



✦ THE BASICS OF CHRISTIANITY | PART 9

BIBLE STUDY SPONSORS

Knowing Jesus: Obedience



"The Disciples of Jesus Baptize," James Tissot, Brooklyn Museum

This week in our ongoing series on *Knowing Jesus*, we will begin the topic: *Obedience to Christ*, which I believe you will find to be a good study to promote soul-searching. Read on my friends!

Ralph Drollinger

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

CABINET: 7:00 AM Wednesdays, location undisclosed, refreshments served.

SENATE: 8:00 AM Tuesdays, rotating offices, hot breakfast served.

HOUSE: 7:45 AM Thursdays, The Capitol Hill Club, hot breakfast served.

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★ ENDORSEMENT

Stephanie Borowicz

Pennsylvania State Representative



Pennsylvania State Representative Stephanie Borowicz who helped establish the new legislative ministry in her state is “on fire for the Lord and unafraid and unabashed to speak about her faith,” said Jon Cassel, Capitol Ministries Africa Director.

On an extended visit to his home state of PA, Cassel was tapped by Ralph Drollinger, president of Capitol Ministries, to organize and birth the new PA ministry because of his tremendous success establishing ministries in Africa.

Until Rep. Borowicz worked with Cassel, she was unaware of Capitol Ministries and its mission to create disciples of Jesus Christ in the political arena.

“The mission of Capitol Ministries is exactly what we need,” Rep. Borowicz said. “We need to get back to teaching the Bible word by word, line by line, and regularly reading the Bible and letting the Holy Spirit speak to us through God’s Word.”

Also a pastor’s wife, Rep. Borowicz is married to Jason Borowicz, associate pastor of

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I. THE SEEDBED OF OBEDIENCE

Obedience is more than following a set of rules. It is the expected response of a Christian to his or her Lord. In large part, a believer’s willingness to be obedient to his Lord has much to do with how he came to Christ: What he was sold. Did you come to Christ only with the expectation of being saved? Or did you come to Christ being at the end of self? Note that in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus begins His “Four Spiritual Laws” presentation (a very popular gospel tract at the end of the 20th Century) not with “I love you and offer a wonderful plan for your life,” but rather by first addressing the inner attitude of the recipient. Why do you think this is? The former presentation could easily lead to someone coming to Christ with improper motives. Whereas Jesus said in Matthew 5:3 *“Blessed are the poor in spirit”* And in 5:4, *“Blessed are those who mourn”* These passages address the inner being of the recipient: Jesus is saying that it is only someone who is tired and broken over their proclivity to sin, and who wants desperately to exchange his life for His life that is *“blessed.”* In this continuing sense, later in 5:6 He says, *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness”* It follows that those who are tired of their sin will be in want of God’s righteousness. 1 Peter 1:14–15 captures this same idea and its twin sister: the internal compunction to be obedient to Him:

“As obedient children ... like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior.”

Show me a believer who views Christ as an add-on and I will show you someone who (generally speaking) lacks in obedience. In the study that follows we will investigate what it means to be obedient, areas of obedience, and some results of obedience—but before we do, this first point cannot be over-emphasized.

The internal desire of obedience to Christ is only birthed in a soil rich in personal destitution and sadness over sin. Soils that foster personal significance

and stature bear little in the way of Christlikeness.

A. THE CALL TO OBEY GOD’S COMMANDS

1. What will you do if you love Christ?

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” (John 14:15)

2. What is expected of Christ’s followers as stated in James 1:22?

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

B. THE CALL TO FOLLOW CHRIST

1. What three things does Jesus say are necessary of a person who follows Him?

“And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.’” (Luke 9:23)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. How did Jesus set the example for us when suffering for His obedience to God?

“For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting



Himself to Him who judges righteously.” (1 Peter 2:20–23)

Obedience is not merely following a list of “dos and don’ts” Rather, it stems from a desperate passion to be saved from the evil ways of one’s self by seeking after the things above.

3. How does Colossians 2:20–3:2 add to your understanding of the above?

“If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, ‘Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!’ (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence. Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”

C. THE CALL TO SUBMISSION

“Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?” (Romans 6:16)

1. How should we present ourselves to God per Romans 12:1? How does the phrase “the mercies of God” relate to our motivation to be obedient?

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (Romans 12:1)

II. OBEDIENCE MARKS A TRUE BELIEVER

Look at 1 John 2:3–4 (our memory verse):

“By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

1. What does obeying the Word of God demonstrate?
2. What does continuous disobedience to the Word of God indicate?
3. What characterizes the true believer as one who will enter the kingdom of heaven?

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” (Matthew 7:21)

“But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him.” (1 John 2:5)

III. AN EXAMPLE OF DISOBEDIENCE

Read 1 Samuel 15:16–23. Instead of complete obedience to God’s command, King Saul substituted his own way of worship and excused his personal obedience.

♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

1 John 2:3–4

“By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

Obedience is a mark of genuine salvation.



★ ENDORSEMENT

Continued from page 2

Crossroads Church in Jersey Shore, PA. She said being “bold” in the faith comes naturally to her.

“Many people try to hide their faith. I am not one of those people,” she said. “That is not why I was put in this position. There is a specific reason why God has put me in office and I rely completely on Him.

“When I was campaigning, people cautioned me to tone it down, saying, ‘You can promote Jesus until after you get there.’ And I said, ‘If I don’t promote Jesus while I’m running, there is no way to promote Jesus in that venue.’ And now being in office, many don’t want me speaking about Jesus and certainly not professing it.

“Yes, you get bashed, but I love where God has place me and I love being in the fight. There is no place else I’d want to be.”

“Capitol Ministries is awesome. It’s exactly what we need. Jesus is our only hope. I continue to stand on that.”

“Then Samuel said to Saul, ‘Wait, and let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night.’ And he said to him, ‘Speak!’ Samuel said, ‘Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed you king over Israel, and the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, ‘Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.’ Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of the LORD?’ Then Saul said to Samuel, ‘I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal.’ Samuel said, ‘Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king.”

1. What was Samuel’s reply? How did he value obedience in comparison to ritualistic sacrifice?

2. To what are stubbornness and rebellion compared?

3. What did Saul’s disobedience cost him?

Consider Zechariah 7:8–14:

“Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying, ‘Thus has the LORD of hosts said, ‘Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother; and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not

devise evil in your hearts against one another.’ But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing. They made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen,’ says the LORD of hosts; ‘but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.”

1. How did the people react to God’s instruction?

2. How did it affect their prayers?

3. What was the result?

IV. EXAMPLES OF OBEDIENCE

The Old Testament contains numerous examples of obedience. Notice the Old Testament heroes of the faith and their obedience as listed in Hebrews 11.

A. ABRAHAM’S OBEDIENCE

1. What were two of Abraham’s great acts of obedience per Genesis 12:1–4 and Hebrews 11:8 respectively?

“Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.’ So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went



with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.”

“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.”

2. Because Abraham listened to the voice of God and obeyed, what three things did God (again) promise to Abraham’s son per Genesis 26:2–5?

“The LORD appeared to him and said, ‘Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.’”

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

B. CHRIST’S OBEDIENCE

1. What was Christ’s primary concern on earth?

“Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.’” (John 4:34)

2. Even when facing the cross, what was Christ’s attitude?

“Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be

done.” (Luke 22:42)

3. To what extent was Jesus willing to be obedient?

“Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Philippians 2:8)

V. THE PROMISES AND BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE

1. List some blessings that are promised to us if we obey God’s commandments.

“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” (John 15:10)

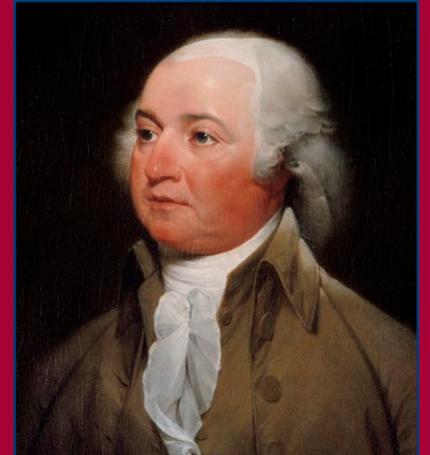
“You are My friends if you do what I command you.” (John 15:14)

“And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.” (1 John 3:22)

2. To what does Jesus compare the life of a person who hears and obeys His Word?

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.” (Matthew 7:24–27)

John Adams



“Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only law book and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited What a Eutopia—what a Paradise would this region be!”

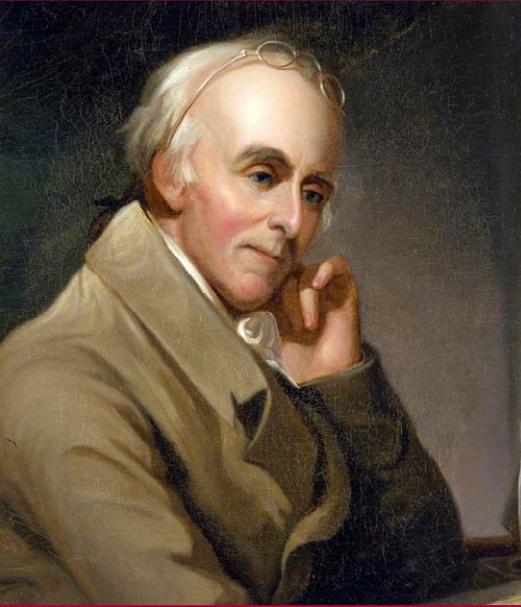
— John Adams, second president of the United States; signer of the Declaration of Independence; judge; diplomat; one of two signers of the Bill of Rights.

John Adams, *Works*, Vol. II, pp. 6-7, diary entry for February 22, 1756.





Benjamin Rush



“[C]hristianity is the only true and perfect religion; and ... in proportion as mankind adopt its principles and obey its precepts, they will be wise and happy.”

— Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence; surgeon general of the Continental Army; ratifier of the U.S. Constitution; ‘Father of American Medicine’; treasurer of the U.S. Mint; ‘Father of Public Schools Under the Constitution.’

Benjamin Rush, *Essays, Literary, Moral & Philosophical* (Philadelphia: Thomas & Samuel F. Bradford, 1798), p. 93, “A Defence of the Use of the Bible as a School Book.” See also Rush, *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 578, to Jeremy Belknap on March 2, 1791.

VI. AREAS OF OBEDIENCE

1. What are all Christians to be taught concerning Christ’s commands?

“... teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)

2. Read each verse below. Fill in who is to be obedient to whom and why.

“Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.” (Colossians 3:20)

Who? _____

To whom? _____

Why? _____

“Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.” (Colossians 3:20)

Who? _____

To whom? _____

Why? _____

“Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.” (Ephesians 6:5–8)

Who? _____

To whom? _____

Why? _____

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.” (Hebrews 13:17)

Who? _____

To whom? _____

Why? _____

“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.” (Romans 13:1)

Who? _____

To whom? _____

Why? _____

3. What should a wife do if her husband is an unbeliever?

“In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives.” (1 Peter 3:1)

4. What if a servant (or employee) has an “impossible” employer? What should he or she do?

“Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.” (1 Peter 2:18–19)

VII. OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OBEDIENCE

We must remember that all our good works apart from faith are like filthy rags. States Isaiah 64:6 in this regard:



“For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”

Whereas genuine faith always manifests itself in obedience to Christ (the introductory point of this Bible study), conversely obedience without genuine faith amounts to nothing: nothing more than a life of moralism that is often characterized by pharisaical attitudes toward others. Our obedience must grow out of a broken heart of desperation and want for God’s love and to be pleasing to our Maker. Obedience stems from knowing all He has done on our behalf — by saving us from our sin through His work on the cross.

1. What was the basis of all of Abraham’s obedience (citing again Hebrews 11:8)?

By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went , not knowing where he was going.

2. Read the parable of the two sons:

“But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in the vineyard.’ And he answered, ‘I will not’; but afterward he regretted it and went. The man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, ‘I will, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father? They said, ‘The first.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.’” (Matthew 21:28–32)

3. Which son had the better attitude? More importantly, why? How does this relate back to Matthew 5:3–6?

“Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”

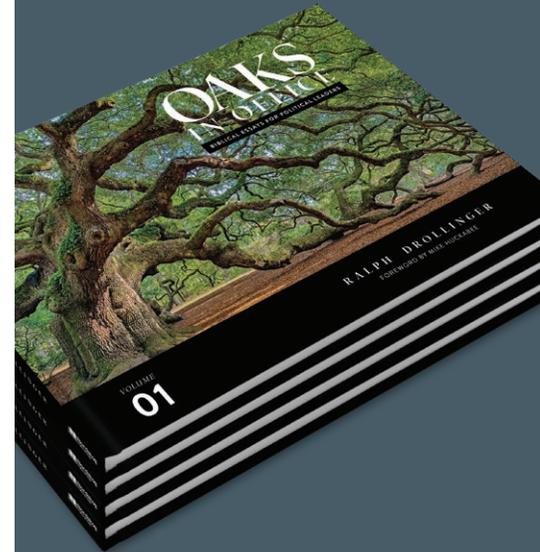
4. Using Peter as our example, what should be our response when God’s Word seems contrary to our own judgment?

“Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And He sat down and began teaching the people from the boat. When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, ‘Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.’ Simon answered and said, ‘Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets.’ When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break; so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink.”

Read Ephesians 6:6:

“Not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”

1. How should we view ourselves in relation to Christ?



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2. Again, what should be our inner attitude as we do the will of God?

VIII. APPLICATION

1. What does it mean to "present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God" (again, Romans 12:1)?

"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

2. What have you learned about the consequences of disobedience?

3. In what areas of your life does God want greater obedience?

IX. SUMMARY

Obedience is a mark of genuine salvation. Many are those on the capitol campus who profess Christ, but walk in disobedience to God's precepts. In fact they place their own opinions over and above the perspicuous teachings of God's Word. If this is an accurate characterization of you or someone else over a prolonged period of time, what should that indicate to you? Be discerning! Matthew 7:20 states, "You will know them by their fruits."

This insight is not only profoundly important in terms of asking yourself "am I really saved?" but it is characteristic of one's level of actual spiritual maturity. Many are those who "name the name of Christ" but how many are obedient to His scriptural precepts? Accordingly, who do you know who "names the name of Christ," but is in need of your ministry of evangelism? Note Matthew 7:21-23 in this regard:

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I NEVER KNEW YOU; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'"

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