

Intro.

- A. The very best way to show real love & honor = obedience. (**Jn. 14:15; 1 Sam. 15:22**)
 - 1. Do you consider yourself an accountable person who will one day stand before God at Judgment?
 - 2. Is it a concern to you that your manner of life & your response to God’s will is going to determine your eternal destiny?
 - 3. Have you realistically faced up to the fact that your ultimate destination will be either heaven or hell?
- B. It does not take much Bible study (or reading) to realize the obligation of all responsible persons to submit to the will of God as a condition of their salvation.
 - 1. Paul warned, **2 Thes. 1:8-9** as did Jesus (**Mt. 7:21**) to which He added, **Lk. 6:46**
 - 2. It is really quite simple, *If you continue in my word, they you are my disciples...* **Jn. 8:31f**

Discuss.**I. WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THE TRUTH ABOUT WHICH HE SPOKE?**

- A. Did God convey the idea that His blessings depended on conformity to the gospel => salvation? **Rom. 1:13-17**
 - 1. **Does one obey God** who, in ignorance, substitutes his own ideas & practices for God’s revealed instruction @ coming to the Lord, worshipping Him, & living for Him?
 - 2. Is one appropriately loved or honored when their specific wishes are **ignored** & replaced with another’s ideas???
 - a. In government, rejection of this principle produces criminals.
 - b. In God’s government, rejections of Divine direction produces sinners!
- B. There 3 requisites to obedience, the omission of any one renders the other 2 invalid.
 - 1. We must do *what the Lord said do*.
 - 2. We must do that *in the way He said to do it*.
 - 3. We must do what He said do *for the reason(s) He said to do it*.
 - 4. Illus. –
 - a. If Lord said go west, & we go east = disobeyed!
 - b. If Lord said, go west to work in field, & we get factory job in west = disobeyed!
 - c. If He said, go w., work in field, & buy house, & we go...work & buy a car = disobeyed!
- C. Thus, **to obey** is to follow commands of another. To do otherwise is to disobey &/or substitute, not submit.

II. HAVE YOU OBEYED or ARE YOU OBEYING GOD....WHEN IT COMES TO:

- A. Conditions God set forth as essential to salvation? **Heb. 11:6, Lk. 13:3, Rom. 10:10, Mk. 16:16.**
 - 1. ~ obedient are saved, added to the church **Mt. 16:18**, wherein *all spiritual blessings are found* **Eph. 1:3**
 - 2. ~ obedient worship on Sunday **Ac. 20:7**, singing **Eph. 5:19**, praying **Mt. 26:30**, studying **Ac. 20:7**, giving **1 Cor. 16:2**, & communing around the Lord’s table **1 Cor. 11:23-26**.
- B. Our need to respect & obey God’s will is just as obvious in other areas, as well.
 - 1. Paul wrote 1 Cor. in A.D. 57, in response to a letter he received f/ members re: contentions in the church
 - a. *Is Christ divided* (parceled out into small portions). *Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?* → The only name they should wear = the name of the one crucified for them
 - b. Division among those who claiming to follow Christ, including wearing name of a man or method, is clearly implied to be wrong. (c. **Ac. 11:26**)
 - c. It is logically implied that *if one hasn’t been baptized, they have not right to wear any religious name*
 - d. => Disciples in the 1st cent. Church were to accept Christ as head of the church, & wear His name.
 - 2. Case of Naaman the leper **2 Kgs. 5:1-14**
 - a. He was told to dip 7 times in the Jordan R.
 - b. Not mud, not 5 x’s, not just to make his servant happy.
 - 3. Could the Jews offer **any lamb** on **any day** **Ex. 12:2-24** & expect deliverance? (10th day, male, less than 1 yr., roasted, blood on lintels & posts; wearing belt, sandals, staff in hand, eat quickly)
- C. While most readily conclude the need to comply with God instructions in these past events, some still imagine they can obey God, and escape the burden & punishment of sin without ever knowing the truth of God’s plan to save man, or without every obeying it!!! **Jn. 8:32**

III. APPLICATION --

- A. Inconceivably, some contend that one may consider himself already saved *before baptism* & without the baptismal act, & still receive every blessing available to & intended for obedient believers.
 - 1. God's word is clear: Baptism saves us, **1 Pet. 3:21**, when we submit, doing right thing for right reason
 - 2. Baptism in Christ (**Gal. 3:27**) washes away our sins **Ac. 22:16** & thus are sins are remitted, **Ac. 2:38**.
- B. Since the Bible is exceedingly clear that salvation & damnation depend on ones obedience to God, how can one entertain the deception that obedience to God re: salvation, worship, division, etc. doesn't matter?
 - 1. Can a person who is ignorant of the divine design of the Lord's Supper, take of it acceptably before God even though they believe that the elements have miraculously nchanged into the actual body & blood?
 - 2. Has God will been obeyed by one who was immersed *after* he states that he was saved 2 weeks earlier immediately after saying, *I believe that God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned by sins.*
 - 3. What about the *good confession* **1 Tim. 6:12-13**; & Why be immersed *if* your sins are already pardoned
- C. The only devout, knowledgeable Christians (since the day of Pentecost, **Ac. 2**) that I know anything about are those who have obeyed God's plan of salvation, & strive to continue doing His will always!
 - 1. If *intent* to obey God is sufficient for salvation, then why encourage baptism at all???
 - 2. But if one must *obey* the Father's will in order to please Him, & be accepted with Him, then intent is important, but it is certainly not the end of the matter!
 - a. Often, a person with a good heart & sincere intentions, hears a message of "faith only" salvation, & they *accept Jesus as their personal Savior*, & believe they are then saved, having never obeyed God's plan for our justification from our sins. **Jas. 2:24**
 - b. According to **Jn. 7:17**, the problem is not that the Bible is too hard to understand, but rather an unwillingness to submit to God's will.

Concl.

- A. Religious plupiteers fail to teach God's plan of salvation, Heaven's plan for worship, the proper organization of the church & a host of other important matter, not because they don't understand the Bible ----but because they have decided that those things just are not important. (There is a problem of faith, not interpretation.)
- B. If one learns the truth through independent study regarding what to do to be saved, how could they be content to remain affiliated with a body of people that continually & conscientiously disregards the truth of God's word?
 - 1. Brothers & sisters in Christ, it is our obligation to help the lost learn the truth of Heaven's grace so that they may have the opportunity of salvation & fellowship with the children of God.
 - 2. It is neither narrow nor sectarian to urge people to learn God's will and obey it, **Mt. 7:21**
- C. Have you obeyed God, doing what He said, the way He said, for the reasons He said?
 - 1. Will you not let us baptize you into Christ this very hour?
 - 2. If you are a child of God, but have not been living the Christian life as you should, then please, come as we sing this song and make your life right.