

The Glory of Christ's Obedience

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[0:00] Philippians 2, and we'll be reading verses 1-13 tonight. If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in Spirit and purpose.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

[1:38] For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose. tonight we're turning our attention to those words in Philippians 2, where it says, and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient.

We're going to save to death until next week, but He humbled Himself and became obedient. Christian, I have a question for you.

Whose obedience is more important in your life and your thinking? Your obedience or Jesus' obedience? What do you spend more time thinking about?

What you need to do or what Jesus has done? Don't get me wrong, I don't think those things are mutually exclusive or opposite. I'm talking about relative importance, relative weight in your mind. When our minds are full of what we need to do, but empty of what Jesus has done, when we're thinking about what we need to do, but we're not thinking very much about what Jesus has done, it inevitably has a result in our spiritual lives, in our own hearts.

[3:04] The whole life becomes sick and weak and anemic because you were never meant, Christian, you were never meant to live and to think of yourself apart from Jesus Christ.

You were never meant to dwell more on you than on Him, even on the good things that God calls you to do. Jesus was in Bethany, and He was at the house of those two dear Christian sisters, Martha and Mary, and Martha was busy, so very busy for the Lord.

She was doing good things. She was thinking about what she needed to do, and she was thinking, I've got to go, go, go. And you remember how she became, as she was consumed with the tasks that she had to do, as soon as she became upset and irate, because Mary wouldn't get up and help her.

Mary chose to focus on Jesus. She wasn't thinking, I've got to go, go, go. She was thinking, I need to stay and look at Him and be with Him.

And Jesus said, Mary chose what is better, and it will not be taken from her. Jesus comes first. His obedience comes before my obedience, and His obedience is glorious.

[4:28] His obedience needs to be the earth that our moon of obedience revolves around, that goes around. Is there a place for my obedience? Yes. Yes, yes, yes.

A hundred times yes. But we need to have the order right. His obedience is first. We need to see and live in the glory of Christ's obedience. And out of a sense of His glory, we then obey. We're going to see that a little bit later. Well, you might ask, why do we need, we're in the series of looking at the glory of Christ, and so we come to this place of looking at His obedient life. Well, why do we need to do that? Well, the glory of Christ's obedience is the only thing that's going to keep you from trusting in your own obedience.

The scene of the glory of Christ and His obedience, His law keeping His sinless life, is the first step in believing the gospel. We first embrace Jesus Christ as our righteousness.

[5:34] And only faith in Christ's obedience can dislodge faith in my obedience. So many people know they are guilty. Many people know they need a Savior.

But less people believe and give themselves to Jesus Christ. What happens? What do people do when they first see their sin and their guilt?

Well, they soon start to put their faith in their own obedience. They start thinking about what I need to do to be right, make myself right with God.

They put their faith in their own obedience. It's not until the Spirit of God does a supernatural work in their lives and in their minds upon their eyes that they see the glory of Christ's obedience.

And then they realize, I don't need to obey in order to be saved because His obedience is full enough. There's nothing lacking there.

[6:30] If I need righteousness, He has all that I need. And when I know how glorious He is, I trust Him. You trust someone who is trustworthy, who has what you need and is willing to give it.

And so I quit trusting me and I start trusting Him. And so you need to see the glory of Christ's obedience because it's the only way anyone could ever be saved.

To turn away from your own righteousness and turn to His. Well, I need to see the glory of Christ's obedience because it's the only thing that will save me from despair at the end of a bad day.

So you've had bad days. I've had bad days. There's days where you felt distant from God and instead of coming to Him right away, instead of getting right with Him right away, you've distracted yourself with other things.

You've gone to entertainment, you've gone to work, you've gone to people, and you've just gone from one thing to the next and at the end of the day, you lay your head on your pillow and you feel miserable.

[7:45] Because the whole day, you've gone, putting off God, putting off Jesus, you've sinned against Him. And then I can turn my mind to Christ's obedience.

And I see it in all of its glory, all of its sufficiency, all of its fullness, abounding fullness, and trusting in that righteousness. I then can turn to my Father and say, Father, forgive me for I've sinned.

See, there is still a relationship to heal. Our sin is not without any repercussions. There is this relationship to heal. But I'm a son. I'm a daughter of the King.

I'm not a slave coming to His master. Jesus obeyed and His obedience has won me this place of being in the family of God.

And so at the end of the day, I can warm myself and bring comfort to myself because I am united to Jesus Christ and His righteousness. And so I don't despair because I can come with hope even out of my sin.

[8:50] to my Father because of what Jesus has done. That's why you need to see and dwell upon and have the glory of Christ's obedience weigh heavily upon your heart because it's that sense and that feeling and knowing it that will move you to come and confess and repent.

Well, there's more that we could say, but you can see this isn't merely academic. This isn't merely out there. This is our life. This is our joy and our strength.

This is what it means to live like a branch in the vine, like a limb on the tree. We're taking, we're sucking the overflowing glory of Christ and His life into our lives and making it and calling it and claiming it as our own.

It's in His glory and His grandeur and His goodness and His overflowing sufficiency that you live, Christian. So these things aren't merely academic.

These things are important to us and to our well-being as Christians. So let's look at this glory of Christ. Let's look at His obedience. We see it in three ways.

[10:04] We see it first in that His obedience was voluntary. Second, we see that it was for us and third, it was not easy. So first we're going to see His obedience was voluntary.

Now, we've been looking at Philippians 2 and we look again at it in this passage and in verse 8 it says, And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself.

He humbled himself. It doesn't say he was humbled. No one humbled him. He humbled himself. He bent down.

No one pushed him down to this place of becoming obedient even unto death. This obedience was voluntary. He did it willingly. He did it without coercion.

It was only his heart that called him and coerced him to obey. And there's something glorious when someone does something voluntarily without coercion but gladly serves.

[11:06] So it was Tuesday. It was a Tuesday morning and Charles Costello was at his normal job at Thyssen Krupp Elevator Company.

There was nothing unusual about that morning and when he got up and what he did. He was at the Mercer Hotel in Manhattan working on the elevators.

But of course it wasn't a normal Tuesday afternoon. It was September 11th, 2001. And so Charles was 20 blocks away from ground zero when he heard that a plane had struck the World Trade Center and he dropped what he was doing and he started to run those 20 blocks to the World Trade Center.

His company did not maintain the elevators in the towers. He had no responsibility there. But even before the second plane struck the South Tower he knew that his services were needed.

If a building is in that kind of condition the elevators are going to be in trouble and they're going to need someone that can work on elevators and so he was going. And so what he was doing at this luxury hotel would wait.

[12:26] Well, 15 minutes later after he entered the site after he entered the first tower the second tower was struck. So he worked with fire crews and he worked with policemen to get people out of the elevators.

He knew how to fix them. He knew how to open them. He knew how to get them going when no one else had a clue. 59 minutes later after he arrived on the site the towers began to collapse.

One and then the other. And that was September. They didn't find his remains until the next year.

Charles didn't have to be there. No one told him to go. He wasn't responsible to go. No one expected him to go. But when most people were running one way he was running the other.

And what of our Savior? He was God. He was the Son of God. He was not under law. He was not obliged to obey it.

[13:39] He didn't need to expose himself to it. He didn't need to bring himself under it. He didn't need to come under the law. But here we were ruined. Here we were wrecks.

We had wrecked our ships on the rocks of our own disobedience. We were obliged to obey and yet we wouldn't. We couldn't. We didn't.

But look at Jesus. When everyone else is running away from obedience he runs to it. And he put his neck under the yoke and he saw us with no righteousness with nothing but filthy rags on nothing to stand before the judgment of God and we were running from obedience and he was running to it and he embraced it and his own loving heart compelled him.

He loved us and he was willing to do whatever. He loved us and he said whatever you say I will do. Upon his incarnation Hebrews says then I said here am I it is written about me in the scroll I have come to do your will oh God so do you hear him who will obey who will obey for these people who will sanctify my people who will make up for all their failure and all of their disobedience and he says here I am I have come to do your will oh!

God so he was a horse charging into battle the trumpet sounded and we we shied away from it every one of us shied away from obedience we flee the battle we we flee from the struggle but Jesus charged into battle the trumpet blares and he runs and he's a farmer and he puts his weight behind the plow we've given up plowing and he picks up the plow and he pulls it and pushes it forward he saw the pack on our back he saw us stumbling in the pack on the side there we were on the trail of life with the obedience that we owe to God and he lifted it from us and carried it for us he says this is my food to do the will of him who sent me this is my food he thought about that he said this is my life but we don't eat just to live we eat to give ourselves comfort

[16:22] Jesus obeyed to give himself comfort I go from strength to strength doing what he wills I go to the next thing because my heart is eager to embrace it this fills me with comfort this fills me with health this is my food was he compelled was he forced only by his own heart his own heart spurring him forward to obey isn't our Jesus glorious here we are all of our failure all of our lack of

joy lack of obedience and Jesus steps in and his obedience is voluntary now our second point his obedience was for us and this is where the sweetness is if it was just out there if he was just doing it and it didn't have anything to do with us and there would be no comfort there there would be no glory there but the glory is he was doing it for us so so it wasn't for him he laid aside the dignity of being

God I didn't say laid aside being God he laid the dignity of being God aside he laid aside all consideration all privileges all advantages that he had from being God enjoying that and he humbled himself and became obedient and obedient to death and isn't that the point of this passage isn't that the point of Philippians 2 look at verse 3 look at verse 3 do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but in humility consider others better than yourselves each of you should look not only to your own interest but also to the interest of others your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus why was Jesus becoming obedient even to death well it was for our good it was for our interest it was for our advantage he looked to our interests and Christian isn't that a glory that he would even notice you and yet he does more than that he says what good can I do for them the son of God looked to your interest he looked to your needs so apply this to yourself personally feel the weight of it and humble yourself underneath it what were you what was I a ruined sinner we saw it this morning we were alive but dead we're the living dead a disobedient servant a disloyal subject and are you perfect now hardly not on the dead we say who can measure the depth of my sin and what did Jesus do for you he humbled himself and became obedient he made up for all your failure he didn't need the righteousness he had no need of this he was the law giver and the judge he condemned angels to everlasting darkness and to chains he was the law he had no reason to obey like that for the law comes from him the law is what creatures owe him because he is

God he is judge he is not to be judged but yet here he is what humility he's born under the law he came under the law he came under the judgment of the law now he's exposed to it and now he must perform in order to be declared righteous God must perform in order to be declared righteous and he must perform in order to be righteous and we ask why Jesus why this humility why this humbling yourself and he says for you I'm looking after your interest for your good for your justification what do I mean by justification justification is God declaring us righteous in his sight his it's him saying you are righteous in my sight and the only way anyone can stand in God sight can be accepted can be reconciled the only way anyone will ever go to heaven is if they have experienced justification experience God declaring them righteous And so this is why Jesus obeyed.

[21:30] Because as we came into his presence, we had nothing to offer. We had nothing to say for ourselves. And yet he obeyed and it was never for him. It was never about him.

He didn't need it. It was for you and it was for all who would believe. So do you see the glory of it? Do you see the practicality of it?

This is my defense against doubts. So when Satan comes tempting me to despair, upward I look and I see him there. This is my defense against morbid introspection.

This is my defense against constantly scraping in the insides of me, constantly going over, have I done enough? Is he pleased with me? I don't know what I need to do, what more I need to do. I don't have what it takes. Let me tell you, there is a place for self-examination in the Christian life. Absolutely, a place in the Bible for self-examination.

[22:29] But biblical self-examination is always done with an eye on Christ. It's always done in faith and with confidence in God's grace. This morbid introspection I'm speaking about, though, is self-centered.

It loses sight of Jesus. And it looks only at our weaknesses and our failings and our inabilities. It's done in fear. It's done in doubt. It's done in unbelief. For every look at me needs to be ten looks at Jesus.

So what can get me from brooding on myself? It's this righteousness. It's looking at his life and saying, he lived that in my place.

The life I didn't live, he lived for me. Disobedience is for me. Do I fail? He didn't. Do I forget? He didn't. Do I doubt? He never did. Do I grow sleepy and careless?

Shame on me. But he never did. He obeyed for me. And this is my motivation to obey. This is my motivation to obey.

[23:39] Has the grace of God, has the grace of Jesus Christ and the glory of Jesus stolen your heart? If it is, then this is the motivation to obey. Why should I care about obeying God's law?

Why should I be careful about being earnest in obedience and getting to it and being active and thinking about how I can obey more and being persevering in it?

Why should I be eager to please the Father in everything? Because Jesus did it for me. These are the this is the path that he walked. This is the road he traveled. He didn't do that.

So I could just say, well, he did it for me. I don't need to do it now. He obeyed. So I don't need to.

What's it matter? Brothers and sisters, don't you want to be like Jesus?

Don't you want to be like Jesus? You want to be like the one you love. If you really love them and you realize how much they love you, you want to be like them.

[24:43] Love imitates the beloved. So the shepherd led the way. And with all their hearts, the sheep should say, I want to follow. Jesus was careful to obey God's commands.

I want to be careful to obey God's commands. Call this perfect. For you to mind. For you to mind. Next time you have no zeal.

Next time you you see something that you should do and you don't feel like doing it. You feel lethargic. You feel a lack of concern. Call this obedience to mind.

Let Jesus obedience for you warm you to obedience of your own. Call this obedience his perfect purity to mind. Next time you're tempted to impurity. Call this perfect patience to mind when you're tempted to impatience.

He obeyed God's law to save us. Let's obey God's law to please him. To be like him. To say, Lord, I can do nothing to save myself, but here is what I offer.

[25:49] This is the road that you walked. And your very footsteps are precious to me. I want to walk in your in your footsteps. Your ways are my delight. His obedience was for you.

That should warm your heart to obedience of your own. It should encourage you when you are doubting. This brings us to our last point. You see the glory of Christ's obedience and that it was not easy.

His obedience was not easy. The glory of something can be measured by how hard and how difficult it is to accomplish it.

So the climbers, they suffer freezing temperatures and altitude sickness and sheer cliffs and ice and snow and 70 mile per hour winds.

But yet when they reach the top of Everest, there is glory there in accomplishing it. You could walk just as far into a flat plain and there's no glory.

[26:51] But when you weather ice and storms and wind, then there's glory. I heard of a race this past week called the Race Across America. It's a bicycle race beginning in San Diego and ending in Baltimore.

So west coast to east coast. And to finish this race, a single racer must finish in less than 12 days. To finish in that time realistically, the maximum amount of time that you can spend off of your bicycle in any given day is four hours.

Four hours to sleep, four hours to eat, four hours to rest, four hours to repair. And most of the time, it has to be less than that. And you ride through deserts and you ride over mountain ranges and you ride miles and miles of flat land.

And guess what? They don't stop traffic for you. You have to obey every single red light. And there's semis going by you the whole time.

[27:57] And it's relentless. Night and day in any kind of weather. But to the winter gets the glory. And people see them pulling into Baltimore.

And they wonder at what these people have accomplished. Our Lord's obedience was not for 12 days. It was for 33 years.

33 years of relentless perfection. A moment by moment obedience. A moment by moment loving God with all of his heart.

All of his soul and mind and strength. Every minute of his life. 33 years of constant temptations. Hour after hour.

Minute after minute without sin. Can you even imagine it? And what deserts and what mountains did he face? What did he face?

[29:03] Jesus didn't come to the Garden of Eden. He didn't come to the Garden of Eden. The second man didn't have it so easy as the first man. He didn't come to the Garden but a desert.

He wasn't tested when he had lots of food and trees all around. When he was hungry, Satan came to him. He wasn't surrounded by tame creation and a beautiful garden.

He was in a wilderness. And with wild animals, it says. Sinclair Ferguson said, Jesus had to hack his way through the jungle which our sin had created in order to grow in his obedience to his Father in Heaven.

He faced the devil. Heard about him this morning. None other than the arch demon himself came to deal with this man.

And even after the special time of temptation in the wilderness, Satan left him for a more opportune time. I don't know when that came, but it came often enough, I'm sure.

[30:09] Satan, the wisest and the strongest tempter of all, He who tripped up the first Adam gave himself wholeheartedly to tripping up the second Adam.

Can you imagine? We heard about that hit man this morning. Can you imagine? Satan had you in his crosshairs every day.

And not just other demons, but the head, the leader. Satan is a spirit who needs no rest.

He's a spirit who at this time when Jesus came had gained thousands of years of experience at tripping up men. Jesus was a man who needed rest. And Jesus was a young man.

Even though he was the son of God, but to his human nature, he was young, younger than many of you. And our young Lord won through.

[31:12] All eyes were bent and looking who would win. As the contestants entered the arena. Satan, that ancient serpent. So old and so powerful and so cunning.

And yet our Lord dodged every dart. He overcame every argument. Men opposed him. Religious men opposed him.

His own disciples argued with him. His own family didn't understand him. At one time or another, all of them, even his closest friends, stood in the way of his obedience.

His closest friends. In Satan's hands. And his own weakness. His own humanity.

Think about your own humanity. Don't you find it so much easier to sin when you're tired? And you're hungry? And you're sick? Well, he was a human just like us.

[32:18] And there was the constant demands of the ministry upon him. People. People. People. All the time. People always pressing.

Always asking. Silly people. Silly people with foolish ideas. Dirty people. Foolish, selfish people. People always wanting more from him.

Can Jesus relate to you? Mothers, can Jesus relate to you? Hebrews says, though he was the son. Though he was a son. He learned obedience by what he suffered. Being the son didn't spare him the difficulty. God the father didn't pave a special road for him.

He was no exception. No, though he was the son. He learned obedience by what he suffered. He didn't learn how to obey. He didn't learn what to obey.

[33:18] He learned the experience of obeying. He learned the pain that comes from denying your flesh. He learned the pain, the gut-wrenching agony of seeing things that you love taken away from you.

And we're going to see it next week. But that obedience came to its zenith in the garden. Would he obey even when the word from the father was, now go die for your people?

Go die for them. Would he obey even when it meant losing the father? Losing the father's fellowship and nearness to God.

That's what real death is. Tearing, being torn away from God, living apart from God. Would he obey then? And this is our hero.

This is our hero. This is the one our soul glories in. No matter the cost. No matter the command. No matter who faced him. No matter who was against him. No matter the difficulty.

[34:29] He obeyed. And he obeyed for us. And he obeyed with all of his heart. And he obeyed with all of his love. And he obeyed with joy. Was it hard? Yes.

But for the joy set before him, he endured. He endured the cross. The joy of winning you. The joy of saving you. He endured. He overcame every difficulty to bring glory to God and to save your soul.

And so I wonder, and maybe you wonder. Maybe you wonder. Can Jesus save me? I'm so bad.

I am so wicked. How could he ever save me? Charles Spurgeon was a young teenager. And he asked those very questions.

And he thought those very thoughts. The mercy of God's for other people. Can't be for me. I'm too evil for that. But I say he's done all that needs to be done.

[35 : 34] He humbled himself. And he became obedient to death. So don't look to yourself. There's no hope there. Give yourself to Jesus.

Because he's a mighty savior. He humbled himself. And he hacked his way through the jungle. For the lost sons of men. To pull them out.

To save them. And he'll have you. If you will entrust yourself. To him. There's nothing for you to do. But look. And lean.

He's done it all. So the response is. Humble faith. He will save you. Let's pray. Oh Lord Jesus.

The words of men. My words can no way. Spell out your glory. And your grace.

[36 : 34] And your kindness. To us. So I pray. Spirit of God. Come upon us. And teach us the ways of God. Teach us the love.

Of God. Teach us to fear him. And to see our sin. And to run away from it. And to hate it. To put doubt behind us. And to embrace Jesus Christ.

As our Lord. And our Savior. Father. Father. I pray that you would win for yourself. Glory. Today. From those who are broken hearted.

Win. Glory. As you gently. Encourage them. For those who are. Stubborn in their sin. And in their disobedience.

Win. Glory for yourself. And. Breaking them down. And humbling them. And showing them. Their need. For you. Lord.

[37 : 30] Win for yourself. Glory. Out of our own hearts. As we. Trust you. And obey. Through this coming week. I pray that the. The words.

And the gospel. Would ring loud. And clear. In our minds. Hour after hour. This coming week. That we would not. Walk away. From the gospel.

Think that it's over. And we've heard. And. And yet. Not dwell on it. May the words of Christ. Dwell in us. Richly this week. And may we encourage.

One another. With these things. I pray this all. For Jesus sake. In his name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.