

ST. SIMEON ANGLICAN CHURCH, OFF FUTA ROAD, AKURE

BIBLE STUDY, 03/06/2009

STUDY 10

EVANGELICAL OBEDIENCE

Psalm 103:20

Evangelical obedience is obviously the opposite of *legal*, and that is of two sorts. First, the flawless and constant conformity unto His revealed will which God required from Adam and all who are under the covenant of works; for though man has lost his power to perform, God has not relinquished His right to insist upon what is His just due. Second, the obedience of unregenerate formalists, which is unacceptable unto God, not only because it is full of defects, but because it issues from a natural principle, is not done in faith, and is rendered in a mercenary spirit, and therefore consists of "*dead works*". Evangelical is also to be distinguished from *imputed* obedience. It is blessedly true that when they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, God reckons to the account of all the subjects of covenant of grace the perfect obedience of their Surety, so that He pronounces them justified, or possessed of that righteousness which the Law requires. Yet *that* is not the only obedience which characterises the redeemed. They now *personally* regulate their lives by God's commands and walk in the way of His precepts; and though their performances have many blemishes in them, yet God is pleased for Christ's sake to accept the same. The character and conduct of a saint are so clearly and fully delineated in Psalm 119 and the conscientious Christian should frequently compare himself with it. All through that Psalm we find holy resolution and earnest endeavour side by side with conscious weakness and frailty but dependence upon God (Psalm 119:4, 5, 8, 10, 32, 159, 173).

Questions for discussion

1. Using various scriptures verses, show that God requires a perfect obedience from all rational creatures and that under no circumstances will He lower His demand.
2. Can love and obedience towards God be separated? John 14:15; 14:21; I John 5:3; Romans 13:10
3. Examine and demonstrate from various scriptures, God gracious promises to work obedience in us ó Ezekiel 36:27; 37:24; Hebrews 8:10; Psalm 40:8
4. Many statements in the scriptures concerning God's saint show that God receives the hearty yet imperfect endeavours of His people. Point out and discuss some of these statements.
5. Why will sincere obedience to God necessarily presuppose regeneration?
6. How will I determine whether my obedience is really sincere and acceptable to God? ó Proverbs 8:13; 3:1; Psalm 119:104,128, 106, 112; John 7:18; Philippians 3:12-14

Conclusion

Sincere obedience consists not of a sinless conformity to God's will, but of genuine desires and proportionate efforts after it. It comprises two parts: the mortification of our corrupt affections and the vivification of our graces, so that we increase in strength and make further advances in true piety. So also has it two adjuncts or attendants: repentance for past sins, and the exercise of faith for present grace. Failures are reflected upon with hatred and shame, are confessed to God with sorrow and contrition, earnestly resolving and endeavoring to abstain from any further repetition of them. Faith looks to the merits of Christ, pleads the virtues of His blood, rests upon His intercession for us in heaven, lays hold of the promises, and counts upon God's acceptance of our imperfect obedience for His Son's sake, knowing that it deserves not His approbation, and is

rewarded (Psalm 19:11) not as a matter of debt, but of pure grace. Then let none conclude that they have no grace because there are so many imperfections in their obedience: a child may be weak and sickly, yet a legitimate one! Renew your repentance daily, rely wholly on the mediation of Christ, and draw upon His fullness.