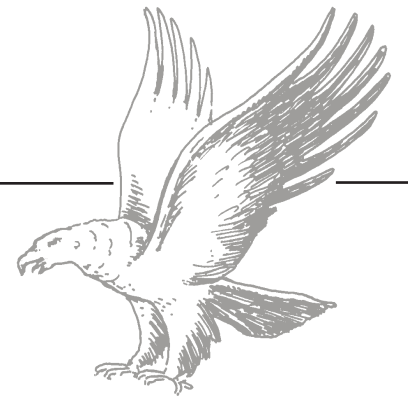


Wings

*"Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles."
Isaiah 40:31*



December 17, 2017

Why You Should Obey the Gospel

The gospel is something to be obeyed, not just believed. But it is important that we have a clear understanding of why we are obeying it.

*"... 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 Thess. 1:8).*

*"For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not **obey the gospel of God**?" (1 Pet. 4:17).*



Both of these passages foretell the doom that will come upon those who do not obey the gospel. We might conclude, therefore, that the primary reason we ought to obey the gospel is to avoid going to hell. But that misses the larger picture of what the gospel is about.

The Greek word translated *gospel* means "good news." It is a message of hope delivered to a race of creatures who are up to their eyeballs in bad news. We all have made a mess of our lives by our sins, but God has sacrificed His own Son as a payment for those sins, and raised Him from the dead as a preview of our own victory over death someday. Of course, how this good news affects our lives depends on how we receive it.

If we dismiss it as an ancient fairy tale unworthy of our attention, it will have no power in our lives. That's why the New Testament describes the gospel as something that must first be *believed* (Rom. 1:16; Ac. 15:7; Eph. 1:13).

But the gospel is more than just an academic proposition to be accepted. It also calls for a change of life in the one who accepts it. That's why these two verses describe the gospel as something that must be *obeyed*. Obedience implies a set of instructions or commands. This good news, in other words, not only gives us release from our past mistakes, it also offers guidance on how we ought to live our lives going forward.

This obedience is not a *quid pro quo* arrangement by which God delivers the goods in return for services rendered. It is the response of a grateful heart to an undeserved gift that can never be repaid. The gospel is good news precisely because of its incredible origin—a loving God expended great cost to offer us a salvation we do not deserve and could never achieve on our own. Obedience to this offer is not a deal or a chore; it is a

privilege that we will gladly take on, if we really grasp the value of the gift.

So the gospel is a complete package of instruction connecting us to a source of power that heals our past and brightens our future. But it provides these benefits *only if we obey it*.

That obedience begins at baptism, when we make a symbolic display of our surrender to the rule of Jesus Christ in our life. By being immersed in water we are washing away the past and entering a new relationship with a Savior who loves us beyond anything we could imagine. The obedience then extends to every decision we make through the rest of our days. Our whole life becomes a living demonstration of the power of God's love to transform a selfish human being into an instrument of His mercy.

Why should you obey the gospel? The more appropriate question is: Why would you not? Your life will be over soon, and then what? The gospel gives you a perspective on life that extends beyond the grave into eternity. Believe it, obey it, and let God accomplish something amazing with your life.

— David King



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