

Study of Luke Ch. 1-2

Obedience

Opening

Pray. *You start off with prayer. Ask for God to be in your conversation and to increase faith through this time.*

Tell about an epic fail you've had. Why did you fail?

What is the hardest rule you have to follow? Why is it so hard for you to follow? What are the consequences of not following this rule?

Study

Obedience. Submission. These two words are not used or liked very much in our culture today. People tend to associate these words contrary to the "freedoms" and "rights" that we demand and associate. The reality is that this clash of attitudes comes from a deeper condition of rebellion our sinful desires and worldly ways lead us to feel and act on. Obedience is an important part of our Christian walk with God bringing us in line and partnership with His mission in our lives. Submission is an important willingness that postures us to hear and receive God's gifts of grace, forgiveness, and mercy. Let's look at these examples in our text for today. The birth of Jesus is filled with attitudes of submission and obedience.

Before we read, let's define what each word means. Obedience means to abide by or fulfill a command or directive given to you. Simply put, you do what an authority figure tells you to do. The spirit of it goes deeper. Godly obedience has an attitude of love and wholeheartedness. In other words, godly obedience carries out the task to its fullest and in a way that gives the best effort to the authority.

Submission means to **willingly** align your ways, life, attitude, actions, or etc. to the one in authority. If someone is not willing, it is not submission. It is subjection which means to force someone to comply or follow your ways. Our obedience and submission to God can impact the effectiveness of our service and witness to others. Let's take a look at this idea.

Read Luke 1:26-38.

What is Mary being told here (vs. 30-33)?

What is Mary's response (v. 38)?

Mary's question, "how will this be?", comes from wanting to understand. As Mary hears how all this will come about, she submits to God's way and desire for her to bring forth Jesus into the world.

Would God have chosen Mary if she had been a disobedient person? How would a rebellious or disobedient Mary have affected God's plan for the savior?

Read Luke 2:1-7.

Who was the authority of this time and what was he expecting the people to do (vs. 1 & 3)?

What excuses could Joseph and Mary make to disobey the command?

What excuses do we make when we do not want to obey others in authority like parents, teachers, or the government (think speeding)?

Why did they obey? Read Colossians 3:22-24. What is God's expectation of us?

Read Luke 2:8-20.

If Mary and Joseph had been disobedient to Caesar's decree, what consequences would they have faced personally?

If Joseph and Mary had been disobedient, how would that have affected the shepherds?

Thank God that we do not have to deal with the ramifications of a disobedient Joseph and Mary. Thinking about other aspects of the birth narrative, Joseph obeyed by taking Mary as his wife despite what the worldly way expected. The wise men obeyed God by not going back to Herod. Joseph obeyed God and traveled to Egypt and then back to Nazareth to protect the baby. It seems like God leaves so much in a reckless and delicate balance but God knows the people He chooses for His work in the kingdom.

Read Luke 2:21-40.

In what other ways do we see Joseph and Mary being obedient to God?

Who else is blessed by Joseph's and Mary's submission of life? How did Mary and Joseph's obedience bring blessing to their own lives (vs. 33 & 40)?

How can our obedience bring blessing to our own lives?

Mark of a Disciple: Obedience

As disciples, we live lives that demonstrate our love and respect for God's authority and sovereignty. This is done through obedience. Obedience brings us peace in our relationship with God and with others. Job's obedience led to trust in God even when it was difficult. A life of obedience becomes a life of submission. Submission to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Submission to God brings us identity, blessings, faith, and purpose.

Do not confuse obedience with salvation though. Our obedience can't save us. It won't prevent bad things from happening. It does not make life "fair". We still live in a sinful broken world. Jesus is the only one that saves.

Obedience doesn't just affect you. It impacts the people in your life who see and observe it. A life of obedience and submission to God is a witness to others about the authority and love of God. Our disobedience to God leaves a bitter taste in peoples' mouths calling us hypocrites and fakes. It damages our relationships and leaves us with doubt, fear, and brokenness. In those times, we obediently turn to Jesus to save us and restore us.

Where do you struggle with obedience? How will you purposefully obey God in this area this week?

Create a plan to daily value God's Word and share that with the group. It needs to be specific with times, places, and details. Make it realistic. Keep each other accountable this week. If you miss a day, pick up the next day.

Prayer Time

Take prayer requests. Have everyone write them down so that each day you may pray for one another. Then, pray for each other before you close.

Are there any fears or concerns around the pandemic? Please be sensitive to each other and listen. Respond with encouragement from God's Word.