

# “Faith to Obey”

## Introduction

Do you have faith to obey?

Do you have faith to obey, even when you think you know what to do? Do you have faith to obey, even when you are exhausted? Do you have faith to obey, even when you don't know what is to come? Do you have faith to obey?

So, with that being said, please join me as I open us in prayer.

Lord, this is Your time, and this is Your space. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of all our hearts be pleasing in Your sight, Oh Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

## Opener

Obedience is hard, it requires a submission of our will, our wants, and our desires. Often when people think of the word obedience they think of restrictions or rules... things you have to give up. This word can feel kind of cold at times. So much so that there is just this “ugh fine, here” attitude that we can easily have towards God instead of this [surrendered hands] “God, I give this to you...” “I don't understand, but I trust You. I have faith that You know better.” He is not a God that wants us to simply give up things, but a God that wants us to pick up what He has for us instead. Even in the unknowns. I have come to find what obedience looks like in my life, and how I don't want to disobey what it is that God says, by doing my own thing and then having to repent later and go through the messiness of my consequences of own decisions.

**1 Samuel 15:22** *“But Samuel replied, “What is more pleasing to the Lord: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams.”* (SLIDE 9)

What does obedience mean?

- Obedience = to hear, to listen, with attention and interest, to agree, yield to.
- It is a submission to the authority of God, to carry out what He says.
- Obedience is fully doing what God says for us to do, in the timing He wants us to do it; not adding to, or subtracting from, what He says for us to do.

One of my favorite Old Testament accounts is from the life of Moses. Moses often took time away from others just to be with God. He would get instructions of what to do, as well as I am sure enjoyed that quiet away from all the noise of people. Although I am

extremely extroverted and love being around people... can I just say: there are some people that just drain you. Especially if they just complain all day... So, Moses, I feel you man.

But if I can be transparent with you: I relate to Moses in other ways too: in feeling like I was always different than those around me. Or: in not feeling adequate at times, like my words don't quite go together well enough. I relate to him in the dealing with complaining people. (Anyone in any form of a leadership or if you have kids, you understand - you gotta deal with that whining and complaints) I relate to Moses in his times of frustration, like when he broke the tablets because he was mad the Israelites were making idols, or when asking the questions like, "what is going to change, I've tried that" as he kept having to approach Pharaoh, or when he asked God "how much longer must I deal with these people?" I can also relate to Moses in the exhaustion of going around the same mountain. Can anyone else relate with Moses for any of these moments? See, when I think about Moses, I especially think of and relate to him from this passage that was read today.

I want to look at it this morning, starting in verse 5: **(SLIDE 10-11)**

*5 Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us here to this terrible place? This land has no grain, no figs, no grapes, no pomegranates, and no water to drink!" 6 Moses and Aaron turned away from the people and went to the entrance of the Tabernacle, where they fell face down on the ground. Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to them, 7 and the Lord said to Moses,*

**(SLIDE 12)**

Moses and Aaron are given specific instructions from God to do what?

- grab the staff
- assemble to people
- Speak to the rock

*8 "You and Aaron must take the staff and assemble the entire community. As the people watch, speak to the rock over there, and it will pour out its water. You will provide enough water from the rock to satisfy the whole community and their livestock." 9 So Moses did as he was told. He took the staff from the place where it was kept before the Lord.*

**(SLIDE 13)**

What do Moses and Aaron do?

- grab the staff; assemble to people; Chastises the people; Raises his hand; Strikes the rock (twice)

*10 Then he and Aaron summoned the people to come and gather at the rock. "Listen, you rebels!" he shouted. "Must we bring you water from this rock?" 11 Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with the staff, and water gushed out. So the entire community and their livestock drank their fill.*

**(SLIDE 14)**

*12 But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust Me enough to demonstrate My holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land I am giving them!”*

- Moses did not have the faith to obey what God instructed him to do... and as a result, he was not going to go into the Promised Land

---

This passage is kind of frustrating when I have looked at it in the past, because I have thought, it wasn't that big of a deal... and hey, the water still came out, right? There were some pretty crazy things that Moses had did in the past too, that didn't disqualify him, so *why* this?

Moses began to do what God told him to do, and then he made some adjustments...

Well, today's passage is about "Faith to Obey" because as we see with the life of Moses, he somehow got lost along the way. Doing his own thing that day.

Back in 2017, I had the opportunity to go to the Holy Land into Israel and it was an incredible experience. Before I went, I thought about the places that were going to be so memorable, and I was excited about the trip, so much that I didn't really look into all the places we were going to see. I got baptized in the Jordan River, I was at the Garden Tomb, and the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee... But you know what was the most memorable for me? This place...

**(SLIDE 15)** Mount Nebo...

I remember when we arrived, it was cloudy, sprinkling and kind of gloomy... and it was absolutely cold!

Let me read to you WHY I am mentioning this place, Deuteronomy 34:1-4 "Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, **2** all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, **3** the Negeb, and the Plain, that is, the Valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.

I want you to look at verse 4: **(Slide 16)**

*4 Then the Lord said to Moses, “This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when I said, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have now allowed you to see it with your own eyes, but you will not enter the land.”*

When we were arriving at Mount Nebo, we were told that we were going to get this neat view... but all we saw was this thick fog surrounding us.

**(SLIDE 17)** This is a map in relation to where things are

The guide pointed and said, well normally from right here you could see across... and then like straight out of a movie, the clouds parted!! The view... absolutely breathtaking! **(Slide 18)** I placed the names over the places so we can see a bit more clearly what we are seeing. **(Slide 19)**

As I looked out at this view, I became emotional. I never want to be that close to God's promise, and miss it... and not be a part of it because of my disobedience to His calling, His voice, His leading...

What does it mean to obey? Well, I think I should tell you what obedience vs disobedience looks like.... I've learned that

1. partial obedience = disobedience **(SLIDE 20)**

*Only doing part of what God is telling us to do, is not obedience*

2. delayed obedience = disobedience **(SLIDE 21)**

*We cannot hesitate when God tells us to do something*

3. conditional obedience = disobedience **(SLIDE 22)**

*If there are conditions to us obeying... that is not obedience*

4. forced obedience = disobedience **(SLIDE 23)**

*Obedience is not us doing things under compulsion but rather is a response of our faith in God, our trust in who He is... to simply trust and obey*

BONUS:

5. favorable obedience does not always = faithful obedience **(SLIDE 24)**

*This is similar to the conditional obedience but takes it a step further to say it is not going to be how we would like it to be, while sometimes it may be. True obedience is rooted in faith... faith to obey... not in the approval, reward, or recognition that we may receive from being obedient.*

Obedience is hard. Because we want to do our own thing... But I believe that obedience needs to begin with a relationship. By simply following rules or commandments, we are going to miss the joy that there is in having the faith to obey. We obey God because we can trust God has a better way, than anything else we could think or imagine. We go from faith to faith, growing in our relationship with God.

We have been given the Holy Spirit, we are being transformed by His Spirit, and should want to respond in obedience to His leading, more and more as we go from faith to faith.

In the building of a relationship with God, Moses has been entrusted to mediate and say things from God to the people... and this was big deal. Moses knew very well what

God could do, he saw the goodness and faithfulness of God time and time again.. yet Moses missed the opportunity to have the faith to obey.

-God is going to do what He is going to do and show His character, His promises, despite us being us. We can be with Him or not- Regardless of that decision... He is still going to remain the same. From that consistency of God's character, it should motivate us to obey Him and trust that His plan, and way, is greater.

When I was seven years old, I can remember being asked what I wanted to be when I grew up. This question didn't take thinking or hesitation. I said in my little twang of a voice, "I'm gonna be a pasture." I said it and just knew. I said it though I had no idea if that were even possible. I had never seen a woman lead anything in church, let alone be a pastor. I didn't know if that was possible as I looked at myself and where I lived or that no one in my family was in ministry, was this like a royal family type of thing. I had zero clue what schooling it would take or if I was going to have to have a bunch of kids like I saw so many pastors I knew of. I didn't know a lot, but I knew what I was called to do. I had people in church throughout growing up who would speak over me that I would be a leader, and that I would be a pastor. Whenever I was asked that question of what I wanted to be when I grew up, the answer remained: "I'm gonna be a pastor." There was such conviction in my heart, though I did not have the answers. Yet, I knew what I was called to do. Time and time again, I have felt impressed on my heart of what I was called to do. And if I can let you all in: it is scary sometimes. I have hesitated and allowed fear to take the lead in my life far too often. Yet when I have leaned into the Lord's leading: He has remained so faithful. His ways are always much better!

I believe every single person has a call of God on their life. The call of God on your life is not easy, no matter what it is. It comes at a price of us responding in faith to obey: when you don't have the answers, when you have doubts, when you are scared, when you can't see the other side, when you want to do your own thing, when it does not make sense, when you want to respond differently, when you don't know where the finances will come from, when you don't know if you will have the emotional or mental support from your family or friends... have faith, my friend.

When you are being called to do something, it takes faith. Faith, not in your own abilities or intellect, but faith in the One who holds it all together Who knows just what we need, Who wants to show us what lies beyond other side of the mountain.

## Closing

**Church, please pray with me.**