THE POWER OF OBEDIENCE (1)
Deuteronomy 28:1-14

Is obedience really that big of a deal with God? Is there really any benefit to obeying God? If obedience is really that important to God, what can we expect to happen in our lives?

The reality is there are so many believers who have never become convinced that obedience to God and His Word bring about blessings and the way they operate is like obeying when it is convenient and disobeying when that is convenient. The world today is filled with many Christians who claim to have a relationship with the Lord, but just are not convinced that obedience pays. Many Christians find themselves in all sorts of shapes spiritually, emotionally and even financially because they have missed a significant truth in the Christian life of obedience.

Why do we struggle with obedience? One of the basic problems in each of our lives is that we are fallen human beings. We were born with a bent away from God and a bent toward disobedience. One excellent example of this is a small child. When a small child wants their way, they simply act up or take something away from another. Why? Because they are revealing by their nature that they are born with a bent on disobedience.

We struggle because we are fallen, but we also struggle because we have a warped view of obedience. If you were told as a child to obey parents who made life difficult for you, then you are going to have a warped understanding of obedience.

All of us were children once, and we may have had a parent that told us to “obey” this rule or that rule, but may never told us the benefit of the rule. We may have been told to obey harsh or hard commands of a parent which turns a child sour. So often times when we hear the word “obey” we carry all sorts of mixed emotions deep inside us. But the wonderful truth of God is this…He is a good God, therefore He will never tell us to obey a given directive but what that directive is good for us in every way…if we could see the big picture as He sees it.

God is going to be good to us all the time, under all circumstances, and He yearns for us life at its best. Why? Because that is simply who He is. God loves us and it grieves His heart when we miss out on the joys and the wonders of life. God wanted for Adam and Eve and eternity of life, and blessing, but He knew that they would respond in disobedience and rebellion. Yet, their disobedience didn’t alter that heart of God.

While we live in a world where many are walking in rebellion and disobedience to God, the wonder of His Word, and His eternal nature is that there is power in the life of obedience. In other words, no person can obey God but what God will do amazingly, abundantly, above all that we could ask or even think.

What then can a person expect to happen in and to his or her life if they are willing to obey God, and follow His directives, lovingly and willingly?

1. OBEDIENCE CAUSES GOD TO ACT. In Deuteronomy, Moses is giving directions to the nation of Israel, regarding obedience and disobedience. He is reminding them that he will soon be leaving them. But before Moses departs into the presence of God, he gives them directives from holy God for life and living. Moses at this point is better than a hundred years old, and he can look back on his life and see the wonderful hand of God over his life, as he has obeyed the Lord God.

While we are some thousands of years removed from the times of Moses, it is vital to remember that eternal principles etched in the Word of God are timeless and eternal. The laws and principles of obedience set down thousands of years ago, were set down by an eternal, unchanging, unalterable God. One of the first realities in a life that is obedient to God is the very fact that God ACTS on behalf of the life of obedience.

The very first words of chapter 28 are, “And it shall come to pass” or “It shall be”. In other words, God is making it clear to the nation of Israel, that when they choose to obey God, God will act on their behalf, and the same thing goes in our lives just the same today. When God finds a person that is willing to “diligently obey” and “listen carefully” to Him, there you will find a person that God does mighty ACTS in that person’s life.

Why does God act in the life that obeys Him? Because God has made it abundantly clear in His Word that “we reap what we sow”. When a person sows obedience, lives obedient, walks obedient, strives daily to obey, then he will soon be able to watch God at work in his life. He will find God open doors in his life. He will find God blessing his life in a special way. Not because he is more special than another, but because of the power of obedience. When God says “IT SHALL BE!”, you can rest assured that IT will happen.

In the life of Joseph…is the wonderful evidence of God acting in response to his obedience. Joseph was maligned, talked about, accused, yet none of that stopped God from acting on his behalf. God moved in his life from the prison to the palace in one day’s time.

In the life of Joshua and Caleb…is the wonderful evidence of God acting in their lives. When they along with 10 others went into the land of Canaan to spy it out, only those 2 chose to obey God…and the result was God acting to save their lives, while thousands of Israelites died because of rebellion. Joseph was rescued from the pit and Joshua and Caleb were saved.
because of their heart of obedience to God.

When we are seriously willing to examine our lives and evaluate why the blessings of God are not coming upon our lives...there will always be but one answer...a choosing to disobey God. God is not playing at make believe when He is speaking to the nation of Israel through Moses. He is making one thing soberly clear to an entire nation. They can expect and experience the mighty blessings of God if they are willing to: listen, follow, obey the directives of God. It is obedience that moves the heart of God to act in any person's life. God declares upon the oath of His Word that "it" shall happen if there is obedience. But what is the "it'? The "it" are the blessings of God.

God never lets obedience to His Word go unrewarded, because to do so would violate His holy nature. What does that mean to a person, couple, family, church, community and nation? It means that where God finds a person acting in obedience, God will in turn act in blessing. Where God finds a person acting in walking with God, God will return in pouring out the overflow of His goodness in ways that are both visible and invisible.

When you examine vv.3-14, you will notice that these are visible, literal, real, tangible blessings. What is there that causes us to think that we can obey God without blessing? The answer is found in the fact that there remains a real devil in this world, who lies to us and does all he can to tell us that obedience doesn't pay. But the holy Word of God speaks completely to the contrary. Just as God acted on Moses time, God will do precisely today as He did thousands of years ago. Because God is eternal, holy, righteous, and trustworthy. In other words, God will keep His Word for all time.

2. OBEDIENCE CAUSES GOD TO OPEN. The wonderful nature of God is that He never leaves us in the dark about obedience to Him. He will always point out what we can expect to happen as we obey Him. However it must always be understood that obedience is not a casual action. Obedience to God is not obedience when it is convenient. Sadly, that is where many believers are. They will obey God when it is convenient, meaning they will disobey God when it is convenient. Yet, the very power of obedience causes God to "open" His storehouse of blessings in all types of ways and manners. Since God owns and runs His world, He owns and runs the storehouse of heaven, and He will cause blessings to come upon that heart and life that is obedient to Him.

First, obedience by its very nature causes God to open His blessings on that obedient life. The very essence of the wording in verse three means, "You will be blessed!" In other words, there is the full realization of the blessings of God on that heart and life that "fully obeys" the directives of God. It wasn't by accident or chance that the blessings of God came upon the people, the blessings would come on the obedient heart and life. Why is it then that we miss the blessings of God? We miss the blessings of God because we miss the conditions from God. The blessings that come from God are conditional...based on listening, obeying and applying God's Word to our lives. That is the life that finds the favor of God, and the blessings from God, for that is the life that bows down in reverence to God. But when God finds a life of obedience to Him, God finds a life that He can bless.

Second, obedience opens God's blessings to all areas of life. God knows well that obedience in our lives is not accidental but purposeful and deliberate. A person doesn't automatically stand on God's Word. A person isn't automatically faithful with the money that God has entrusted to him. A person doesn't automatically get up to serve God. God is well aware that obedience takes effort because we live in a world under satanic attack. Yet, the promise of God and the power of obedience means that God WILL CAUSE His blessings to come upon all areas of our lives. Notice that it is God that causes blessings. The power of obedience causes God to move in blessing specifically. The reference to "city" meant that God would reward them with extraordinary prosperity. When a person obeys God, God makes it His business to promote that person due to obedience.

God doesn't stop at blessing through promotion, but God made it clear that He would bless their children, their possessions, protect them from their enemies, and He would command from heaven His mighty powerful blessings to come upon their storehouses or their possessions. Because God wanted His people to know that there was great reward, blessing and honor for them if they chose to walk with God in a pagan world.

3. OBEDIENCE CAUSES GOD TO COMMAND BLESSING. Did you realize that serious obedience causes God to command, give, send, release His blessings? That is exactly what God said to the nation of Israel, and the divine truth of God, He always responds the same way to obedience today. Locked within the power of obedience to God is this reality...God causes and commands His blessings to come in ways we can't even fathom or dream. The power of obedience causes God to call down His blessings on our homes, our possessions. Why? Because He is pleased and honored with that life that is bent on obedience. One of the aspects of the blessings of God was the ability to be generous without losing out.

God wanted His people to know with each passing day, that He was their God, and that He was pleased with obedience. The holy truth of God's Word is the same today. Imagine the wonder and the thought of obeying God, and Him calling into your life His blessings...not for us to brag about, but out of the overflow of His loving goodness. The reality is, each of us are reaping...but the question must be asked, "What have we been sowing?"