

Women's Bible Study

1 Peter 1:14-16

Obedience. 1. The act of obeying; dutiful or submissive behavior with respect to another person. 2. The trait of being willing to obey. 3. Behavior intended to please your parents. (*WordWeb*)

A synonym used for obedience is respect. When we consider showing respect towards someone or something, it is the condition of being honored, having an attitude of admiration or esteem. When we honor or esteem someone, we want to please them, we want to do a good job, to perform well.

1Peter 1:14-16 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts [which were yours] in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all [your] behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

The address is to **obedient children**. Obedient <hupakoe> attentive hearkening, i.e. (by implication) compliance or submission. Consider, if you have accepted God's gift of salvation, you are His child. Therefore, you are to be obedient. You are to hold your own personal desires and thoughts low, as being not important, and esteem God's direction and commands as having higher value. The idea of submission is putting another's authority and decisions in front of your own, respecting their knowledge and understanding as superior.

Contemplate this thought for a moment – 'respecting their knowledge and understanding as superior'.

♥ **What does it require from you to respect another individual's knowledge and understanding as superior?**

Micah 6:8 He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Ro 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

Philippians 2:5-8

God knows and understands all things.

Psalms 147:5 Great is our Lord, and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.

Isaiah 40:28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

The motivation to obey as God's children is to please Him as our Father. Obedience honors God's name.

Following the description of who we are to be now - obedient children, is an explanation of who we once were before God took hold of our heart and turned our eyes to His truths. *We were conformed to lust in our ignorance.* We followed the same pattern as the world, longing for what is forbidden. Perhaps those who were saved later in life have a more well-defined picture of their ignorance in following the world. But even if you have been a believer since childhood, the struggle with sin is real and understanding its grip on the human heart is not difficult.

Consider how you have changed in your thinking and actions, and desires and pursuits, since Christ took hold of your life. For example, what I once thought was not so bad, I now see as directly opposed to God. And the things I desired were very self-centered and prideful. I would not have even understood that there was a problem in following the world – this was the acceptable standard. Comparing myself to the world's standard, I thought I was fairly good. Look at the fallacy in this thinking.

First, when we compare ourselves to other individuals, we always come out on top because there is always someone in our own estimation that is worse off or did not do something as well as we did. We do not tend to look at the millions who have excelled over and above our own efforts.

Second, in order to make a true comparison of anything, the entire picture is needed, from the very worst to perfection. We are unable to comprehend either scenario. However, what we do know as God's obedient children is that we are to strive towards God's standard of holiness. Think of the following questions.

- ♥ **How well do you fit in the world?**
- ♥ **Do your unsaved friends influence you, or do you influence them?**
- ♥ **Do you act differently with one group of people than another?**
- ♥ **What things might tempt you to try and 'fit in'?**

1 Peter 1:14 says we used to be ignorant regarding our behavior. To be ignorant is to be without information or intelligence, without understanding or knowledge. This is a description of who we were without Christ. The decisions we made were without full information, without the complete understanding of who we are and our desperate need for a Savior. We were entrenched in sin without even realizing we had a problem. Consider how well you are able to make good decisions when you have a significant

piece of information missing. Try booking a flight without knowing the times you want to leave and arrive, or without having a destination in mind. Your plans will probably turn out haphazard at best. This is like shooting an arrow in the dark hoping you hit the target. This is the best we have without Christ. In fact, we are so heavily pulled into the things of this world that we do not even recognize the danger. – Until, God opens His children’s eyes to His Truths. God’s children no longer conform to sin out of ignorance, instead they are characterized by obedience.

Obedience to God demands that we do not follow worldly ways. Instead, we are to live holy in **all** our behavior (v. 15-16).

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

1Peter 4:1-2 Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;

♥ What does it mean to be holy?

We are to be physically and morally blameless. We are to strive to be like Jesus. This is only possible through His redemption of our soul. God is holy, He is perfect and pure. He is the One who called your name as His child. He is the one who has called you into understanding and faith in Christ. As His child, receiving all the benefits of His salvation, you also receive the means to be like Him, to imitate His character.

It is sometimes much easier to concentrate on what everyone else is doing wrong. Almost every social media venue is built on complaints, disagreement with another, justification of self, and individuals sharing their opinions of why we should or should not do something. Is this behavior that seeks to follow Christ in humility and obedience?

♥ How much time and effort do you put into thinking of what others should or should not be doing? Is there any value in this?

Specifically, what is mentioned is behavior, or *all manner of conversation* (KJV). People aptly take on the persona of those they admire. Look around and notice that styles of dress, speech, and even food begin with following someone’s example that another thought highly of. If you profess to follow Jesus, it is imperative that your entire life points to His holiness. We need to learn about Him so that we can imitate Him. We have examples to follow throughout the word of God. Read what Paul tells the Corinthian church, “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). It is impossible for us to be perfectly holy, yet we are to endeavor to follow the pattern

set before us and practice holiness in every area of our life. We are holy because we belong to God; our actions should increasingly speak of our inward salvation. Our thoughts should be held captive by Truth, and our words should honor God. As we seek to know God and follow Him, our actions on the outside will reflect the change God has wrought on the inside. The inside transformation of our soul will show in the outward actions of our life.

2Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Notice the word **all** in verse 15. All means everything, it is inclusive to your whole behavior. *Matthew Poole's Commentary* has this explanation of all, "with whomsoever ye converse, believers or infidels, friends or enemies, relations or stranger; and in whatsoever condition ye are in, peace or trouble, prosperity or adversity".

The word 'all' negates any exception to holiness. This means we never have a reason to act unholy. Consider these phrases that may enter into your thoughts –

"This makes me so mad, therefore ..."

"It is unfair..."

"I have waited long enough..."

"It happens all the time..."

"I am tired..."

"No one cares..."

"You do not understand..."

You will probably be able to think of many more instances where we allow ourselves to justify behavior that is unbecoming to a Christian. We do better if we are willing to point the finger at ourselves rather than someone else. Regardless of any outside circumstance, God's children are to be obedient to His word.

♥ How are you seeking holiness?

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

1Thessalonians 2:10-12 You are witnesses, and [so is] God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we [were] exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father [would] his own children, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

1Thessalonians 4:7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

Philippians 2:12-16 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for [His] good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

God's command to the Israelites was to be holy. This command stands true to His children everywhere. Conclusion: Do not continue in the sin that once held you captive, instead seek holiness because your Father is holy, and he commands His children to be holy.

Think again how society copies their behavior and appearance after the things they follow. Do you imitate the God you worship? We are to put on holiness and put off sin. Both garments cannot be worn at the same time. As God grows us in His likeness, we are less and less garbed in the world as the righteousness imputed to us through Christ becomes more evident in our character.