fruit and grain and every good thing	You will be left hungry, thirsty, naked, and lacking in everything.
Blessed with good health (<i>Exod 15:26</i>)	Afflicted with all kinds of sickness and disease.
Blessed when you go out and when you come in	Cursed when you go out and when you come in
You will conquer your enemies – they will come from one direction and scatter in seven!	You will be defeated by your enemies – you will attack in one direction and scatter in seven!
God will bless everything you do	You will plant much but harvest little
You will be a lender, not a borrower – the head and not the tail	You will borrow, not lend – the tail and not the head
Established as God’s holy people	An object of horror in the earth!

Jesus lived his life in complete obedience to the Father, and so lived in the full protection of the Kingdom of God – totally impervious to the attacks of the evil one. We can live exactly the same way – provided we learn to obey the Father just like Him.

Saul – the consequences of failing to obey

In 1 Samuel we see that the people of Israel are crying out for a king “*like the nations around them*” (8v5). On the face of it their request seems a reasonable one – Samuel is getting old and his sons are wicked men who have not followed in their father’s ways. Who is going to succeed Samuel as leader? But God is not pleased – he says that they have not rejected Samuel but Him. So God “gives in” to their cry and says they can have a king (8v22). In fact He gives them exactly what they want and selects Saul – a man who is “*head and shoulders*” above his peers (9v2) – a man who fits the criteria in a human way, but not God’s choice. So Samuel anoints Saul as king (10:1) and immediately Saul fails to obey the instructions God gives him through the prophet.

Firstly in 1 Sam 12 he fails to wait for Samuel to come as instructed and goes ahead and offers the a sacrifice to God, motivated by fear of the Philistine army (See 1 Sam 12-13). This was clearly a test of heart, which Saul fails. He rejects God’s instructions and does his own thing – and from the very start his kingdom is already doomed.

“You acted foolishly,” Samuel said. “You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the Lord’s command.” (1 Sam 13:11-14)

This soon becomes a repeating pattern. In 1 Sam 15 God instructs Saul to fight against and totally destroy Agag king of the Amalekites and all his people and livestock. Saul wins the battle but fails to kill Agag and keeps the best of his livestock (1 Sam 15:9). When confronted by Samuel, Saul immediately tries to justify himself.

*“But I did obey the Lord,” Saul said. “I went on the mission the Lord assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king. The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the Lord your God at Gilgal.” But Samuel replied: “Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? **To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.**” (1 Sam 15:20-23)*

He is already falling into the deception of the evil one. God looks for obedience, not sacrifice.

Lessons of obedience

Any substitute for full obedience is a waste of time. You can do all kinds of religious stuff, and bring God your idea of an offering – but all He is ultimately interested in is the obedience of your heart.

Disobeying His voice will prevent you from hearing it again. If you are having difficulty hearing the voice of the Lord, it probably means you haven’t obeyed what he told you do when you were hearing his voice!

If you ask God to show you any areas of disobedience, He will. Repent and call on His grace.

In the New Testament, every command is a promise! Every command of God come fully resourced with the power of the Holy Spirit to help you to obey it. You can receive this by faith.

Friendship and intimacy with God flows from the obedience of your heart.

You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. (John 15:14-15)

Even Jesus had to “learn obedience” through his sufferings (See Heb 5:8) He always passed the test first time. We too never fail God’s tests – if we don’t learn obedience the first time, we get to take the test again!